

Roads to the West

How travel routes shaped westward settlement in New York.

4.6a "After the Revolution, New Yorkers began to move and settle farther west, using roads many of which had begun as Native American trails."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline reasons people moved west, circle one travel difficulty, and number the two ways roads were improved.

Following Paths West

- ① After the American Revolution, some families in New York looked west for new chances. Land in older eastern towns could be costly or already owned. Farther west, settlers hoped to farm rich soil, build homes, and start businesses. They traveled from places near the Hudson River toward areas such as the Mohawk Valley and lands beyond it. These lands were already home to Native nations, whose communities lost land as settlement expanded.
- ② Many roads used by settlers had begun as trails made by Native American people. These trails often followed useful paths through valleys or across lower ground. As more travelers used them, some paths were widened into roads. A wagon could bump over roots, sink into mud, or get stuck after rain. Travel west could take many tiring days.
- ③ Communities worked to make travel easier. On wet, muddy places, workers laid logs side by side to create corduroy roads. The logs gave wagons a firmer surface, though rides were rough. Other roads became turnpikes. Travelers paid a toll at a gate, and the money helped maintain the road. Better roads made it easier for people, farm goods, and supplies to move west, so more settlements could grow.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did some New Yorkers choose to move west after the Revolution? Give two reasons from the passage.

2 How were Native American trails connected to roads used by settlers?

3 Describe one problem a family might face while traveling west by wagon.

4 How did corduroy roads and turnpikes each help travelers?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences about an imaginary family moving west in New York. Include a reason they move, a problem on the road, and one road improvement that helps them.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline reasons people moved west, circle one travel difficulty, and number the two ways roads were improved. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did some New Yorkers choose to move west after the Revolution? Give two reasons from the passage.	Land in eastern towns could be costly or already owned, and settlers hoped to farm rich soil, build homes, or start businesses farther west.
2	How were Native American trails connected to roads used by settlers?	Many settler roads had begun as Native American trails. As more travelers used the trails, some were widened into roads.
3	Describe one problem a family might face while traveling west by wagon.	A wagon could bump over roots, sink into mud, or get stuck after rain.
4	How did corduroy roads and turnpikes each help travelers?	Corduroy roads used logs to give wagons a firmer surface on wet, muddy ground. Turnpikes collected toll money that helped maintain roads.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Ortiz family heads west to find land for a farm. Their wagon follows a road that began as a Native American trail, but rain turns one section muddy. Workers build a corduroy road there, so the family can travel over the wet ground.

Accept equivalent reasons, travel difficulties, and explanations stated in the passage. For the open response, check for exactly three sentences that include all three required ideas and use a historically accurate road improvement.