

Moving Westward

Examine how new transportation and communication systems changed life in the 1800s.

SS.5.A.6.3 "Examine 19th century advancements (e.g., canals, roads, steamboats, flat boats, overland wagons, Pony Express, railroads) in transportation and communication."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each transportation advancement and circle each communication advancement. Then number three details that tell how an advancement changed travel, trade, or messages.

Connections Across a Growing Nation

- ① In the early 1800s, many Americans traveled slowly on rough roads or natural rivers. New transportation systems changed that. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, linked the Hudson River to Lake Erie. Canal boats carried farm goods east and manufactured goods west. Because water travel cost less than wagon travel, towns along the canal grew as workers, shoppers, and traders arrived.
- ② Rivers also became busy travel routes. Flatboats floated downstream with cargo, but they were hard to move upstream. Steamboats used steam power to travel both downstream and upstream. Meanwhile, turnpikes, or improved toll roads, gave stagecoaches and overland wagons better routes. These choices helped people and products move between farms, towns, and distant markets more quickly.
- ③ By midcentury, railroads connected many places with iron tracks and powerful locomotives. Trains could carry large loads in less time than wagons. Communication improved too. In 1860, the Pony Express used relay riders on horseback to carry mail between Missouri and California in about ten days. Its service ended in 1861, when the transcontinental telegraph sent messages much faster. In 1869, the first transcontinental railroad connected eastern rail lines to California.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What did the Erie Canal connect, and how did it help towns along the canal grow?

2 How could a steamboat do something a flatboat could not do?

3 Compare railroads and overland wagons. What advantage did railroads have?

4 Why did the Pony Express service end in 1861?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Imagine you are a farmer in 1869 who needs to sell goods in a distant market and send news to a buyer. Write 3 or 4 sentences naming one transportation advancement and one communication advancement you would use, and explain why each would help.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each transportation advancement and circle each communication advancement. Then number three details that tell how an advancement changed travel, trade, or messages. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did the Erie Canal connect, and how did it help towns along the canal grow?	It linked the Hudson River to Lake Erie. Lower-cost water travel brought workers, shoppers, and traders to canal towns.
2	How could a steamboat do something a flatboat could not do?	A steamboat could travel upstream, while a flatboat was hard to move upstream.
3	Compare railroads and overland wagons. What advantage did railroads have?	Railroads could carry large loads in less time than wagons.
4	Why did the Pony Express service end in 1861?	The transcontinental telegraph sent messages much faster than Pony Express riders could carry mail.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In 1869, I would ship my farm goods by railroad to a distant market. A train could carry a large load in less time than a wagon. I would send my buyer a telegraph message because it would arrive much faster than mail carried by the Pony Express.

Accept answers that accurately connect an advancement to a change in the speed, cost, direction, amount, or distance of travel, trade, or communication. For Your Turn, students may choose railroads and the telegraph or another passage-based pair if the explanations are accurate.