

Trails, Herds, Change

Trace people, events, and issues in Texas cattle history.

7.6.B “identify significant individuals, events, and issues, including the development of the cattle industry from its Spanish beginnings and the cowboy way of life;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each significant individual or event, circle each issue or challenge, and number the marks in the order they happened. Your marks will help you trace how the cattle industry and cowboy life changed.

From Vaqueros to Open Range

- ① Spanish explorers and settlers brought cattle north from Mexico into Texas during the late 1600s. Around missions and settlements, herds supplied meat, hides, leather, and tallow. Ranch workers called vaqueros rode horses, used ropes, and managed cattle on open range. Their skills shaped later ranch work. Spanish ranchers used brands to show ownership, an important solution when animals grazed across unfenced land. Over time, some cattle became hardy Texas longhorns, able to survive heat, drought, and long walks.
- ② After the Civil War, Texas held many cattle but had few nearby buyers. In 1867, businessman Joseph McCoy helped make Abilene, Kansas, a major railhead for Texas cattle. This event encouraged long cattle drives north on routes such as the Chisholm Trail. Trail bosses organized crews, while cowboys guarded the herd, found water, and moved cattle across rivers. The work was dangerous. Storms, stampedes, injuries, and conflicts over grazing land could delay a drive. Mexican, Black, Anglo, and Native American workers all contributed to ranching.
- ③ Cowboy life was more than riding. A crew repaired gear, cooked meals, stood night watch, and followed a trail boss's orders. In 1866, rancher Charles Goodnight created a chuckwagon by fitting a wagon with storage for food and tools. Later, barbed wire spread across Texas, allowing ranchers to fence land. Fences protected some property but caused disputes by blocking routes to water and grazing areas. As railroads reached Texas and ranching changed, the era of huge open-range drives declined.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did Joseph McCoy and the Abilene railhead affect the cattle industry?

2 What did vaqueros do, and why were their skills significant to later ranching?

3 What issue did barbed wire create, even though it protected ranchers' property?

4 Name one event or change that helped long cattle drives grow and one change that helped huge open-range drives decline.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label about the individual, event, or issue from the passage that you think changed Texas cattle ranching the most. Name it, explain its effect, and use two specific facts from the passage to support your choice.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each significant individual or event, circle each issue or challenge, and number the marks in the order they happened. Your marks will help you trace how the cattle industry and cowboy life changed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Joseph McCoy and the Abilene railhead affect the cattle industry?	McCoy helped make Abilene a major railhead in 1867, which encouraged Texas cattle drives north to reach buyers.
2	What did vaqueros do, and why were their skills significant to later ranching?	Vaqueros rode horses, used ropes, and managed cattle on open range. Their skills shaped later ranch work.
3	What issue did barbed wire create, even though it protected ranchers' property?	Barbed wire blocked routes to water and grazing areas, causing disputes.
4	Name one event or change that helped long cattle drives grow and one change that helped huge open-range drives decline.	Making Abilene a major railhead helped cattle drives grow. Barbed wire, railroads reaching Texas, and changing ranching helped huge open-range drives decline.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Barbed wire was one of the most significant changes in Texas cattle ranching. It allowed ranchers to fence their land and protect property. However, the fences blocked routes to water and grazing areas, causing disputes. Along with new railroads and changing ranching methods, barbed wire helped end the era of huge open-range drives.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the people, events, and issues named in the passage. For the museum label, accept any supported choice that includes an effect and two accurate details from the passage.