

Grade Level: 8th Grade

Topic: Railroad Expansion

Essential Question:

In what ways did building the Transcontinental Railroad change the United States?

Resources:

A. Library of Congress, Excerpt from Chapter 3 of Evolution of the Conservation Movement by Samuel Bowles, primary source.

<http://loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/riseind/railroad/trans.html>

B. Library of Congress, 1938 Interview with Mr. John Grosvenor, worker on the Central Missouri Pacific Railroad, primary source.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/riseind/railroad/cmp.html>

C. Smithsonian Institution, America on the Move. Photograph of completion of transcontinental railroad at Promontory, Utah.

http://amhistory.si.edu/onthemove/collection/object_370.html

Writing Types	Guiding Questions	Prompts	Reminders/Things to Consider (Student-Friendly Rubric Descriptors)
Argument	<p>What were the benefits of building the railroad?</p> <p>What were the drawbacks to building the railroad?</p> <p>In what ways did the construction of the railroad affect farmers and landowners?</p>	<p>You are a farmer in Nebraska. The railroad plans to run a line straight through your property, and you oppose building the railroad. Write a letter to your Congressional representative explaining why you do not think building the railroad west is a good idea.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State a clear claim related to the resources and the prompt.• Use relevant evidence from at least two of the sources to support your claim.• Clarify relationships between ideas and connect evidence to the argument.• Apply conventions correctly.
Informative Explanatory	<p>Resource A offers a description of the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, while Resource B offers a first-hand account of building the Central Missouri Pacific Railroad. What similarities exist between the two resources? What are the differences?</p>	<p>Compare and contrast the description in Resource A to the first-hand account in Resource B.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State a clear controlling idea that addresses resources and the prompt.• Use relevant details from at least two of the sources to explain the controlling idea.• Clarify relationships among ideas and those that explain the controlling idea.• Apply conventions correctly.



<p style="text-align: center;">Narrative</p>	<p>What was life like for the workers who built the railroad?</p>	<p>You are one of the people in the photograph who worked to build the Transcontinental Railroad. Write a letter home telling your family about this historic moment and how it compares to the hard work you have been doing for the past several months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a setting and a narrator/characters. • Use description and/or dialogue to develop situations or characters. • Use appropriate phrases and words to signal order of events. • Make sure you write an introduction and a conclusion that are appropriate. • Apply conventions correctly.
---	---	--	--