

Cobblestone™

ON THE FRONTIER

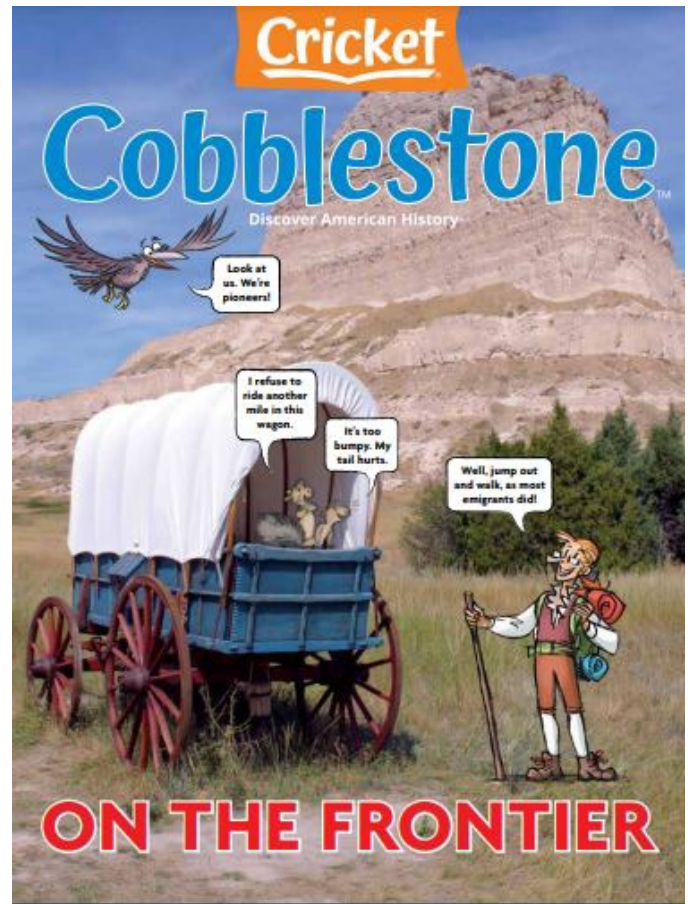
Use the articles, lessons, and activities in this Teacher Guide to help students understand why people moved to the American frontier.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What factors led people to settle on the frontier?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the American frontier.
- Students will create and use a chronological sequence of events.
- Students will explain how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the movement of people.
- Students will compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.
- Students will generate questions about groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities.
- Students will create a pie chart.
- Students will conduct research.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

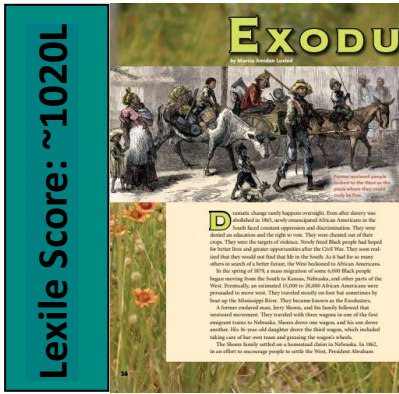
SELECTIONS

- **Exodusters**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1020L
- **A Day on the Trail**
Realistic Fiction, ~940L
- **Mormon Migration**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1130L

Exodusters

pp. 26–29, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about the Exodusters to let students explore how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the movement of people.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the Exodusters on the frontier.
- Students will analyze why the Exodusters moved to the West.
- Students will learn how sod houses were constructed.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **emancipated** (p. 26) free from restraint, control, or bondage such as slavery
- **perimeter** (p. 27) a line or strip bounding or protecting an area
- **ridgepole** (p. 28) a horizontal beam along the ridge of a roof, onto which the rafters are fastened

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What led people to settle on the frontier?

Ask students if they have ever heard of the Exodusters. What does the name make them think of? Explain that the Exodusters were a particular group of settlers who were once enslaved peoples in the South, and who came to the frontier. Have them create a K-W-L (know, want to know, learned) chart. After completing the reading and the READ & DISCUSS questions, have students return to the chart and complete the final (“learned”) column.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read the vocabulary words and definitions. Then have students work in three groups and assign each group one of the words. Set a timer for five minutes and tell students to create as many sentences as they can in that time, using that word correctly. Have each group share their sentences with the class. Finally, remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students answer these questions after reading the article.

1. Who were the Exodusters?
2. What were some of the reasons why they moved from the South to the frontier?
3. Why did the Shores family need to build a home quickly?
4. Why did the Exodusters and other settlers build homes from sod?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Historical Sources

INSTRUCT: Explain that people’s reasons for settling in the West were varied. Share some other primary sources such as letters from pioneers to relatives back home, or journal entries during the trip west. What reasons do these different perspectives give for heading to the frontier?

ASSESS: Have students write an imaginary letter home from an Exoduster who has reached the frontier and is settling there. Why did they leave the South? What did they hope to find in the West? Then have students gather in groups to share their letters.

EXTEND

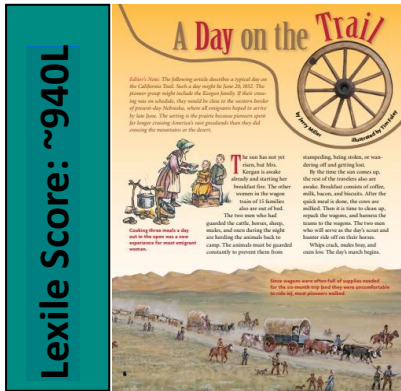
Social Studies Have students create their own model of a sod house. They can research project directions online, such as using crispy rice cereal squares or household sponges.

