

Trails to Market

How cattle trails connected Texas ranches with distant buyers

SS5H1.a "Describe the role of the cattle trails in the late 19th century; include the Black Cowboys of Texas, the Great Western Cattle Trail, and the Chisholm Trail."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the names of the people and trails. Underline the sentences that explain how cattle trails helped ranchers sell cattle.

Cattle on the Move

- ① After the Civil War, Texas ranchers had huge herds of longhorn cattle, but local buyers paid little. Railroads and meatpacking markets were far to the north and east. Cattle trails gave ranchers a route to rail towns in Kansas. There, cattle could be sold and shipped by train to growing cities. The trails connected Texas ranches to national markets.
- ② Black Cowboys of Texas were important trail workers. After emancipation, many Black men used their riding and ranch skills as drovers, cooks, and horse wranglers. On long drives, they helped keep cattle moving, found water, repaired gear, and guarded herds at night. Although they faced discrimination and lower pay in many cases, their work helped cattle drives succeed.
- ③ The Chisholm Trail carried Texas cattle north through Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, to Abilene, Kansas. Another major route, the Great Western Cattle Trail, ran from Texas through Indian Territory toward Dodge City, Kansas, and later reached Nebraska. Drovers chose trails that led to railroad shipping points. By moving large herds overland, both trails made cattle drives a major late-1800s business.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did Texas ranchers need cattle trails after the Civil War?

2 What are two jobs Black Cowboys of Texas did during cattle drives?

3 Where did the Chisholm Trail lead cattle, and what rail town was connected to the Great Western Cattle Trail?

4 How did cattle trails connect a Texas ranch to a growing city?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining how a Texas rancher in the late 1800s could use a cattle trail to reach a city market. Include one named trail and one contribution by Black Cowboys of Texas.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle the names of the people and trails. Underline the sentences that explain how cattle trails helped ranchers sell cattle. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Texas ranchers need cattle trails after the Civil War?	Local buyers paid little, and trails led ranchers to Kansas rail towns where cattle could be sold and shipped to larger markets.
2	What are two jobs Black Cowboys of Texas did during cattle drives?	Answers include keeping cattle moving, finding water, repairing gear, guarding herds at night, working as drovers, cooking, or handling horses.
3	Where did the Chisholm Trail lead cattle, and what rail town was connected to the Great Western Cattle Trail?	The Chisholm Trail led to Abilene, Kansas. The Great Western Cattle Trail was connected to Dodge City, Kansas.
4	How did cattle trails connect a Texas ranch to a growing city?	Drovers moved cattle from Texas ranches to rail towns, where cattle were sold and shipped by train to cities.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would send the herd north on the Chisholm Trail to Abilene, Kansas. At the rail town, buyers could purchase the cattle and ship them by train to cities. Black cowboys could guide cattle, locate water, and guard the herd at night. Their skills would help the long drive reach a larger market.

Accept equivalent explanations that show cattle moving from Texas to railroad shipping points and then to distant markets. For the open response, require a correct trail name and an accurate contribution by Black Cowboys of Texas.