

THE LAST FRONTIER

Directions: Fill in the sentences on these pages with the missing words, names, and terms. Use the answers in the following list.

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|---------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| saloons | cowboys | immigrants | cow towns |
| mines | Great Plains | prairie fires | dairy products |
| chaps | horse races | boom towns | Homestead Act |
| bison | ghost towns | Colt revolvers | circuit riders |
| land | vigilantes | desperadoes | frontier |
| gold | last frontier | Virginia City | gold rush |
| slaves | 160 acres | roundup | barbed wire |
| rodeos | population | Dawes Act | sheep owners |
| wheat | white man | transcontinental | George Custer |
| dresses | flapjacks | sod houses | corn-husking bees |
| weapons | reservations | Oklahoma | dust and cold |



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|--------------|----------|
| stagecoaches | Indians |
| open range | rustlers |
| felt hat | Negroes |

- (1) The "last frontier," the last part of the United States to be settled, included the _____ and the Rocky Mountains.
- (2) Thousands of Americans had already settled on the West Coast, where they had gone in search of _____ and good farmland.
- (3) The _____ was settled between 1850 and 1890.
- (4) The discovery of gold and silver in the Rocky Mountains brought a wave of miners and prospectors to the region similar to what happened during the California _____.
- (5) By 1890, nearly \$2 billion worth of gold and silver had been taken from the _____ in the Rocky Mountains.
- (6) To encourage pioneer families to settle in the dry plains region, Congress passed the _____.
- (7) The Homestead Act gave _____ of government land to settlers who agreed to live on the land and work it for at least five years.
- (8) Many _____ from European countries came to the United States and started homes and farms in the West.
- (9) Most of the people who settled in the West became miners, _____, and farmers.
- (10) Large numbers of _____ moved westward because of the unfair treatment they received in the East and South.
- (11) Many former _____ became well-known cowboys during the late 1800s.
- (12) Flour, which was used in making biscuits, bread, and _____, or pancakes, was the basic food because it was nutritious and would not spoil.
- (13) Other important foods included dried beans, bacon, salt pork, wild fowl, antelope, elk, deer, and _____.
- (14) Frontiersmen rarely ate fresh fruit and vegetables or _____.
- (15) Most men wore rawhide boots, blue jeans, a wool shirt, a jacket or vest, and a _____.

- (16) A red bandanna handkerchief was often worn around the neck for protection against the _____.
- (17) Women wore sunbonnets and simple calico and gingham _____.
- (18) Cowboys wore wide brimmed hats called "sombros" and leather _____ to protect their legs from brush.
- (19) Many frontiersmen carried Winchester rifles, _____, and Bowie knives.
- (20) Families got together for square dances, holiday celebrations, house-raising, and _____.
- (21) Miners and cowboys often spent their leisure hours drinking and gambling in _____.
- (22) Cowboys demonstrated their horsemanship and other frontier skills at _____.
- (23) Westerners enjoyed _____, shooting contests, and boxing and wrestling matches.
- (24) Traveling preachers, known as _____, visited towns and preached sermons and conducted marriages, baptisms, and other services.
- (25) The first _____ railroad was completed in 1869 when the Union Pacific (building west from Omaha, Nebraska) and the Central Pacific (starting east from Sacramento, California) joined together at Promontory Point, Utah.
- (26) Railroad companies were given large areas of _____ on each side of the railroad for every mile of track they built.
- (27) The _____ of the Great Plains and Far West increased rapidly as more and more railroad track was laid.
- (28) _____ grew up along the railroads and around mining camps.
- (29) Huge amounts of silver and gold were taken from the Comstock Lode around _____, Nevada.
- (30) After the valuable ores had been taken out of the ground, most mining centers became _____.
- (31) Cattlemen let their herds graze on the _____.
- (32) Cowboys protected the herds from mountain lions and bands of _____.
- (33) In the fall, ranchers held a _____ to gather in their cattle.
- (34) The cattle were taken on a "long drive" north to the _____, where they were loaded onto freight cars and shipped back east.
- (35) Farmers on the Great Plains raised grain, usually _____.
- (36) Farmers had to contend with grasshoppers, hot winds, and _____.
- (37) Ranchers despised the farmers and their _____ fences which destroyed the open range.
- (38) Because of a lack of trees and wood on the plains, farmers often built _____.

READING INFORMATIONAL TEXT

The Homestead Act

Read the texts and answer the questions.

The Homestead Act of 1862 was passed by Congress to encourage land development in the West. Qualified homesteaders were required to claim, live on, and develop 160 acres of land for a minimum of five years. Close to 500,000 homesteaders would receive over 80 million acres by the start of 1900. Nearly 10% of the United States was settled with land grants from in the Homestead Act.

The following text is a first-person narrative of Jenny, a Nebraska homesteader.

Jessup was almost grown by the time we moved to Nebraska. Mary was born shortly after. We took our chances on the homestead because Danny wasn't making enough money in the mill. He said there was a chance for him in the West—nobody to say he couldn't.

I didn't say he couldn't, but nature gives and nature takes. The first winter, half our mules died from cold. Spring brought rain, wildflowers, and softened the hard soil. The ground was ready for planting crops, but our first harvest produced very little. We lived by hunting wild animals. The second year's harvest was plentiful, and we all worked hard for every bit of food we had.

We built our house at the base of a slight rise near a creek. The rise protects the house from howling winds at night, and the creek is good for washing and drinking. Without trees or stone anywhere in sight, Danny and Jessup cut sod bricks made of grass and earth. One by one, we stacked the walls high against the slope, and cut into the hillside. Danny dug a ditch from the stream to the crops, and the mules stay close to the creek in hot summers.

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAPER.

1. Make at least three inferences about the author of the second text. Cite evidence from the text to support each inference.
2. Explain the relationship between the Homestead Act and the author of the second text.
3. A. List at least 5 obstacles homesteaders faced on the prairie.
B. Describe how homesteaders overcame those obstacles.
4. List the requirements of the Homestead Act and explain their purpose. Cite evidence from both texts to support your answer.

- (39) Most travelers in the West used _____, while others went by horseback or in wagons.
- (40) Violence broke out between cattlemen and _____, because sheep ate the grass so close to the ground that the cattle could not graze on it.
- (41) Gangs of outlaws called _____ robbed banks, trains, and stagecoaches.
- (42) Citizens formed groups of _____ to help frontier sheriffs capture lawbreakers.
- (43) The Sioux, Comanche, Crow, Apache, and other Indian tribes became alarmed at the advance of the _____.
- (44) To defend their lands and way of life, the _____ attacked farmhouses, villages, wagon trains, stagecoaches, and railroads.
- (45) In one of the last Indian wars, the Sioux under Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse wiped out more than 200 cavalymen under General _____ at the Little Big Horn River in Montana.
- (46) Indians in the West were gradually overpowered by the white man's numbers and _____.
- (47) Most of the Indians were moved onto government lands called _____.
- (48) Congress passed the _____, which gave each head of an Indian family 160 acres, and each single person 80 acres, if they gave up loyalty to their tribe.
- (49) In 1889, the U.S. government opened an area known as the Indian Territory to eager settlers called "Sooners," who rushed into _____ and staked out homesteads.
- (50) In 1890, the Bureau of the Census announced that the _____ had disappeared.