Tracks and Territory

How westward expansion changed people's lives

SS24.4.17a "Explain how territorial expansion and the construction of the transcontinental railroad affected immigrants and Native Americans, including how it led to the loss of land in Indian Territory where Alabama tribes had been relocated."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way the railroad affected immigrants, and circle two ways Native Americans lost land. Write 1 beside the earlier forced move and 2 beside the later land loss in Indian Territory.

New Tracks, Changing Lands

1 In 1869, two railroad lines met in Utah, joining tracks across the United States. The transcontinental railroad made travel and shipping faster. Many immigrants, including workers from China and Ireland, helped build it. They earned wages, but the work could be dangerous, and many faced unfair treatment. As trains brought more people west, settlers sought land where Native Americans already lived.

2 For Native nations, westward growth was not a new beginning. Years earlier, the U.S. government had forced many Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw people from their homes in Alabama and nearby states. Many were sent to Indian Territory, in what is now Oklahoma. They built homes and communities there. As more settlers moved west, Native nations faced growing pressure over their land.

3 After the Civil War, the U.S. government made the Muscogee (Creek) Nation give up a large part of its land in Indian Territory. The main transcontinental railroad did not cross Indian Territory, but other rail lines later did. Railroad routes and new settlers added pressure on Native lands. Later, U.S. laws broke up land held by Native nations, and much of it passed to non-Native people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did building the transcontinental railroad help some immigrants, and what hardship did they face?

2. How did faster train travel add to pressure on Native Americans' land?

3. How did the Muscogee people's land situation change after they were forced from Alabama and nearby states?

4. Did the main transcontinental railroad cross Indian Territory? Explain how railroads still affected Native land there.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum sign about an immigrant railroad worker and a Native family from an Alabama tribe. Explain an effect on each and how their stories connect through westward expansion. Use facts from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Tracks and Territory

GRADE 4 · SS24.4.17a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way the railroad affected immigrants, and circle two ways Native Americans lost land. Write 1 beside the earlier forced move and 2 beside the later land loss in Indian Territory. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did building the transcontinental railroad help some immigrants, and what hardship did they face?	**Building the railroad gave some immigrants wages, but the work could be dangerous and many faced unfair treatment.**
2	How did faster train travel add to pressure on Native Americans' land?	**Trains brought more people west, where settlers sought land Native Americans already lived on.**
3	How did the Muscogee people's land situation change after they were forced from Alabama and nearby states?	**Many were sent to Indian Territory and built communities there. After the Civil War, the Muscogee Nation had to give up a large part of its land there.**
4	Did the main transcontinental railroad cross Indian Territory? Explain how railroads still affected Native land there.	**No. Other rail lines later crossed Indian Territory, and railroad routes added pressure on Native lands.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A worker from China earned wages building the transcontinental railroad but faced dangerous work. A Muscogee family had been forced from Alabama to Indian Territory. After the Civil War, the Muscogee Nation had to give up a large part of its land there. Railroad building brought work for immigrants, while westward expansion added pressure on Native land.

Accept different passage-supported effects on immigrant workers, including unfair treatment. Students should distinguish the main transcontinental railroad from the rail lines that later crossed Indian Territory.