



# Wyoming State Museum Oregon Trail Trunk Teacher Guide



# **BYU REDD CENTER**



**This education trunk is only possible due to the generous support of the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University.**

On behalf of the Wyoming State Museum, thank you for allowing us to be a part of your classroom. We hope the items included in this trunk, and the corresponding activities, will help bring the story of the Oregon Trail to life in your classroom. Thank you for all you do to impact the youth of Wyoming. Please let me know if the museum can be of any help in the future.

Sincerely,

*Jeremy*

Jeremy Thornbrugh  
Curator of Education  
Wyoming State Museum  
307-286-8627



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Contents

This exciting curriculum will take your students on a journey along the ever dangerous Oregon Trail. They will learn all about the trail, how immigrants prepared, and what it was like to take the trip. They will use reading, vocabulary, mathematics, small group work, critical thinking, and writing throughout these activities!

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# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Rules of the Trunk

Here are a few rules pertaining to the museum items within your trunk that you must be aware of before starting the class activities.

### Everything is Delicate

The museum spent more than \$2,000 during the summer of 2022 replacing broken and damaged items in our Education Trunks. Please treat them with kindness and respect, and teach students safe handling of all items.

### Sharp Items Included

There are knives, arrow points, and more (potentially) sharp items within this trunk. Each blade has been dulled, but can still be dangerous if handled carelessly. The teacher is responsible for deciding whether these items should be a “show only” item or if they can be handled by students.

### Do Not Try on the Clothes

The clothing in this trunk should be viewed (as with all the items) as educational artifacts, not as dress up toys. This means that under no circumstance, should the clothes be worn by students or adults.

### Don't Lose or Break Anything

The inventory of this trunk has been verified before you picked it up or before it was shipped to you. If something is broken or missing, please call the Curator of Education at 307-286-8627. Please ensure every item is returned in the same condition that you received it. The cost of any broken or damaged items will be the responsibility of the teacher, school, and/or school district who reserved the trunk.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk Inventory List – Clothing

Girl's Dress  
Girl's Bonnet  
Girl's Apron  
Boots

Information describing the immigrants' clothing can be found in the Clothing on the Oregon Trail section, on page 23.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Clothing

- Boy's Hat
- Boy's Vest
- Boy's Shirt
- Boy's Trousers

Information describing the immigrants' clothing can be found in the Clothing on the Oregon Trail section, on page 23.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Cookware

### Cast Iron Skillet

The cast iron skillet was used extensively on the immigrant trails to cook all kinds of food. And, since it was extremely durable, it could be placed directly on top of campfire flames.



### Tin Coffee Pot

The tin coffee pot was an essential item for immigrants because men, women, and children drank coffee (or sometimes tea) at almost every meal. The coffee pot was the first item to go on the fire and the last to come off. Families that drank coffee or tea were less likely to die from cholera and other diseases, because the water was boiled to make the drink.



### Wooden Spoon

Women on the trails used the wooden spoon to stir a variety of beans and stews, as they warmed on the fire. Women would try to get the longest spoon available so that they would not have to stand too close to the fire while stirring.





# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Cookware

### Tin Coffee Cup

The tin coffee cup was the cup of choice on the trails because it was less likely to break along the bumpy trail. The cups would get hot from holding tea and/or coffee, so some immigrants would quickly lick the rim of the cup and then take a drink before the wet spot dried. This would make sure they didn't burn their mouth on the hot metal cup.



### Tin Plate

Tin plates were another essential item on the trails. Across the 2,000 miles and 20 years of the Oregon and California Trails, millions of helpings of beans, bacon, and bread were served on plates like this one.



### Eating Utensils

Just like today, eating utensils were used on the trails. These are examples of eating utensils from the 1840s and 1850s.

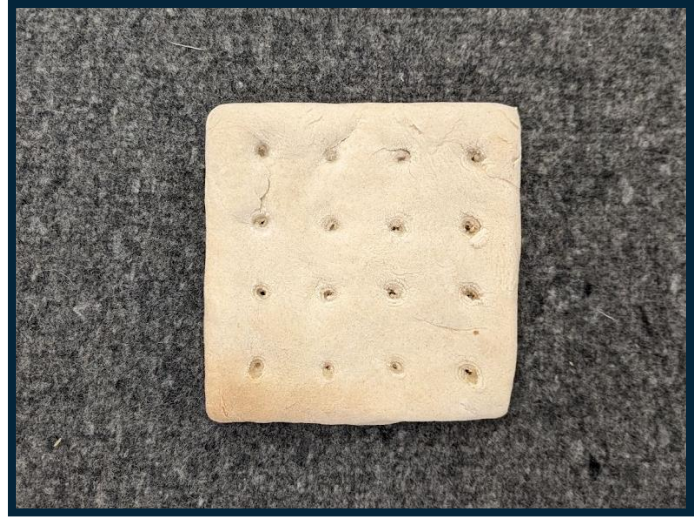


# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Cookware

### Hardtack

When it was too rainy or gross outside to cook or bake, the immigrants relied on hardtack. It was a much less appealing alternative to bread, made out of flour and water, and then cooked slowly to remove all moisture. Immigrants took a lot of hardtack with them on the trails. These hard cracker like food items tasted bland and was frequently dipped into coffee to soften it up.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk Inventory List – Animal Items

## Oxen Shoe

About 2/3 of immigrants chose oxen to pull their wagons. Oxen (trained cattle) were tougher than other livestock options and could survive on the grasses of the plains. They were also less likely to be stolen by Native Americans, were cheaper than other livestock options, and could even be eaten if times turned hard. Only some immigrants chose to shoe their oxen.



## Horse Shoe

Horses were unsuited to pull heavy wagons 12-15 miles a day for 5-6 months. But, immigrants did bring horses along to use while hunting and scouting. Additionally, about 1/3 of immigrants chose mules to pull their wagons. Feed had to be brought for all horses and mules.



## Spurs and Straps

Spurs were worn by men on their boot heels, held in place with leather spur straps. Each spur has a round pointy piece of metal called a rowel. Spurs were generally used to urge the horse on or signal the horse for quick action. Spurs were made of metal and could be plain or fancy. Spur Straps were made of leather and could also be plain or fancy.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Animal Items

### Branding Iron

Branding irons were placed into fires to get red-hot and then used to burn a symbol into the hide of calves. The brand indicated who owned each cow or oxen. This could help reduce theft of livestock while traveling west.



### Prairie Rattlesnake Skin

Wagon trains could reach up to 100 wagons long. This many people crossing a prairie were sure to stir up a rattlesnake or two. This is the skin of a prairie rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*), which is one of our 16 snake species in Wyoming. It grows 3-5 feet long and mainly eats ground squirrels, ground nesting birds, small rabbits, prairie dogs, mice, and rats.



### Grizzly Bear Claws (2)

As with the rattlesnake, other wild animals were a danger on the trail. Large ungulates like moose, elk, and bison could be a serious threat. Large predators, like grizzly bears, could also be dangerous. Today, bear attacks are rare. From 2000-2015, across all of North America, there were 183 brown bear attacks and 24 deaths. This is a grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) claw.

Grizzlies mainly use their claws for digging up roots, tubers, and bugs.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Bedroll Items

### Bison Pelt

The bison robe (another name for a full bison pelt) was an important part of an immigrant's bedroll. While most immigrants brought tents, families spent many nights sleeping out under the stars. Even though some immigrants brought feather mattresses, most of the travelers would spread a bison robe down on the ground and use it as their mattress.



### Quilt

Quilting was a necessary and popular folk art of the time. Immigrant women quilted around the campfire on the trail. Additionally, before leaving for the trail, the women would make quilts for every member of the family. Immigrants would cover up with these quilts while laying on their bison robes. They spent many cold nights under these warm hand-made works of art.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Trade Goods

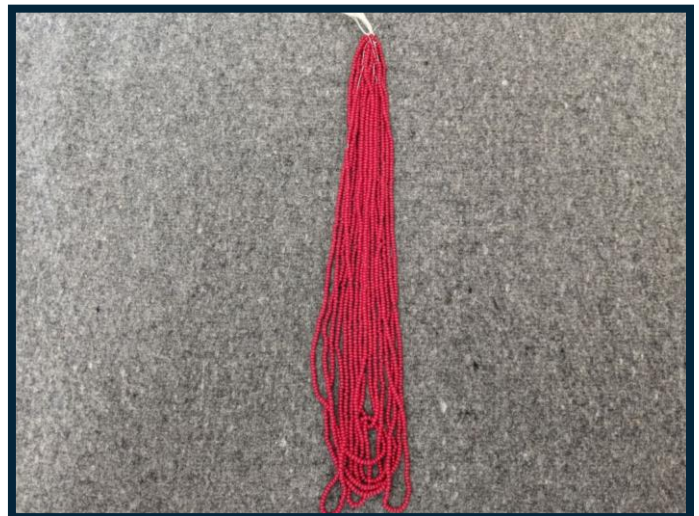
### Hawk Bells

Much like the mountain men, immigrants brought trade items along with them on the long trails. Hawk bells, like these, were prized by Native American people of the Great Plains. They added the bells to the clothes they used for ceremonies and dances.



### Seed Beads

There were numerous styles of glass beads used as trade items with the Native American tribes. Your trunk has seed beads, a type of small bead popular during the 1800s. Glass beads were popular among the tribes because they were colorful, easy to use, and easy to carry. Trade beads replaced beads made of bone, shell, copper, and stone.



