

America Moves West

Week 28 • Monday • Westward Movement

Reading Time

In the early 1800s, America was growing fast. Most people lived near the Atlantic Ocean in the east. But to the west lay huge lands with rich soil, tall forests, and wide rivers.

Families called **pioneers** packed up everything they owned and headed west. They hoped to find cheap land, build farms, and start new lives. Some searched for gold. Others wanted adventure.

The journey west was long and dangerous — there were no roads, cars, or stores along the way. But wave after wave of pioneers kept going, and little by little, the nation stretched from ocean to ocean. This week, you will travel west with them!

Reading Questions

1. Where did most Americans live in the early 1800s?

2. What do we call the families who moved west?

3. Name two reasons pioneers went west.

4. Why was the journey dangerous?

This Week's Goals

By the end of this week, you will be able to:

1. Explain why pioneers moved west.
2. Describe life on a wagon trail.
3. Tell how the journey affected Native Americans.
4. Compare a pioneer journey to trips your family takes.

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

pioneer

west

trail

wagon

frontier

journey

Why Go West?

Check YES if it was a reason pioneers went west, or NO if it was not.

Reason	YES or NO
To find cheap land for farms	
To search for gold	
To ride in airplanes	
To start new lives	
To visit shopping malls	
To have an adventure	

Fill in the Blanks

east pioneers land gold dangerous ocean

1. Most people lived in the _____ near the Atlantic.
2. Families who moved west were called _____.
3. They hoped to find cheap _____ for farms.
4. Some searched for _____.
5. The journey was long and _____.
6. The nation grew from ocean to _____.

Think About It

1. Would you have wanted to be a pioneer? Why or why not?

Review

I learned...	Circle one
Who the pioneers were	YES / NOT YET
Why they moved west	YES / NOT YET
Why the journey was hard	YES / NOT YET