Tracks and Turning Points

Use text evidence to explain facts and make inferences.

5.P.3.1.A "Use information accurately from a text when explaining the text explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB As you read, underline two facts about how the railroad was built or used, and circle two details that help you infer how it affected people. Number the circled details 1 and 2 so you can find them when you explain your thinking.

When the Tracks Met

1. In the 1860s, two railroad companies laid tracks toward each other. The Union Pacific built west from Omaha, Nebraska, while the Central Pacific built east from Sacramento, California. Crews on the flat plains could lay track quickly. In the Sierra Nevada mountains, crews had to cut tunnels through rock and clear deep snow. Many Central Pacific workers were Chinese immigrants. Their hard and dangerous work helped push the tracks forward.

2. On May 10, 1869, the tracks met at Promontory Summit, Utah. Railroad leaders drove a golden spike at a ceremony to mark the moment, but ordinary iron spikes held the rails in place. Before the railroad, a trip across the country could take months by wagon. Trains made many long trips possible in about a week. Letters, passengers, and supplies could now move much faster.

3. The railroad brought new business to some towns near its route. Shops could receive goods shipped from far away, and travelers needed meals and places to stay. Yet the railroad also crossed lands where Native peoples lived and hunted. Railroad traffic and new settlements damaged hunting grounds and disrupted lives. The same tracks could bring opportunities to some people while causing serious losses for others.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the work on the plains differ from the work in the Sierra Nevada mountains? Use two details from the text.

2. Why might a person sending a letter have welcomed the new railroad? Support your inference with a detail from the text.

3. What does the golden spike ceremony suggest about how railroad leaders viewed the meeting of the tracks? Use a detail from the text.

4. Why might Native peoples have viewed the railroad differently from shop owners? Use details from the text.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are planning a long train trip soon after the tracks met. What is one question you might ask before leaving? Explain why you would ask it, using two different details from the passage. Write two or three sentences.

ANSWER KEY

Tracks and Turning Points

GRADE 5 · 5.P.3.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

As you read, underline two facts about how the railroad was built or used, and circle two details that help you infer how it affected people. Number the circled details 1 and 2 so you can find them when you explain your thinking. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the work on the plains differ from the work in the Sierra Nevada mountains? Use two details from the text.	**Crews could lay track quickly on the flat plains, but in the Sierra Nevada they had to cut tunnels through rock and clear deep snow.**
2	Why might a person sending a letter have welcomed the new railroad? Support your inference with a detail from the text.	**The person might have wanted a letter to arrive sooner. The text says letters could move much faster by train.**
3	What does the golden spike ceremony suggest about how railroad leaders viewed the meeting of the tracks? Use a detail from the text.	**They viewed it as an important event. They held a ceremony and drove a golden spike to mark it.**
4	Why might Native peoples have viewed the railroad differently from shop owners? Use details from the text.	**Shops could receive goods from far away, but railroad traffic and new settlements damaged Native peoples' hunting grounds and disrupted their lives.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask where I could buy a meal during the trip. The passage says long train trips could take about a week and that travelers needed meals and places to stay.

Accept reasonable inferences supported by accurate passage details. For Your Turn, the student should ask a question and connect it to two different details.