### Metal Arrow Points

While Native Americans (during this time period) made points (like arrowheads) out of stone and bone, they did not make anything out of metal. Therefore, steel points were a widely sought after trade item. The people of the plains substituted the more efficient steel points for the historically crafted points for their arrows. This allowed them more free time, instead of spending time crafting their own points.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Trade Goods

### Trade Cloth

Another popular trade item of the time was trade cloth. Trade cloth could be cotton (often calico) or wool. Wool trade cloth was often traded in the form of blankets. Much like metal and glass, fabric was a material that the Native Americans of the Great Plains could not make during this time period.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Gun Items

### Revolver Holster

Leather holsters were secured to the waist with a leather belt. The holster was used to carry a revolver and provided quick access to the it in times of need.



### Powder Horn

Animal horns (unlike antlers) are naturally hollow. Therefore the horns of cows and bison could be used to create these containers to store gun powder. Gun powder was a vital ingredient for firing guns of this time period. So, immigrants would carry these powder horns with them on the trails.



### Metal Bullet

Before modern ammunition, guns were loaded with gun powder and lead balls separately. These are examples of the round bullets that would have been used by people on the immigrant trails.





# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Toys and Pastimes

### Rag Doll

No pieces of fabric were wasted by the immigrant women. Fabric scraps that were too small for clothing could be used for quilts or rag dolls, like this one. Many young girls walked the trails with their parents, carrying their favorite little doll.



### Jaw Harp

The jaw harp, also known as a mouth fiddle, was used as a musical instrument and was often accompanied by singing in the evenings. The first archaeological evidence of a jaw harp dates back to more than 3,000 years ago! But it was still very popular during the mid 1800s.



### Jacks

This toy was popular among boys and girls on the immigrant trails. The first jacks were made of clay and were easy to break. The small size of the toy made it a good choice for trail travel.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Toys and Pastimes

### Playing Cards

Spending up to six months on the trail meant that the immigrants had to fight boredom on many a night. Many different card games were known and played during free time in the evenings.



### Wooden Top

This type of wooded top was a very popular toy at the time. Its small size (like the jacks) and durability made it perfect for trail travel. The string would have been wound around the top and pulled to spin it.

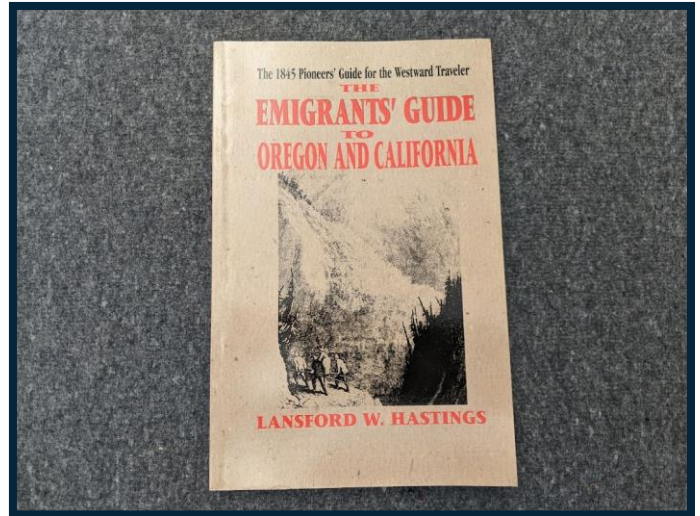


# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Household Items

### Guidebook

Many guidebooks were published to help immigrants prepare for the arduous journey to the West. This book was one of the museum's sources for our "Pack Your Wagon" activity, and was also what we based our little guidebook on. Feel free to compare our guidebook to this original. This was also the book used by the ill-fated Donner Party.



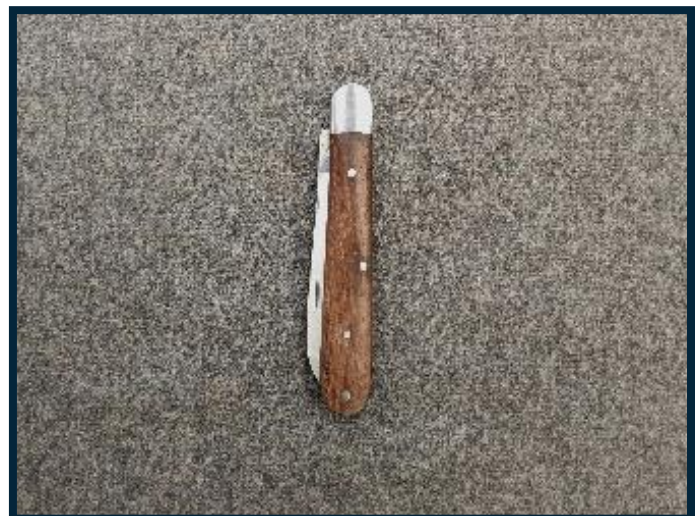
### Compass

The compass was an important tool for immigrants traveling west. It ensured they could find the landmarks that would guide them to their final destination.



### Pocketknife

Based on cultural norms at the time, men and boys frequently carried a pocketknife with them along the trails. This allowed for quick access to a knife, as they needed it.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Household Items

### Candle Lantern

The candle lantern was a very popular item on the trails. This candle lantern is made of tin with glass panes. These lanterns were used instead of kerosene lanterns because kerosene was too heavy and combustible to take on the bumpy trail.



### Candles

Candles have been used as a light source for many centuries. People generally made their own candles through the processes of dipping, rolling, or molding. The immigrants often placed candles into lanterns they brought with them.



### Washboard

Women did most of the clothes washing along the immigrants trails. Young women took the family's clothing to nearby water sources and used lye soap and a washboard to clean them. Clothes had to be well made so that they would not be destroyed on the rough washboard.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Inventory List – Household Items

### Lye Soap

Lye soap was an essential supply for the long journey west. Soap was used to clean clothing, dishes, and the immigrants' bodies – although immigrants took very few baths on the trail.



### Steel Striker

The flint (also called flintstone) and steel striker were used to start fires much the same way that we use matches today. A piece of flintstone would be struck on the steel striker to produce a spark. The spark could be “captured” on char cloth placed into tinder in order to start a flame.



### Flint

The flint (also called flintstone) and steel striker were used to start fires much the same way that we use matches today. A piece of flintstone would be struck on the steel striker to produce a spark. The spark could be “captured” on char cloth placed into tinder in order to start a flame.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Clothing on the Oregon Trail

### Acknowledgement

The following information comes from a 1977 master student thesis, written by Maria Barbara McMartin at Iowa State University. McMartin researched this topic and crafted a very well-written study on immigrant clothing along the trails.

The information that the Wyoming State Museum has paraphrased below, and all drawings included, are from that study. The full study can be found within this trunk as well, if you are curious. The Wyoming State Museum thanks Maria Barbara McMartin and Iowa State University for researching, writing, and supplying this information to the public.

### How were clothes made?

The first sewing machines were patented in 1846 but were not a part of most households until the 1860s. Due to this, clothing (especially women's) was almost exclusively homemade by women or made by professional seamstresses. The general store was not a location to buy women's clothing until after 1910... well after the Oregon Trail. Men's wear was either sewn at home, professionally tailored, or purchased ready-made from stores.

Because commercial patterns were not introduced until the 1860s, women made their own garment patterns by taking apart old garments and using the pieces as patterns for new items. Consequently, there was little variation in the style of clothing. The fabric used in the immigrant's clothing (1840s – 1850s) was mostly manufactured in the United States. Popular fabrics included cotton calicoes, osnaburg (natural-colored, thicker fabric), denim, wool, and linen.

By the 1840s, textile mills in the Eastern United States produced calico printed cotton cloth. This popular, inexpensive, white cotton fabric was machine printed with an all-over pattern that came a variety of colors and designs. Popular patterns in the 1840s and 1850s were vertical stripes mixed with floral patterns, all-over small geometrics, mazes of tiny flowers and leaves, plaids, and solid colors too. Drab colors were popular at this time and included blue, dark green, tan, dull gold, brown, purple, red, and black.

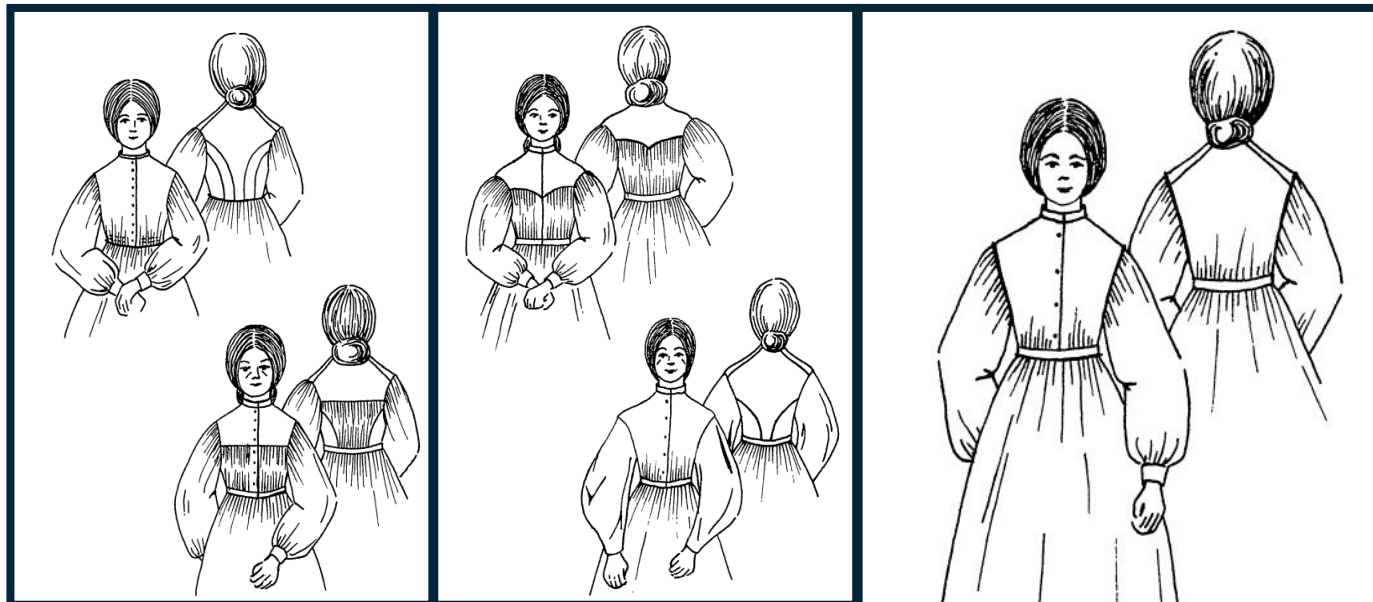
The pioneer women wasted neither fabric nor old garments; all fabric was literally "used up." Patterns were arranged on the fabric with little or no regard to the grain, and if the pattern still did not fit onto the fabric, sections were pieced. Scraps remaining after cutting out a dress were used for children's garments, for lining outfits, for mending, in pieced quilts, or sometimes for rag dolls. Dry good stores sold fasteners such as hooks and eyes, buttons, belt buckles, laces, trims, and braids.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Clothing on the Oregon Trail

