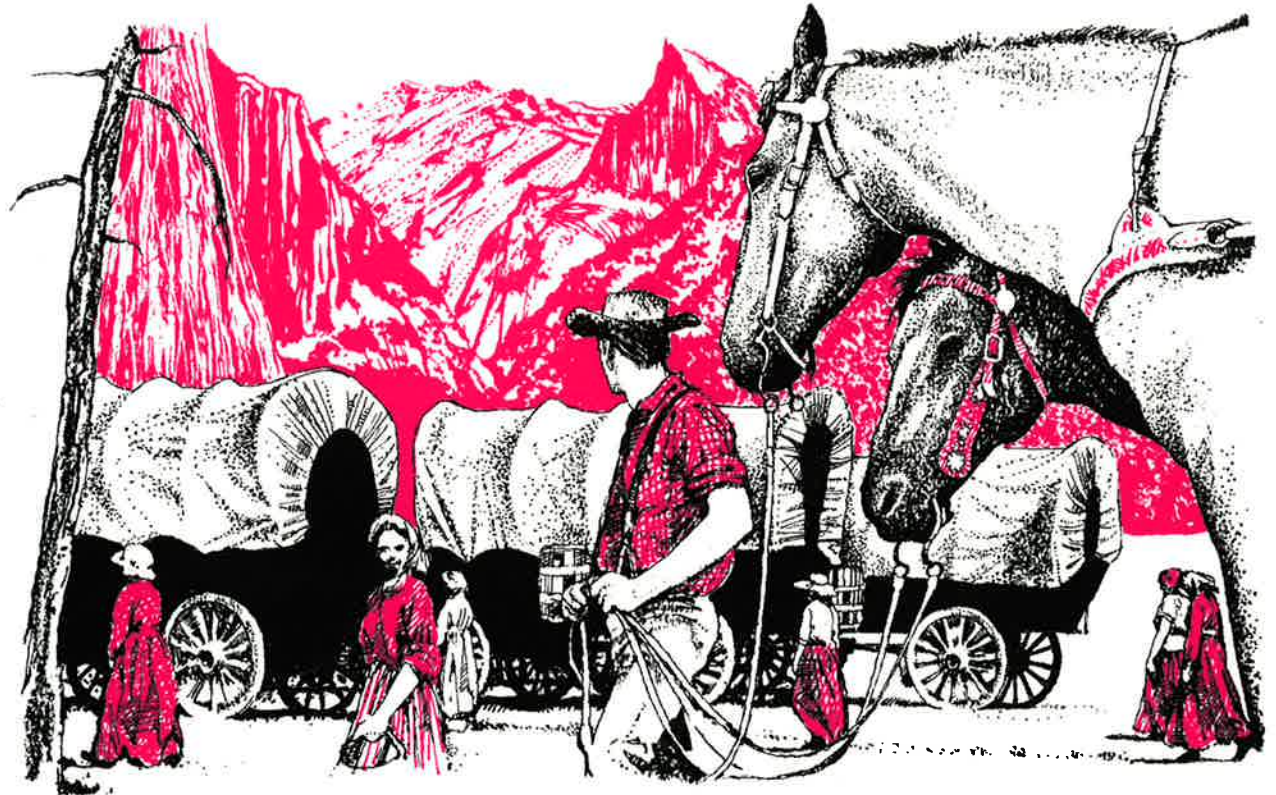


The Journey West

by Mabel Harmer



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1 A pioneer is a person who goes first and leads the way for others to follow. Years ago American pioneers moved west toward the ocean. There were no roads for them to travel on. The rivers had no bridges. There were wild ani-

mals in the woods.

2 Some of the pioneers journeyed on foot. Some rode horses or mules. But most of them used covered wagons.

3 Wagon wheels were large so that the wagons wouldn't get stuck in the mud.

The ends of the wagons were high. This was to keep things from sliding out on the hills. The wagons were filled with flour, salt, cornmeal, bedding, and tools. They also carried furniture. There would be no stores where the pioneers were going.

4 Most of the wagons were pulled by oxen. Oxen were slow. But they were strong.

5 Trees had to be cut down to clear a path. A wagon wheel would hit a rock and break. Bad rains made great mudholes. Uphill travel was hard. And downhill travel was dangerous. Strong men tied ropes to the wagon. They hung on to keep it from falling down the hill.