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A Day on the Trail

pp. 6–8, Realistic Fiction

Use this article about what life was like on the frontier trail to give students an opportunity to compare life during the frontier period with life today.



RESOURCES

Compare and Contrast

OBJECTIVES

- Students will compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.
- Students will analyze everyday life on the frontier trail.
- Students will conduct research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **emigrant (p. 6)** a person who leaves their home in one region to settle in another
- **churn (p. 7)** a container used to turn cream into butter using shaking or stirring
- **corral (p. 8)** a pen for keeping or capturing livestock such as cattle

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What led people to settle on the frontier?

Ask students what they know about the westward movement on the pioneer trails in the 1800s. How did the pioneers travel? cook? sleep? communicate? Then, ask them to think about their own daily lives. Is there anything they do that might be similar to the way children lived on the trail? Is there anything that might be positive about children's lives as they traveled west, compared to today?

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read the vocabulary words and definitions. Then ask students to work in pairs to create a word search puzzle using at least 15 words, including the three vocabulary words. Have pairs trade papers to complete each other's puzzles.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students answer these questions after reading the article.

1. How do the pioneers begin their day on the trail?
2. Why must the animals be guarded during the night?
3. Describe the sights and sounds along the trail.
4. Why do most people walk, instead of ride, on the trail? Who and what is inside the wagon?
5. How do the pioneers "pay a toll" to the indigenous people they encounter?
6. What were some of the dangers that the travelers encountered?

SKILL FOCUS: Compare and Contrast

INSTRUCT: Explain that it is important to study the everyday lives of people during other historical eras, in order to help understand that time through their experiences and perspectives. Describe everyday life on the pioneer trail and how different it was not only from today, but also from the lives the pioneers led in their previous homes. Have students work in pairs to review the article. Then have them complete the *Compare and Contrast* chart, listing as many details as possible from life on the trail in one column, and then listing the way that same task is done in their own lives today.

ASSESS: Have students gather in groups to share and discuss their lists and comparisons. Circulate and have a mini-conversation with each group.

EXTEND

Geography Explain to the class that there was more than one trail that pioneers took to go west. Have them research the different western trails and their routes. Students will create a map marking the trail routes across the United States. Maps should include symbols, a key, a compass rose, and tags of notable locations along the route.

Compare and Contrast

Comparing life during a historical era with life today requires finding the similarities and differences between an era from the past and modern life. In the left column, list several things that the pioneers had to do on the trail. In the right column, list the equivalent of that task today.

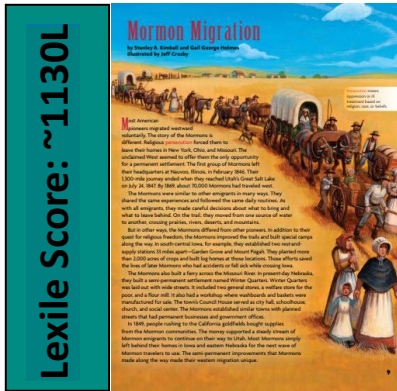
Life on the Trail	Life Today
Ride in a covered wagon	Ride in a car

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Mormon Migration

p. 9, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about the Mormon experience moving west to give students an opportunity to analyze how their journey differed from other pioneers.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the Mormons and why they moved west.
- Students will analyze how the Mormons shaped significant historical changes and continuities.
- Students will create a pie chart.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **Mormons (p. 9)** members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a religion founded in the U.S. in 1830
- **washboard (p. 9)** a board made of ridged wood or a sheet of corrugated metal, used as a surface for scrubbing and washing clothes
- **migration (p. 9)** the movement of either people or animals from one area to another

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What led people to settle on the frontier?

Ask students to think of some reasons why people might move from one place to another, such as seeking a better life or wanting to live in a different climate. Now ask them if there might be political or religious reasons why people would move, and why. Discuss people in current news that are moving from one place to another for similar reasons.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. For each word, have students write a sentence demonstrating understanding relative to traveling west to the frontier. Have students share their sentences with a partner. Remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students answer these questions after reading the article:

1. What was the main reason why the Mormons moved west?
2. What made the Mormons' experience on the trail different from other pioneers?
3. How did the Mormons help other pioneers and create permanent improvements to the experience of moving west?
4. Why was their experience so unique?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Historical Perspectives

INSTRUCT: Explain that historical perspectives differed between people even when they lived during the same historical period and were involved in the same events. The article shows that the Mormons had a different reason for moving west and a different experience on the trail, compared to many other emigrants. Have students work in small groups to create a list of the unique things that Mormons experienced or did as they traveled west and how they differed from the experiences of other pioneers heading for the frontier.

ASSESS: Revisit the earlier discussion of modern-day immigrants. Pose the questions: What are the reasons that people are fleeing their countries today? How does the length and hardship of the journey compare to the Mormons' migration?

EXTEND

Math Research and compare the number of Mormons who moved west to the number of non-Mormons who also traveled to the frontier. Then use the information to create a pie chart representing each population.