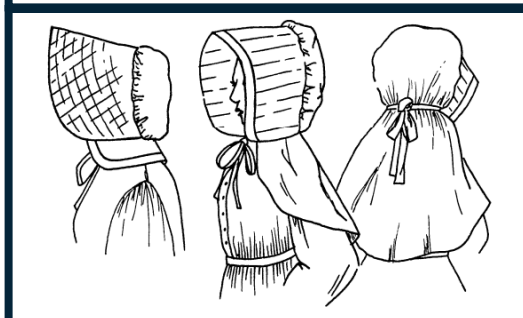
### Women's Clothing

During most of the trip, women wore everyday dresses made of calico, a type of cotton print with an all-over printed design (see the previous page). The typical dress of the 1840s and 1850s featured narrow collar band and a fitted bodice with shoulder seam set back and slanting down from the neck to the armhole. Full sleeves gathered to the dress and to a narrow band at the wrist. A full, long pleated skirt attached to the bodice.



The apron was an essential part of a woman's daily wear, fulfilling several purposes. It protected her dress from dirt, ash, and grease while preparing food; it preserved the appearance of the dress during everyday use; and it was used to carry items like wood and bison chips. Apron styles were functional rather than decorative, and usually made of calico remnants or an inexpensive white sheeting fabric.

Women and girls of all ages wore sunbonnets while outdoors. Bonnets had three different sections, the brim, crown, and apron. The brim extended forward from the crown section and framed the face to protect the complexion and eyes from the sun, dust, and wind. The crown covered the back of the head and was either a separate piece or part of the apron. The apron fell from the bottom of the brim, varying in length from about 3-12 inches. The apron of the bonnet protected the women's long hair. Ties fastened the bonnet under the chin. Small wooden or cardboard slats were inserted in the cases between the bonnet brim and the lining to stiffen the fabric. Gloves were also worn to keep the women's hands from burning or chapping in the sun and wind. Shawls, mittens, hats, and warm cloaks were worn in the cold.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Clothing on the Oregon Trail

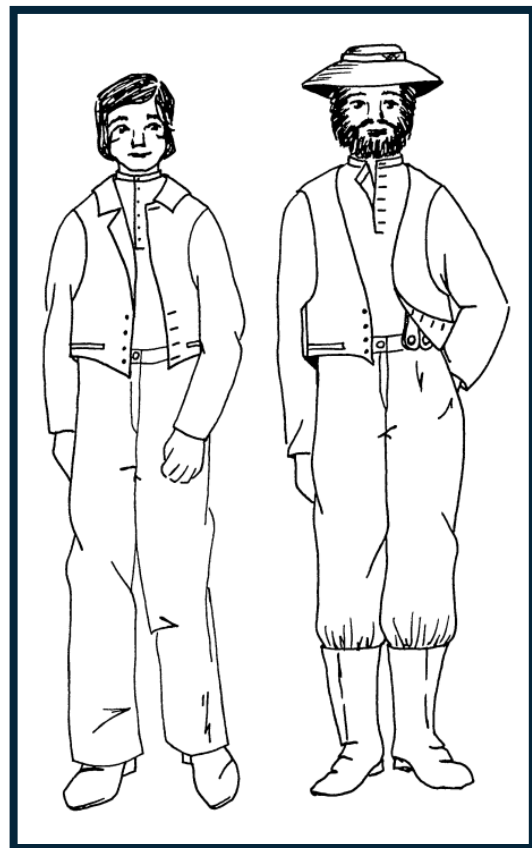
### Men's Clothing

Men usually wore pants, vests, and coats. Pants were called pantaloons or breeches during the 1840s and 1850s. They were made from cotton, denim, or wool. Some features of these pants included: a fly opening at the center front, a yoke at the back waistline which could be tightened by adjusting a buckle, buttons to attach suspenders, a very baggy crotch area, semi-fitted pant legs, and deep side pockets. Suspenders or belts were used to hold them up.

Shirts were made of cotton calicoes, linen, or flannel fabric. Their features included a narrow neck band, partial front placket opening with buttons, dropped shoulders, and gussets under the arms. Men worked in shirts and put on vests and coats in the evenings or when the temperature was low.

Vests were worn over shirts, either alone or topped with jackets. Special features found in vests of this period included a pointed center front extending one to two inches below the natural waistline, shallow front pockets, deep armholes, and a convertible or roll-type collar. The vest fastened at the front with four to five small buttons, and a back buckle adjusted the circumference of the vest. The front of the vest was cut from one fabric and the back from another fabric, such as a printed calico. The vest was completely lined and featured pockets of a variety of sizes and shapes. Trail diaries frequently mentioned that coats were worn when the weather got damp and cold. Heavy overcoats were donned when the weather was particularly cold, since they were lined to provide warmth.

Hats and boots were worn on the long trek west. The trail was very hard on boots and shoes. Many immigrants (men, women, and children) found themselves without shoes after theirs had completely deteriorated. Many journals of the travelers tell of immigrants having to walk barefoot along the long, difficult journey. Native Americans often clustered around forts and sold moccasins to the immigrants. Trading forts also sold boots to the travelers. If all else failed, immigrants simply wrapped their feet with scraps of fabric in order to give themselves some protection.





# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Clothing on the Oregon Trail

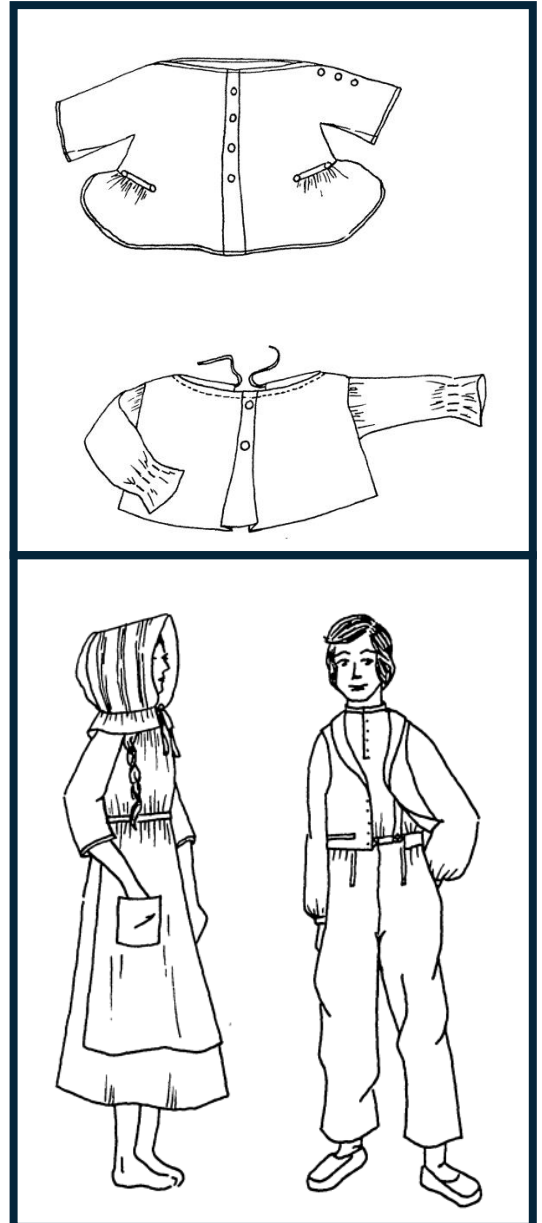
### Children's Clothing

Children's clothing of the 1840s and 1850s, more often than not, was incredibly similar in style to adult's clothing, but probably simpler in design and construction. Most infants' clothing was remade from the "good parts" of worn out adult clothing or pieces left over after cutting out adult garments. Infants' shirts were often constructed from a variety of calico prints, all used together on the same garment.

Children's clothing was very simple with pleats and tucks that could be let out to prolong the garment life for a growing child. Drawstrings at the neck or several buttons were usually the only means of fastening the clothing. Children's clothing was also usually made from leftovers.

With their dresses, girls also wore aprons and sunbonnets. Mothers were often particular about their girls wearing sunbonnets and long mitts while traveling in order to protect their complexions, hair, and hands. Girls' bonnets were constructed similarly to those made for adult women.

Boys' clothing emulated those worn by older men; their outfits consisted of pantaloons and shirts. They did wear vests and coats but only when necessary. Shirts, vests, and jackets were styled after the men's clothing. Pants, pantaloons, or breeches were constructed with either a front flap that buttoned on either side (an older style) or with the newer method of a fly front opening (like the man's pants). They, too, were held up by suspenders or a belt.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Clothing on the Oregon Trail

### The Trail's Effect on Immigrant Clothing

For each immigrant, the amount of clothes they had (and the condition of this clothing) changed radically from the time they crossed the Missouri River, traveled some 2,000 miles, and reached their final destination in Oregon. At the onset of their journey, people wore "presentable" everyday clothes. Garments might not have been all new, but they were at least clean and mended with shoes that were in good walking condition. By the end, most immigrants arrived in Oregon looking tattered and torn.

