

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key: Covered Wagons and Iron Horses: 3rd Grade Frontier Journey Quiz

This mid-unit assessment connects transportation changes to daily life on the plains, analyzing how families adapted to new Western landscapes and tools.

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**1. Families traveling west often moved in groups called 'wagon trains' for safety. Which of these was a common reason they chose to travel together?**

**Answer:** B) To help each other cross difficult rivers and fix broken wheels.

Safety in numbers was vital for physical tasks like fording rivers and repairing equipment that one family couldn't do alone.

**2. Because there were very few trees on the wide-open Great Plains, many pioneer families built their first homes out of blocks of \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Answer:** C) Sod (Grass and dirt)

Settlers used 'sod'—thick squares of prairie grass and roots—as a building material in areas where timber was unavailable.

**3. The 'Pony Express' was a mail service where riders switched to fresh horses at different stations to deliver letters quickly across the West.**

**Answer:** A) True

The Pony Express used a relay system of fast horses and brave riders to move mail before the telegraph was widely used.

**4. How did the invention of 'Barbed Wire' change the life of a cowboy living on the open range?**

**Answer:** C) It allowed farmers to fence in land, which ended the time of 'open' cattle herding.

Barbed wire allowed people to mark their property, which prevented cattle from roaming freely and changed the cowboy way of life.

**5. Before settlers arrived, many Plains Indian Tribes relied on the \_\_\_\_\_ for food, clothing, and shelter materials.**

**Answer:** A) Bison (Buffalo)

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The bison was central to the survival of Plains Tribes, providing everything from meat to hide for tepees.

**6. Most pioneers brought all of their heavy furniture from their old homes and kept it inside their wagons during the whole trip.**

**Answer:** B) False

To lighten the load for the oxen, many families had to leave heavy furniture on the side of the trail.

**7. What was the main purpose of the 'Telegraph' lines that were built alongside the new railroads?**

**Answer:** B) To send electric messages across long distances instantly.

The telegraph used electrical signals (Morse code) to communicate much faster than a horse or train could travel.

**8. The 'Golden Spike' was a famous symbol used to celebrate the completion of the \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Answer:** D) Transcontinental Railroad

A ceremonial golden spike was driven into the ground in Utah to mark the meeting of the two railroad lines.

**9. Many African American pioneers, called 'Exodusters,' moved west to Kansas to find freedom and start their own farms.**

**Answer:** A) True

Exodusters were African Americans who migrated from the South to Kansas after the Civil War searching for a better life.

**10. Why did many pioneer children help their parents collect 'buffalo chips' (dried buffalo droppings) on the trail?**

**Answer:** B) They were used as fuel for cooking fires when wood was scarce.

On the treeless plains, dried manure was a reliable source of fuel for campfires.