

Why Move West?

Identify the different reasons settlers chose to move.

USI.8.c "identifying geographic, economic, and religious motivations that influenced the movement of settlers;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every geographic motivation, circle every economic motivation, and write a small R beside every religious motivation so you can compare why settlers moved.

Reasons for the Journey

- ① During the early 1800s, many American settlers looked beyond the Appalachian Mountains. Some traveled to the Oregon Country, where they expected fertile soil, forests, and rivers. A river could provide water for homes and crops, while rich land could grow food. These geographic features made distant places seem worth the hard journey west by wagon and on foot.
- ② Economic hopes also sent people west. Farmers wanted land they could buy or claim at a lower cost than crowded eastern farms. In the South, some planters moved to new areas where they could grow cotton for sale. Others followed the California gold rush in 1849, hoping to find gold or earn money by selling supplies.
- ③ Religion was another powerful reason to move. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, often called Mormons, faced persecution in several places. Led by Brigham Young, many traveled west to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. There they hoped to build a community and practice their religion more freely, without fear of hostile groups.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name two geographic features that attracted settlers to the Oregon Country. Tell how one feature could help settlers.

2 What economic reason led some farmers to move west?

3 Why did some people travel to California in 1849? Give two possible economic goals from the passage.

4 What religious motivation led many Latter-day Saints to move to the Salt Lake Valley?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine your family is deciding whether to move west in 1847. Write exactly three sentences, giving one geographic reason, one economic reason, and one religious reason for moving.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every geographic motivation, circle every economic motivation, and write a small R beside every religious motivation so you can compare why settlers moved. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two geographic features that attracted settlers to the Oregon Country. Tell how one feature could help settlers.	Fertile soil, forests, and rivers attracted settlers. A river could provide water for homes and crops, or fertile soil could help grow food.
2	What economic reason led some farmers to move west?	They wanted land they could buy or claim for less cost than crowded eastern farms.
3	Why did some people travel to California in 1849? Give two possible economic goals from the passage.	They hoped to find gold or earn money by selling supplies.
4	What religious motivation led many Latter-day Saints to move to the Salt Lake Valley?	They wanted to build a community and practice their religion more freely after facing persecution.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our family hopes to settle near a river because water and rich soil can help our crops grow. We want to buy affordable land and sell extra crops for money. We also want to join a church community where we can worship peacefully.

Accept equivalent details from the passage that correctly identify geographic, economic, or religious motivations. For the open response, accept reasonable historically plausible reasons if all three motivations are included in exactly three sentences.