Traveling clothes were subjected to unusually harsh treatment, simply because the migration took from five to six months. Immigrants began the journey with a limited amount of clothes. Daily chores such as hauling wood, gathering bison chips, riding horses, or even walking all wore out the clothing of the immigrants. Other clothes were disposed of to lighten the load of the wagons, or were lost or stolen.

During the long migration, immigrants experienced several changes of seasons and lived through a variety of weather, from freezing cold to blistering heat. When the cold set in, families wrapped themselves up in cloaks, overcoats, hats and mittens, quilts, bedding, or anything that would keep them warm. In summer months, immigrants covered their bodies to protect their skin from the rays of the sun but sometimes traveled in short sleeves.

Water in many forms, or the lack of it, affected the clothing of the immigrant. Early in the trip, especially in June, severe thunder, lightning, rain, and hail storms caught the immigrants off guard, soaking them and all of their belongings. Clothing also got a good soaking when rivers were forded or floated. Usually the wagons crossed a river without overturning, but there was no guarantee that they would make it across without some water damage. Whether from rain or river water, possessions often got wet. They then had to be unpacked, and sometimes took several days to dry out. The Immigrants could not afford the time to stop and dry things, so they resumed their travel with possessions still damp... causing mold and mildew to grow.

Another enemy of the immigrant was the dust that rolled across the plains or was kicked up by churning wagon wheels and plodding animal hoofs. Dirt was embedded in everyone's clothing, and it was difficult to remove because of poor laundry conditions.

Additionally, the vegetation along the trail caused lots of wear and tear, particularly on dresses and pants. To combat this problem, some women walked along the trail with their dresses hiked up to their knees. Men often tucked their pantaloons into their boots.

Care of clothing, including washing, mending, or completely replacing, was one of the many time consuming chores on the trails.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Curriculum Overview

The Wyoming State Museum is extremely excited for you to try out this exciting Oregon Trail curriculum. This overview tells you what to expect within each section of the curriculum. The following pages will dive deeper into each activity. Most of these sections can even be completed before you receive the trunk or after you send it back.

- **Section 1: The Five Big Questions of the Oregon Trail**  
This section consists of a video, produced by the Wyoming State Museum, that teaches students the five big questions of the Oregon Trail. Afterwards, your students will complete a crossword puzzle to reinforce the information from the video.
- **Section 2: Why Would You Travel the Trails?**  
This section puts students in the shoes of an immigrant traveling west. They will pick one of the nine main reasons why immigrants traveled west (discussed in the “Five Big Questions” video) and write an opinion piece about why they (personally) would take this dangerous journey.
- **Section 3: Exploring History Through Artifacts**  
This section allows students to get hands-on with one artifact from the education trunk. They will do small group work, handle artifacts, draw pictures, and use critical thinking to hypothesize about what their artifact was used for.
- **Section 4: Reading an Oregon Trail Guidebook**  
In this section, students will read a guidebook telling them what to pack on their journey to Oregon. This guidebook was written by compiling the advice of three original sources from the 1840s. Students will also fill out a vocabulary sheet to learn some of the more unique words included within the guide.
- **Section 5: Packing Your Wagon**  
To prepare for their journey, your students will work in small groups to pack everything they’ll need for the long trip west. First, they will watch a short video from the museum to give them tips and hints for packing their wagons. Then, they’ll go through the general store to decide what they’re bringing with them. They’ll use mathematics to fill out their worksheet.
- **Section 6: Field Trip and Game with the Wyoming State Museum**  
Now that your students have packed their wagons, we’re ready to head west! The museum has created a very special field trip to accompany this education trunk. Your students will play a live action version of the Oregon Trail video game. We will see many of the important landmarks along the trail, talk about how the immigrants lived on their journey, and discuss the dangers of the trail. Your students will also see amazing historical artifacts from this time period. How well your students packed their wagons will influence whether they survive this deadly expedition.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## The Five Big Questions

### Section 1: The Five Big Questions of the Oregon Trail

This section consists of a video, produced by the Wyoming State Museum, that teaches students the five big questions of the Oregon Trail, California Trail, and Mormon Trail. They'll learn about **what** the trails were, **where** the trails took the immigrants, **when** the trails were utilized, **why** the immigrants risked their lives on such a dangerous journey, and **who** used the trails. Afterwards, your students will complete a crossword puzzle to reinforce the information from the video.

This activity can be completed before you receive the trunk in your classroom.

- Activity 1: “*The Five Big Questions of the Oregon Trail*” Video

Students will watch a video to learn about the five big questions of the Oregon Trail. This video will walk your students through some basic information about the Oregon Trail before they learn about the topic more in depth. This video is available from the Wyoming State Museum website, on any of the “Oregon Trail” pages.

- Activity 2: Crossword Puzzle

Students will complete a crossword puzzle to reinforce what they learned in the video. This crossword puzzle can be downloaded from the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopied from the “Student Handouts” section of this book.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Why Would You Travel West

### Section 2: Why Would You Travel West?

This section puts students in the shoes of an immigrant traveling west. They will pick one of the nine main reasons why immigrants traveled west (discussed in the “Five Big Questions” video) and write an opinion piece about why they (personally) would take this dangerous journey.

**This activity can be completed before you receive the trunk in your classroom.**

- Activity 1: “Why Would You Travel West” Writing Prompt Worksheet

Give each student a copy of the writing prompt worksheet. They will read the information on the front of the worksheet, then write about why they would have journeyed west, if they lived during the Oregon Trail time period. You can print this document from any “Oregon Trail” page of the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopy it from the “Student Worksheets” section of this book.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Exploring History through Artifacts

### Section 3: Exploring History through Artifacts

This section allows students to get hands-on with one artifact from the education trunk. They will do small group work, handle artifacts, draw pictures, and use critical thinking to hypothesize about what their artifact was used for.

### This activity requires the trunk to be in your classroom.

- Activity 1: “Exploring History through Artifacts” Worksheet

Place students in small groups and give each student a copy of the worksheet. You can print this document from any “Oregon Trail” page of the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopy it from the “Student Worksheets” section of this book. Then, give each group one artifact from the trunk. Make sure you pick a fun, unusual, or interesting artifact. They will then use their worksheet to answer questions, discuss with their partners, draw pictures, and think about this time period.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## An Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California

### Section 4: Reading an Oregon Trail Guidebook

In this section, students will read a guidebook telling what to pack on their journey to Oregon. This guidebook was written by compiling the advice of three original sources from the 1840s. The main source for this guidebook was “The Emigrants’ Guide to Oregon and California” written by Lansford W. Hastings, published in 1845. The guidebook included in this trunk is very similar to Hastings’ guide (word for word in many places). The museum simply edited the sentence structure and vocabulary to make it easier for modern 4<sup>th</sup> graders.

Your students will read this guidebook and fill out a vocabulary sheet to learn some of the more unique words from the guide. The information found within this guidebook will be vital to correctly packing their wagon in the next activity.

There is a copy of the original 1845 guidebook in the education trunk as well, if you are curious about it. One interesting note is that the original guidebook recommended the perilous “Hastings’ Cutoff.” This dangerous pass was the downfall of the ill-fated Donner Party.

### This activity can be completed before you receive the trunk in your classroom.

- Activity 1: “An Emigrants’ Guide to Oregon and California” Guidebook

Give each student a copy of the student guidebook. They will read the guidebook and learn about what immigrants took with them on their dangerous journey to the West. You can print the student guidebook from any “Oregon Trail” page of the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopy it from the “Student Worksheets” section of this book.

- Activity 2: “An Emigrants’ Guide to Oregon and California” Vocabulary Worksheet

Students will use computers, tablets, dictionaries, or other resources in the classroom to define vocabulary terms. You can give the worksheet to your students to fill out before they read the student guidebook or give it to them to fill out as they’re reading the guidebook. You can print this document from any “Oregon Trail” page of the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopy it from the “Student Worksheets” section of this book.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Packing Your Wagon

### Section 5: Packing Your Wagon

To prepare for their journey, your students will work in small groups to pack everything they'll need for the long trip west. First, they will watch a short video from the museum to give them tips and hints for packing their wagons. Then, they'll go through the general store to decide what they're bringing with them. They'll use mathematics to fill out their worksheet.

This activity can be completed before you receive the trunk in your classroom.

- Activity 1: “Packing Your Wagon” Video

Students will watch a video to learn about how immigrants on the Oregon Trail packed their wagons. Students will learn about the type of wagon used, what animals immigrants brought along, and more. Then, they'll learn a few tips and tricks to help with the Packing Your Wagon activity. This includes tips like “Don't pack more than 2,500 pounds,” and “Really pay attention to how much food the guide tells you to bring.” It will help them to not make the most common mistakes that could end up killing them in the game. This video is available from the Wyoming State Museum website, on any of the “Oregon Trail” pages.

- Activity 2: “Packing Your Wagon” Group Activity

This activity may take a little time, **but it is required** before your students have their field trip and play the live action Oregon Trail game with the museum.

Put your students into groups of four or less; you may **NOT** have any groups of five. All groups larger than four will not be able to pack enough food and will starve when we play the game. If you have groups of three or two, have them create imaginary friends to bring their total number of immigrants up to four.

Give each group one of the “Packing Your Wagon” worksheets and one of the “General Store” card boxes. Each student will need their copy of their guidebook too. The “General Store” cards show every item that is available at the general store in Independence, Missouri. The cards also tell students some great information about the item, and list how much it weighs.

