

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Wrangle the Iron Horse: An Advanced 1800s Transit Quiz for College

Students analyze the geopolitical shifts of 19th-century expansion through the lens of legislative precedent and frontier demographic transitions.

1. Which piece of legislation, influenced by the 'Free Soil' ideology, allowed settlers to claim 160 acres of public land in the West during the Civil War era?

Answer: B) The Homestead Act of 1862

Signed by Abraham Lincoln, this act was a fundamental shift in land policy, prioritizing small-scale farming over large plantations to populate the West.

2. True or False: The 'Safety Valve Theory' suggested that the Western frontier acted as a release for social and economic tensions in overcrowded Eastern cities.

Answer: A) True

Historians use this term to describe the idea that unemployed workers could move West to prevent social unrest in the industrialized East.

3. The _____ of 1848, which ended the Mexican-American War, granted the United States territories that would become California, Nevada, and Utah.

Answer: C) Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

This treaty ceded 55% of Mexico's northern territory to the United States, fundamentally altering the nation's borders and raising tensions over slavery's expansion.

4. Which technological innovation was most responsible for the transition from the iconic 'Open Range' cattle drives to enclosed commercial ranching?

Answer: C) Barbed Wire

Joseph Glidden's 1874 patent for barbed wire allowed farmers and ranchers to fence off vast areas, effectively ending the era of free-roaming cattle herds.

5. True or False: The Exodusters were African Americans who migrated from the South to Kansas in the late 1870s to escape post-Reconstruction oppression.

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Answer: A) True

Named after the Exodus of the Israelites, this mass migration sought political and economic freedom in the Great Plains.

6. The concept of _____, coined by John O'Sullivan, claimed that it was the divinely ordained mission of the U.S. to expand across the continent.

Answer: C) Manifest Destiny

Manifest Destiny served as a powerful ideological justification for territorial acquisition and the displacement of indigenous populations.

7. What was the primary goal of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, founded by Richard Henry Pratt in 1879?

Answer: C) Cultural assimilation

The Carlisle School was the flagship institution for Indian boarding schools, designed to 'kill the Indian, save the man' through Euro-American education.

8. True or False: The Transcontinental Railroad was built without any federal subsidies or land grants, relying entirely on private investment.

Answer: B) False

The Pacific Railway Acts provided massive land grants and government bonds to the Central Pacific and Union Pacific companies to incentivize construction.

9. The California Gold Rush of 1849 led to the swift application for statehood, which sparked a national crisis over the balance of power between _____.

Answer: B) Free and slave states

California's entry as a free state required the Compromise of 1850 to keep the North and South from civil war.

10. In his 'Frontier Thesis,' Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the American character was uniquely shaped by:

Answer: B) The existence of open land

Turner argued that the struggle of conquering the wilderness fostered American democracy and individualism.