

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Your Frontier Supply Wagon: A 2nd Grade Pioneer Quest

Students pack a virtual wagon and plan a route while solving the same challenges real pioneer families faced on their journey west.

1. If you are a pioneer child, why is a 'prairie schooner' a more useful home than a wooden cabin during your trip?

Answer: A) It has wheels to move while you sleep.

Pioneers used covered wagons (called prairie schooners) because they were mobile homes that carried all their supplies across the country.

2. True or False: Most pioneer children had to walk beside the wagon for hundreds of miles instead of riding inside it.

Answer: A) True

To save the oxen from getting too tired and to make room for heavy food supplies, almost everyone walked the whole way.

3. Pioneers often followed the _____ River because it provided water for their animals and a flat path to travel on.

Answer: A) Platte

The Platte River was a vital 'highway' for settlers moving west through the Great Plains.

4. Your family needs to cross a deep river. Which choice is the smartest way to keep your flour and sugar dry?

Answer: C) Caulk the wagon with tar to make it float like a boat.

Pioneers would use tar or resin to seal the cracks in their wagons so they could float across dangerous rivers.

5. Since there were no trees on the flat plains, children collected 'buffalo _____' to use as fuel for their cooking fires.

Answer: B) chips

Dried buffalo manure (chips) was a creative and necessary way to make heat for cooking where wood was scarce.

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6. You meet a group of Nez Perce people on your journey. How could they most likely help your family survive?

Answer: B) By showing you which wild plants are safe to eat.

Native Americans had deep knowledge of the land and often helped settlers find food, water, and safe paths.

7. True or False: Pioneers preferred to use horses to pull their wagons because they were stronger and stayed calmer than oxen.

Answer: B) False

Oxen were preferred because they were stronger, cheaper, and could eat the prairie grass better than horses could.

8. Pioneers used a 'chimney' in the desert called _____ Rock to know they were heading in the right direction.

Answer: A) Chimney

Chimney Rock was a famous natural landmark that let travelers know they were on the right trail toward the mountains.

9. Why did many pioneer families move West to live in 'sod houses' made of dirt and grass?

Answer: B) There were no trees on the plains to build wooden houses.

On the Great Plains, pioneers had to adapt to the environment by using 'sod' (layers of grass and soil) because wood was rare.

10. True or False: A 'jumping-off point' was a town where pioneers bought supplies before starting their long trip.

Answer: A) True

Towns like Independence, Missouri, were called jumping-off points because that is where the wilderness journey began.