Your students should use their guidebooks to decide what to bring with them. They may take as many copies of each item as they want, but they may not go over 2,500 pounds. The worksheet is where they'll put the names of each immigrant in their wagon. They'll also list each item they are bringing with them, and add up their total weight.

There are ten copies of the “General Store” cards in the education trunk. You can print a digital copy of the cards (and print the worksheet) from any “Oregon Trail” page of the Wyoming State Museum website or photocopy them from the “Student Worksheets” section of this book.



# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Travel the Oregon Trail Field Trip and Game

### Section 6: Travel the Oregon Trail Field Trip and Game

Now that your students have packed their wagons, we're ready to head west! The museum has created a very special field trip to accompany this education trunk. Your students will play a live action version of the Oregon Trail video game. We will see many of the important landmarks along the trail, talk about how the immigrants lived on their journey, and discuss the dangers of the trail. Your students will also see amazing historical artifacts from this time period. How well your students packed their wagons will influence whether they survive this deadly expedition.

### You can book your field trip before you receive the trunk in your classroom.

- Activity 1: "Travel the Oregon Trail" Field Trip and Game

First, book a field trip with the museum to play the game. You can either bring your students to the museum for an on-grounds field trip or book a virtual field trip. The on-grounds field trip will take a total of two hours (one and a half hours for the game and thirty minutes of museum exploration). If you prefer a virtual field trip, we will break the journey up into two sessions, each one hour. You can request this field trip from the same link you used to request this trunk. The link is available on the Wyoming State Museum website.

Regardless of which type of field trip you book, the museum staff will take your students through a fun, high-paced, and educational trip along the Oregon Trail. We'll roll dice to see which wagons/immigrants are affected by certain dangers, their supplies will help them survive, and we'll lose at least a few students to cholera and bears. But, we promise a very fun experience for all!

- Activity 2: Going Through the Trunk Artifacts

If you schedule a virtual field trip to coincide with when you have the education trunk in your classroom, we recommend not going through the items until we play the game. Many of the included items will be shown and discussed as we go along our journey. You'll be able to get the items out and pass them around while the museum staff member discusses them.

If you schedule a virtual field trip for a date when you don't have the education trunk, we recommend you go through the items with your students while you have the education trunk in your classroom. The inventory list will tell you about each item, so you can discuss it. But, rest assured, we'll go through most of the items in more detail as we play the game.

If you schedule an on-grounds field trip, we also recommend you go through the items with your students while you have the education trunk in your classroom. The inventory list will tell you about each item, so you can discuss it. As mentioned above, we'll go through most of the items in more detail as we play the game.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## The “Five Big Questions” Crossword Puzzle

Before we learn all about what it was like to travel the Oregon Trail and other historic trails, it’s important to answer the “five big questions” about the trails.

What was the Oregon Trail?

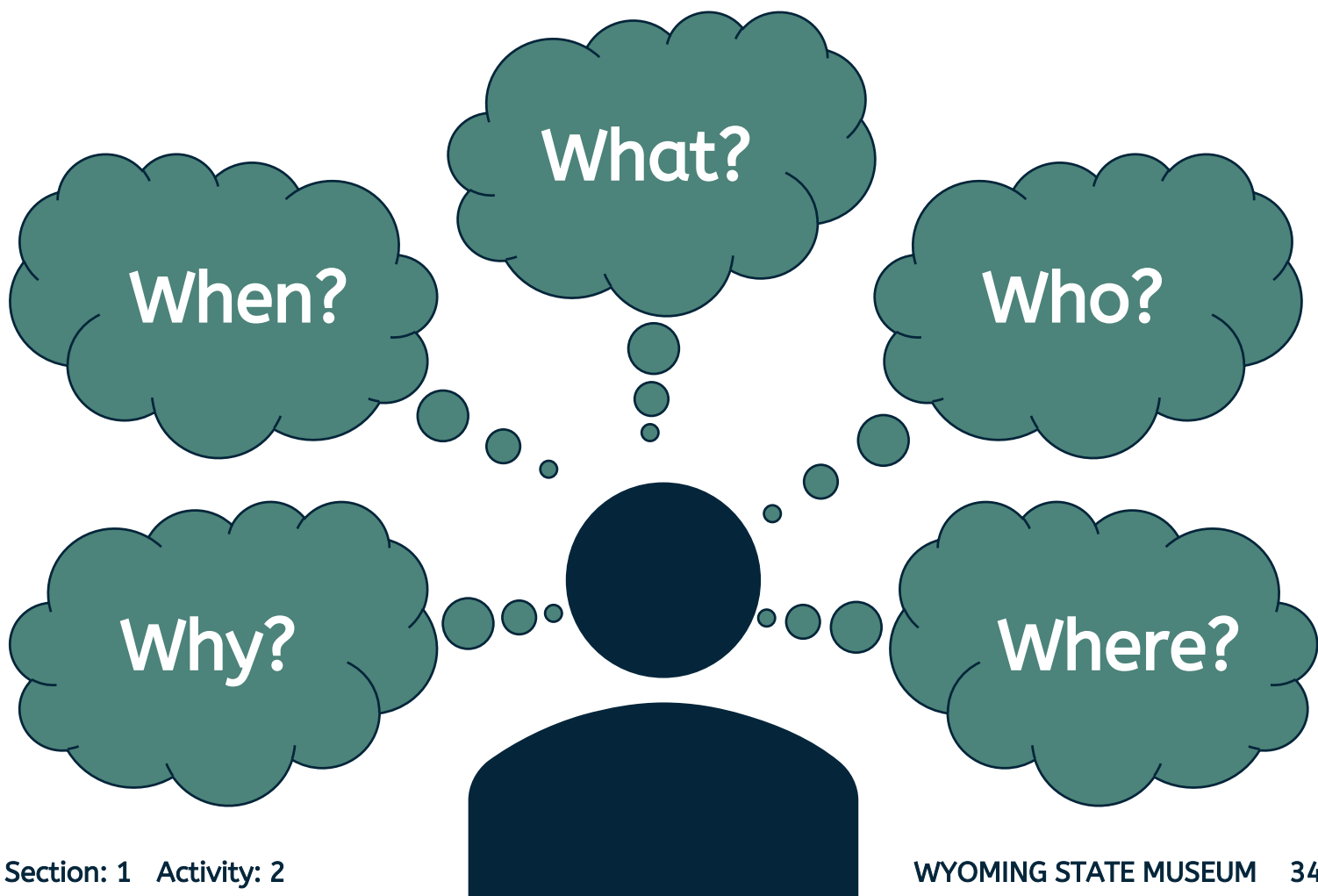
Where did the Oregon Trail and other historic trails go?

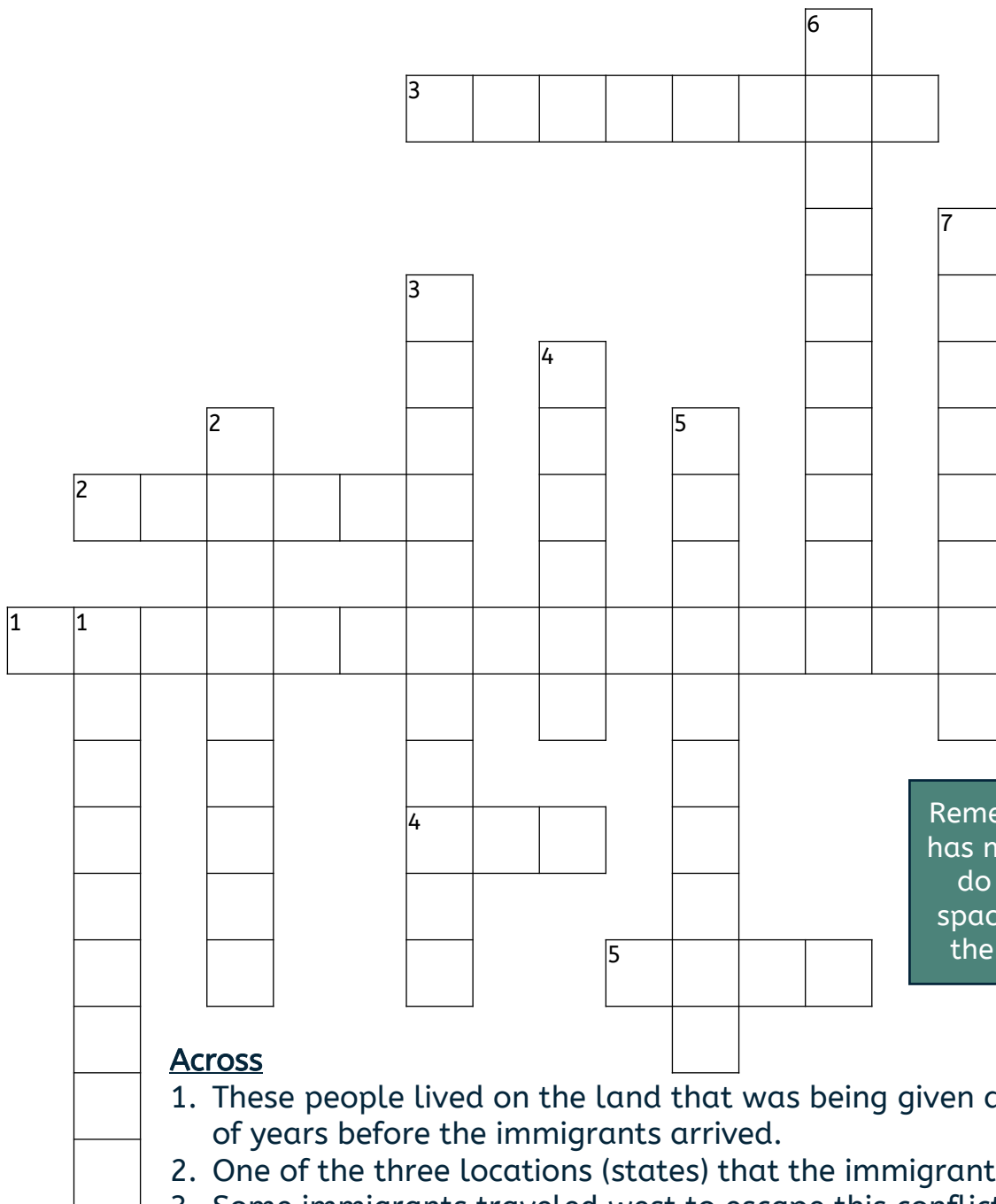
When did immigrants travel the Oregon Trail?

Why did they travel the trails?

Who were these immigrants that risked their lives on this journey?

Your teacher will play you a video to learn more about these five big questions. Afterwards, use the knowledge you gained to complete the crossword puzzle on the back of this page. If the answer has more than one word, do not leave a blank space between them on the crossword puzzle.





Remember, if the answer has more than one word, do not leave a blank space between them on the crossword puzzle.

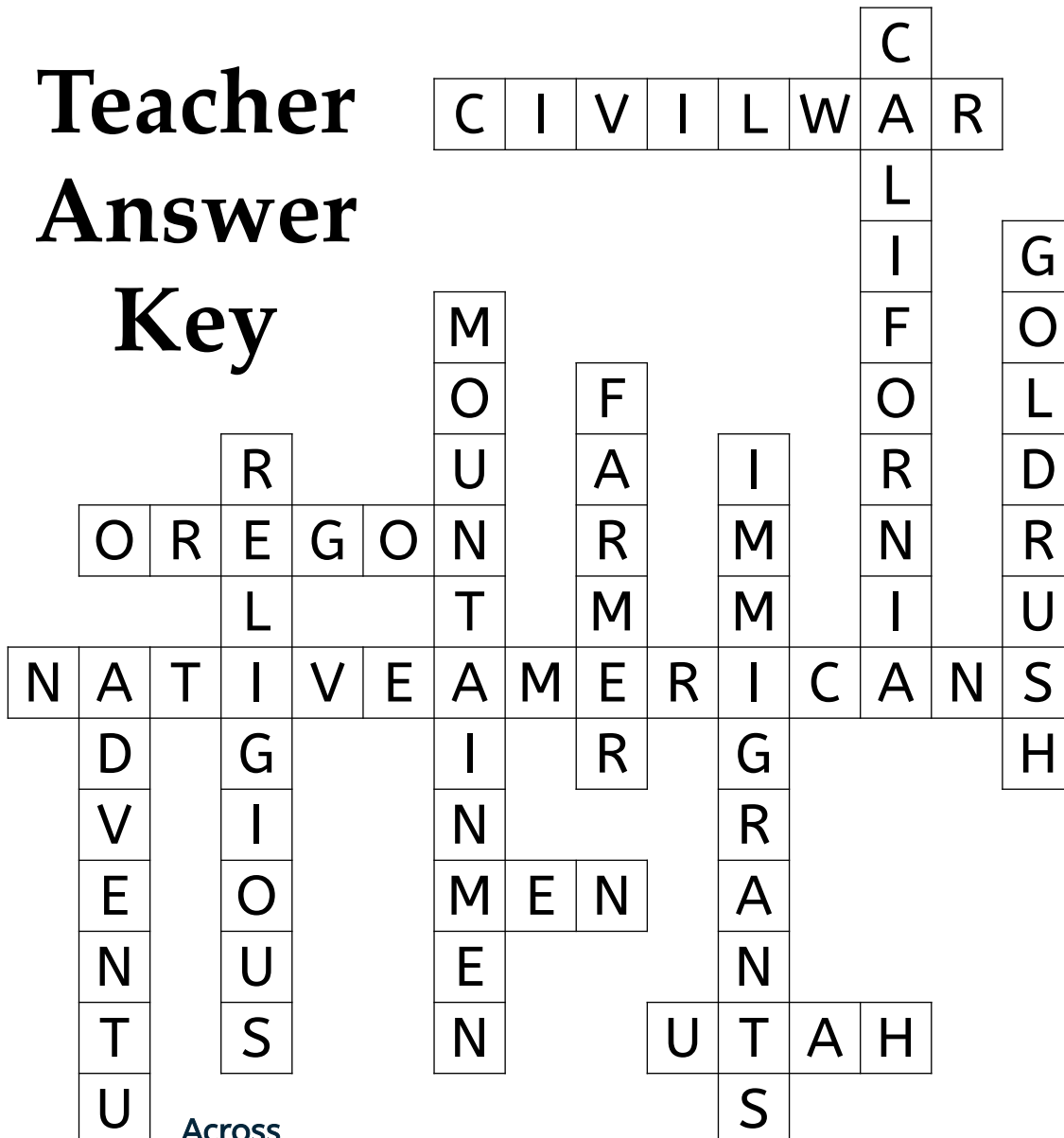
**Across**

1. These people lived on the land that was being given away for thousands of years before the immigrants arrived.
2. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.
3. Some immigrants traveled west to escape this conflict, which would soon affect most of the country.
4. Land out west was only given to this people of this gender.
5. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.

**Down**

1. Some young men traveled west to find \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Many Mormon immigrants traveled west to find \_\_\_\_\_ freedom.
3. These people learned the routes to the West while trapping beavers in the early 1800s.
4. Many immigrants traveled to Oregon to become a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The people who traveled west in search of a new life were called this.
6. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.
7. This was the main reason that immigrants traveled to California.

# Teacher Answer Key



## Across

1. These people lived on the land that was being given away for thousands of years before the immigrants arrived.
2. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.
3. Some immigrants traveled west to escape this conflict, which would soon affect most of the country.
4. Land out west was only given to people of this gender.
5. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.

## Down

1. Some young men traveled west to find \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Many Mormon immigrants traveled west to find \_\_\_\_\_ freedom.
3. These people learned the routes to the West while trapping beavers in the early 1800s.
4. Many immigrants traveled to Oregon to become a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The people who traveled west in search of a new life were called this.
6. One of the three locations (states) that the immigrants traveled to.
7. This was the main reason that immigrants traveled to California.

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Why Would You Travel West

About 300,000 immigrants traveled the Oregon Trail, California Trail, and Mormon Trail from 1840-1860. They faced a difficult and dangerous journey; many of them would die before they ever saw the west.

The ones that survived would have to walk 15 miles a day for up to six months. They ate the same food over and over again, every day. They slept outside during rainstorms, blizzards, and all other dangerous weather. The journey was long, treacherous, and miserable. Most of them would never see the friends and family members they left behind, ever again.



The immigrants chose to face these dangers for many different reasons. Below are the main reasons we discussed in the “Five Big Questions” video. Choose a reason that would cause you to brave this arduous (difficult) trip. Write a short explanation of why you would risk the journey to either Oregon, California, or Utah.

### Why Immigrants Traveled West

To Farm the Fertile Land

To Find Adventure

To Find Gold

To Become Merchants

To Find Religious Freedom

To Secure the Oregon Territory

To Escape Debt

To Perform Missionary Service

To Escape the Civil War









# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Exploring History through Artifacts

### Definition of Artifact:

An object that was made or used by humans, and is of cultural or historical interest.

### Description of the Artifact:

1. What material(s) is the artifact made from?

- |                                  |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bone    | <input type="checkbox"/> Stone   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pottery | <input type="checkbox"/> Leather | <input type="checkbox"/> Fabric         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metal   | <input type="checkbox"/> Glass   | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood    | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Material |

2. Measure the artifact. What is its length, width, and height?

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3. Describe how the artifact looks and feels. For example: What is its shape? What does its texture feel like? What color is it? What does it smell like? How heavy does it feel? Does it have any moving parts? What else is interesting about the artifact?

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# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Exploring History through Artifacts

4. Is there anything written, printed, or stamped on the artifact?

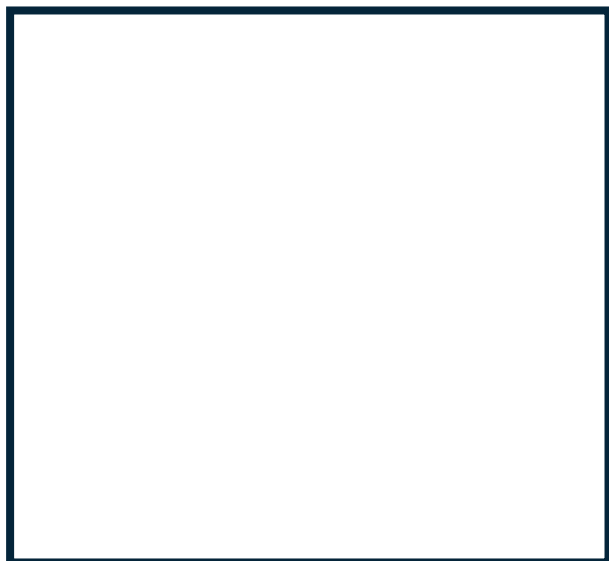
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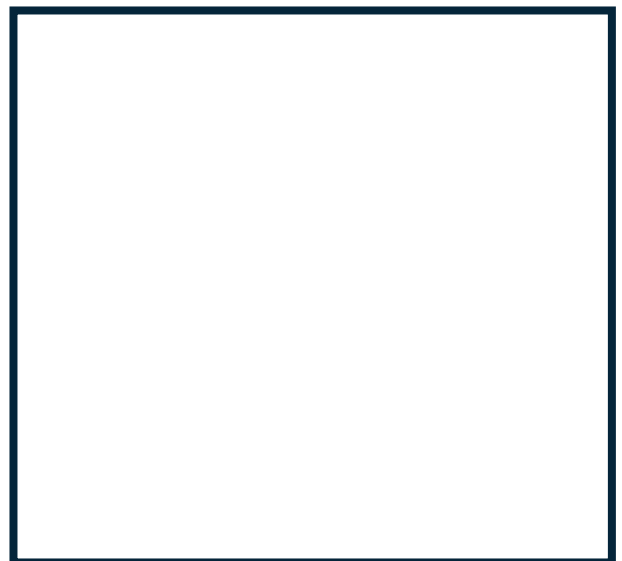
5. Draw and color three pictures of the artifact, one picture for the top, one for the bottom, and one for a side.



Picture of Top of Artifact



Picture of Bottom of Artifact



Picture of Side of Artifact

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Exploring History through Artifacts

### Uses of the Artifact:

1. How do you think the artifact was used?

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2. Who do you think might have used the artifact?

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3. When do you think the artifact was used?

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4. Can you name a similar item that is used today?

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# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Exploring History through Artifacts

5. What does the artifact tell you about technology at this point in time?

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6. What does the artifact tell you about the lives of the people who made or used it?

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7. What are some questions you have about the artifact or things you want to learn about it?

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# An Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California



1

This guide was written through analyzing multiple references, published from 1840-1860. This included:

“The Emigrants’ Guide to Oregon and California”  
Lansford W. Hastings - 1845

“Palmer's Journal of Travels Over the Rocky Mountains”  
Joel Palmer - 1847

St. Joseph, Missouri Gazette  
Article on March 19, 1847

2

## Welcome

This guide is designed to prepare a traveler for the great trip to the West. Being equipped and supplied, as it is suggested here, the emigrant may set out upon this wild and interesting excursion. They will not suffer toil, hardship, or eminent danger. They will enjoy many extraordinary and pleasing scenes, and safely arrive at their desired destination.

3

## Weapons

Each wagon should be equipped with a good rifle, at least 5 pounds of gunpowder, and at least 20 pounds of lead shot. If revolvers can be afforded, they are also a fine addition to an emigrant's supplies. However, they should not be considered indispensable.



4

## Wagons

Good and substantial wagons should always be selected. However firm and staunch they may appear, they should be examined and repaired before leaving the States. Otherwise, the emigrant may set out with what they believe is a good wagon, only to be stranded after a few hundred miles when the wagon's defects have become obvious.

5

One of the most important rules of the trail is to limit weight as much as possible. The prairie schooner recommended by this guide should never be loaded with more than 2,500 pounds. Leaving Independence with a wagon that is overloaded or has hidden mechanical problems will inevitably end with a stranded wagon party who must rely on the kindness of friends or be left behind to perish.

6

## Livestock

The horse is preferable for the saddle. But no horse can be used daily, whether in saddle or wagon harness, throughout the entire trip. Therefore, they are not feasible for use as a wagon team. Mules are preferred to horses, when it comes to wagon teams. But, their extreme slowness, stubborn intractability, and tendency to suffer from fatigue make them an unwise choice.

7

Oxen are the preferred beast for this kind of expedition. Oxen endure the fatigue and heat much better than either horses or mules. They also subsist much better on vegetation alone, and require no additional feed. Each wagon should have four yoke of good oxen, and two good milk cows. Milk is a great luxury on the road.



8

## Food

It is imperative to pack enough food to survive the journey to the West. The list below shows the food that is needed for each traveler.

200 pounds of flour  
100 pounds of bacon  
30 pounds of beans  
30 pounds of hardtack  
20 pounds of sugar  
12 pounds of dried fruit  
10 pounds of coffee  
10 pounds of rice

9

In addition, each wagon party should bring at least 30 pounds of salt, an ample supply of vinegar, 150 pounds of lard, 25 pounds of corn meal, and a small amount of tea and saleratus. Other food items should be avoided, as they provide little value versus the weight they add to the wagon.



10

## Wild Game

While wild game, such as bison, may be hunted along the way, emigrants should not rely on this while planning. Additionally, with each passing year, the great herds shrink ever smaller. Many a traveler has starved to death along the trail due to poor planning in Missouri.



11

## Cookware

Good cookware is essential on the trail. However, very few extra cooking utensils should be taken. They add too much to the wagon load and should be avoided. A Dutch oven, frying pan, tea kettle, teapot, and coffee pot are all the cookware an average family needs on the trail. Tin cups, tin plates, and ordinary knives, forks, and spoons should also be taken for each traveler.

12

## Clothing

Each member of the wagon party should be supplied with enough sets of clothing to last a full year. Walking all day long, for a period of four to six months, wears out clothes at a much faster rate than normal.

Additionally, emigrants will be outside during sun, storm, and cold. Having proper clothing is paramount.

13

Each individual should also be equipped with enough pairs of boots to last up to six months. The average emigrant walks 15 miles a day, and will go through a significant number of shoes during the trip.



14

## Bedding

Bedding should consist of nothing more than blankets, sheets, coverlets, and pillows. These items should be spread over a bison robe or oiled cloth to keep the wet ground off the emigrants' bedding.



15

Feather beds are sometimes taken by families. But, in many cases they are not only burdensome and inconvenient, but also entirely useless. Oftentimes they are left along the trail.



16



## Tools

A good set of tools will be invaluable along the trail and upon reaching Oregon or California. This should include axes, shovels, hoes, and at least 60 feet of rope for each oxen. Additionally, a set of blacksmith tools, used for repairing wagons, will be vital for emigrants. This includes axletrees, chains, hammers, and other tools of the trade.

17

Wagon parties should also include a few surgical tools and a small assortment of medicines. Accidents and disease are all too common on the trail west. These items can be used by doctor and layman, alike.



18

## Tents

Emigrants should provide themselves with good wagon covers and sturdy tents. The weather along the trail to the West can be unpredictable and violent. Wagon parties will be sleeping outside in all types of weather, and will find these items worth their weight in gold throughout the journey to Oregon or California.

19

## Trade Items

It is also advised to bring along items that can be traded with the native peoples living along the trail. Beads, handkerchiefs, blankets, clothing, knives, fish hooks, gunpowder, lead shot, and iron arrowheads are all sought after items by tribes living across the continent.



20

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Vocabulary Sheet

As you're reading the guidebook, you'll come across some new words. Use the resources in your classroom to look up and define these terms.

Emigrant:

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Gunpowder:

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Indispensable:

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Staunch:

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Prairie Schooner:

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# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Vocabulary Sheet

As you're reading the guidebook, you'll come across some new words. Use the resources in your classroom to look up and define these terms.

Perish:

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Subsist:

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Hardtack:

---

---

Saleratus:

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---

Dutch Oven:

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---

# Oregon Trail Education Trunk

## Vocabulary Sheet

As you're reading the guidebook, you'll come across some new words. Use the resources in your classroom to look up and define these terms.

Paramount:

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Bison Robe:

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Burdensome:

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Invaluable:

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Layman:

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# Wyoming State Museum

## The Oregon Trail: Pack Your Wagon Activity



Your Wagon Number:

Immigrant #1:

Immigrant #2:

Your Wagon Party Name:

Immigrant #3:

Immigrant #4:

Welcome to the Oregon Trail! You are about to start the adventure of your lives, as you travel more than 2,000 miles from Independence, Missouri to Oregon City, Oregon!

### Facts of the Trail

- About 300,000 immigrants traveled the trail from 1840-1860.
- They left their homes behind and sold almost everything they owned to afford the trip to Oregon, California, or Utah.
- Most of them would never see the friends and family they left behind, ever again.
- Most travelers started in Independence, Missouri or other nearby cities.
- The trip could take anywhere from four to six months, depending on when the immigrants left and how lucky they got.
- When the immigrants arrived, there would be no home waiting for them. They would have to build their house with whatever tools they brought with them.

### Life on the Trail

- The pioneers rarely rode in the wagons, due to the brutal bumps. Almost everyone had to walk beside the wagon... up to fifteen miles per day.
- There were no hotels along the trail. The immigrants camped the entire way.
- There were no grocery stores along the trail, either. They passed a very small number of trading posts and forts. They also had a few opportunities to trade with Native Americans. But the immigrants had to bring most of their supplies.
- The pioneers had to be outside during extreme cold, intense heat, severe thunderstorms, and all other weather.

Discuss the following questions in your wagon group.

- What would be the most important thing you would take with you?
- Which of these would bother you the most and why?
  - Being hungry.
  - Eating the same things every day.
  - Being cold and wet.
  - Walking 15 miles a day.
  - Not having your favorite personal item.
  - Having bugs crawl into your blankets.
  - Not feeling safe.
  - Being stranded in the wilderness.
  - Never seeing your friends or family again.
  - Having to bathe in cold rivers.



# Wyoming State Museum

## The Oregon Trail: Pack Your Wagon Activity



With your wagon party, examine the newspaper article and the cards at your table. Use these resources to pick how many of each item your team will be bringing on your trip to Oregon. Fill out your shopping list, and then bring it and your cards to the General Store.

**Weight** = The weight of one card, for each type of item.

**Number** = The total number of cards that you will be bringing, for each type of item.

**Total** = The total weight of each type of item. Multiply **Weight** and **Number** together.

**Total Weight of All Supplies:**

	Item	Weight	Number	Total	
Cooking	Cookware	35 lbs.			
	Soap	10 lbs.			
	Stove	300 lbs.			
	Water Keg	5 lbs.			
Food	Bacon	100 lbs.			
	Beans	30 lbs.			
	Coffee	10 lbs.			
	Corn Meal	25 lbs.			
	Dried Fruit	25 lbs.			
	Flour	100 lbs.			
	Fresh Fruit	25 lbs.			
	Hardtack	60 lbs.			
	Lard	150 lbs.			
	Rice	20 lbs.			
	Saleratus	5 lbs.			
	Salt	20 lbs.			
	Sugar	20 lbs.			
	Tea	5 lbs.			
	Vinegar	25 lbs.			
	Weapons	Gunpowder	5 lbs.		
		Lead Shot	10 lbs.		
Revolvers		10 lbs.			
Rifle		10 lbs.			

	Item	Weight	Number	Total
Personal Items	Bedroll	5 lbs.		
	Books	30 lbs.		
	Boots	3 lbs.		
	Chair	20 lbs.		
	China Set	40 lbs.		
	Clothing	3 lbs.		
	Dresser	50 lbs.		
	Family Clock	100 lbs.		
	Heavy Coat	3 lbs.		
	Heirlooms	5 lbs.		
	Instrument	5 lbs.		
	Medicine	10 lbs.		
	Mirror	10 lbs.		
	Table	25 lbs.		
	Toys	10 lbs.		
	Trade Goods	10 lbs.		
	Tools	Canoe	60 lbs.	
Extra Parts		75 lbs.		
Fishing Gear		5 lbs.		
Iron Safe		75 lbs.		
Tent		50 lbs.		
Tools		50 lbs.		
Wagon Tools	100 lbs.			





# Cookware

35 lbs.

This cookware consists of a cast iron skillet, dutch oven, coffee pot, cooking utensils, eating utensils, and a few dishes.



# Soap

10 lbs.

While pioneers took few baths on the trail, soap was important for washing dishes, clothes, and for keeping themselves clean.





**Stove**

**300 lbs.**

The cast iron stove was a staple within homes during the 1800s and used to cook meals.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM



**Water Keg**

**5 lbs.**

The trail had long stretches without water. Pioneers would fill up their water keg at a stream before braving these dry areas.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM





**Bacon**

**100 lbs.**

**Salted bacon was a great food for the trail. Stored in bran barrels (to keep it from melting), it could last the entire trip.**



**WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM**



**Beans**

**30 lbs.**

**Beans were a staple of the pioneer diet. They were often eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner on the trail.**



**WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM**



**Coffee**

**10 lbs.**

**Coffee was one of the most vital items for the trip. Pioneers loved drinking it with meals, and it hid the taste of dirty or foul water.**



**Cornmeal**

**25 lbs.**

**Cornmeal was used on the trail to make a variety of foods. One of the most popular was cornmeal pancakes.**





## Dried Fruit

25 lbs.

Fruit was a great treat on the trail. Dried fruit lasted much longer than fresh. Pioneers mainly brought apples, pears, figs, and raisins.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM



## Flour

100 lbs.

Bread was a staple of the pioneer diet, and flour was used to make it daily. It was also used to make hardtack and biscuits.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM



**Fresh Fruit**

**25 lbs.**

**Fresh fruit is part of a healthy diet. In the 1800s, people ate fresh fruit whenever they could to get vitamins, fiber, and minerals.**



**Hardtack**

**60 lbs.**

**Hardtack was a necessary, but hated, food item. It was similar to a thick cracker, and eaten when the weather was too bad to cook.**





# Lard

150 lbs.

Lard is made from animal fat (usually a pig) and was used for cooking. It was used much like butter is used today.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM



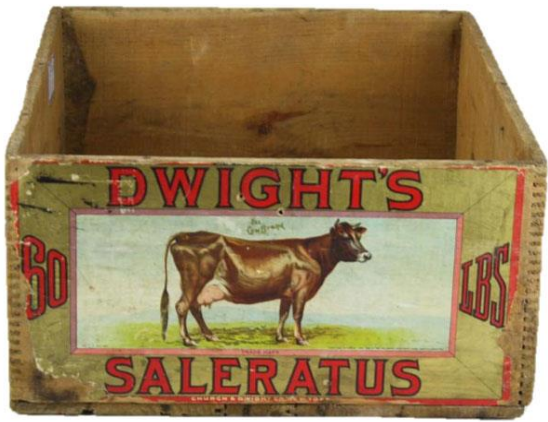
# Rice

20 lbs.

Rice was a great meal to eat on the trail. It stored well, was easy to cook, could be eaten with dried meat, and filled hungry bellies.



WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM



# Saleratus

5 lbs.

Saleratus was an important ingredient when baking on the trail. It is still used today, but is known as baking soda.



# Salt

20 lbs.

Salt was used for cooking and for flavoring foods. It was also used to preserve meat that was hunted along the trail.





**Sugar**

**20 lbs.**

**Brown and white sugar was used for making pies, cakes, and jams on the trail. It was also used for flavoring.**



**Tea**

**5 lbs.**

**Tea was a very popular drink throughout much of the 1800s. Like coffee, it was drunk often on the trail.**





**Vinegar**

**25 lbs.**

**Apple vinegar was used for food processing and canning, to treat cuts and scrapes, and for flavoring in food.**



**Gunpowder**

**5 lbs.**

**Gunpowder was needed for all guns. But, it was dangerous and could explode if it was exposed to fire.**







**Lead Shot**

**10 lbs.**

**Lead shot is the projectile that rifles, shotguns, and revolvers shot on the trail. Pioneers could not hunt without it.**



**WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM**



**Revolvers**

**10 lbs.**

**If revolvers could be afforded, they were a good item to have on the trail. This represents two black powder revolvers.**



**WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM**



# Rifle

10 lbs.

Rifles were an important tool while on the trail. They could be used for hunting or protecting the wagon train.

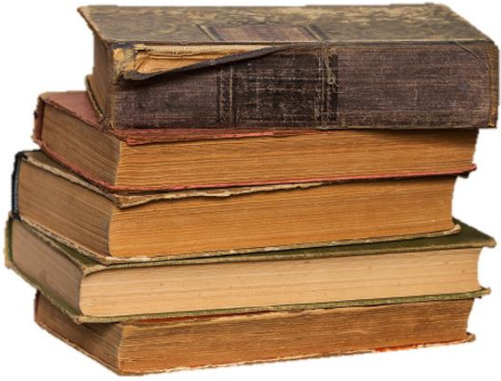


# Bedroll

18 lbs.

Bedding on the trail consisted of bison robes, blankets, and pillows. Some of these items were handmade before the trip.





**Books**

**30 lbs.**

**This is a box of fifteen books to help pass the time while on the trail to California or Oregon.**



**Boots**

**3 lbs.**

**Walking 2000 miles over five months broke down the boots of the pioneers. This is one extra pair of boots for one person.**





**Chair**

**20 lbs.**

**Chairs could be used for comfort along the trail and to decorate the pioneers' future homes in Oregon or California.**



**China Set**

**40 lbs.**

**Some pioneers would bring treasured family heirlooms, like this china set - a gift from the wedding of two grandparents.**





# Clothing

3 lbs.

Good clothing was important, as the constant walking took its toll on clothes. This is one extra set of clothing for one person.



# Dresser

50 lbs.

Some pioneers took furniture along the trail to help with the journey and to use in their new homes. This is a family dresser.





**Family Clock**

**100 lbs.**

**This is a family heirloom, passed down from great grandparents. It is a cherished piece of family history.**



**WYOMING  
STATE MUSEUM**



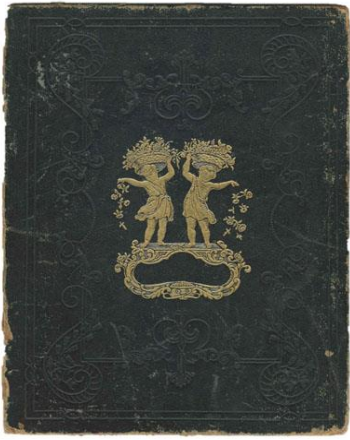
**Heavy Coat**

**5 lbs.**

**Pioneers had to keep walking in almost every type of weather condition. This is one heavy coat in case of cold weather.**



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**Heirlooms**

**5 lbs.**

**These are the most precious family heirlooms for a family. They might include photos, journals, keepsakes, and a family holy book.**



**Instrument**

**5 lbs.**

**A musical instrument could be a source of enjoyment and happiness on the long, 2,000 mile journey.**





# Medicine

10 lbs.

Medicine, while seldom effective, was an important item to bring on the trail. This kit also includes surgical supplies.



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# Mirror

10 lbs.

This mirror is a family keepsake and has been used for years by the entire family.



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**Table**

**25 lbs.**

**Some pioneers took furniture along the trail to help with the journey and to use in their new homes. This is a family table.**

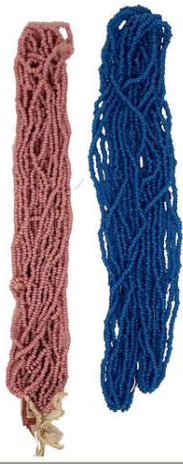


**Toys**

**10 lbs.**

**Children of all ages joined their parents on the trail. This is one box of toys to keep the children entertained.**





**Trade Goods**

**10 lbs.**

**Beads, fishing hooks, clothing, blankets, and cookware were often taken, to be traded with Native American tribes on the trail.**



**Canoe**

**60 lbs.**

**Canoes had already been used on North American rivers and lakes for thousands of years before the Oregon Trail.**





**Extra Parts**

**75 lbs.**

**A broken wagon could mean death for an entire family. This is one spare part (wheel, axle, tongue, etc.) for a family wagon.**



**Fishing Gear**

**5 lbs.**

**The wagons traveled along rivers for a good portion of the trail. Fishing gear was used to try to catch fish.**





# Iron Safe

75 lbs.

Some pioneers brought small iron safes on the trail to keep their money and prized heirlooms safe from theft.



# Tent

50 lbs.

Tents were used by pioneers at night when it was too rainy, snowy, or dusty to sleep under the stars.





# Tools

50 lbs.

This tool kit has shovels, hoes, hatchets, saws, hammers, and other tools to help along the trail and to build a new home.



# Wagon Tools

100 lbs.

Blacksmith tools were used to fix broken parts of pioneer wagons, along with other broken items along the trail.