6 There were times when the pioneers could move down a river on a flatboat. But no matter how they went, they could go only a few miles a day.

7 There were many dangers on the way west. The oxen could pull the wagons across small streams. But there were deep rivers to cross, too. Logs were tied to the wheels of the wagons so that the wagons could float on the water. The oxen swam in front and pulled the wagons across. Men on horses helped to guide them. Sometimes a wagon broke loose and floated away and turned over.

8 Herds of buffalo on the plains could be dangerous. Great numbers of them raced across the land. They could

smash anything in their path.

9 Then there was danger from Indians. They did not welcome the white men who had come to take their land away. The white men came from the east and pushed the Indians farther and farther west. The white men took the land and killed the buffalo, the Indians' source of food and clothing. Because of this, the Indians were often unfriendly. For safety many wagons traveled together in a "wagon train." At night the wagons were pulled into a circle. The oxen were kept inside the circle. Pioneers could protect themselves better this way. And this kept the animals out of the reach of the Indians.

10 The first pioneers faced these kinds of dangers on their trip west. Then the railways were built. They crossed the whole country. The track that came from the East met the track that came from the West. This was the first chain of railways to cross the land. Now men could go from towns in the East to towns in the West in only a week. It opened up new lands for settlement. Dangerous trips in covered wagons were no longer needed.

11 Many years have gone by since the pioneers went over the mountains. They opened the way. They built homes. They built bridges. They built roads and railroads. But in doing this, they also pushed the Indian from his home.

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How Well Did You Understand?

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

1 This story shows

- a why pioneers had to go west
- b how pioneers traveled west
- c where pioneers built towns

2 The pioneers traveled in wagon trains

- a so they could help each other
- b so they would be better protected from Indian attacks
- c Both *a* and *b*

3 Because railroads were built,

- a the trip to the West became harder
- b more people came to settle in the West
- c roads were not needed any more

4 Many Indians disliked the pioneers because

- a the pioneers changed the Indians' way of life
- b the pioneers' oxen traveled too slowly
- c the pioneers knew how to travel in wagon trains

5 If the pioneers had *not* moved west,

- a railroads would not have been invented
- b there would probably be fewer buffalo today
- c Indians would probably be

Learn about Words

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Directions: Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning below. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 went; made the trip (2)
- 2 blankets, sheets, and pillows (3)
- 3 unsafe things; risks (7)
- 4 steer; lead (7)
- 5 areas of flat, grassy land (8)
- 6 greet; act friendly toward (9)
- 7 supply; where it comes from (9)

C too = also
two = the number after one

Say *too* and *two*. They are homonyms. **Homonyms** are words that *sound* the same but aren't spelled the same and don't mean the same thing.

Directions: Look at each word in **heavy type** below. Note the paragraph number. Look at the paragraph and find the homonym. Which of the two words fits in the blank in the sentence? Write the word.

- 8 **road** (2)
There was no ____ for the pioneers.
- 9 **reins** (5)
Heavy ____ made lots of mud.

Think about It

D A **fact** is something that can be proved. It is a true statement. An **opinion** is what someone thinks. It cannot be proved.

Fact: The pioneers went west.

Opinion: They carried too much.

Directions: Read each sentence. If it can be proved, write *fact*. If it cannot be proved, write *opinion*.

- 1 People today can travel faster than the pioneers.
- 2 The pioneers wore odd clothes.
- 3 There were no roads for the pioneers to travel on.
- 4 They should have used better wagons.
- 5 No one today is as brave as the pioneers.

E quickly = quick + **ly**
 poisonous = poison + **ous**

The letters *ly* and *ous* are called suffixes. A **suffix** is added to the end of a word. It changes the word's meaning. The suffix *ly* makes a word tell "how." The word *quickly* tells *how* something was done. The suffix *ous* means "full of." The word *poisonous* means "full of poison."

Directions: Each word in **heavy type** needs a suffix. Choose the correct suffix—*ly* or *ous*. Write the new word.

- 6 The trip was full of danger.

7 Traveling was slow. The wagons moved **slow**_____.

8 Some Indians became friends with the pioneers. They were **friend**_____.

9 The pioneers worried about being safe. They wanted to arrive **safe**_____.

10 When the pioneers reached the West, they were full of joy. They were **joy**_____.

F Suppose you are going to write a report called "What Happened to the Indians?" Read each item. If it fits your main topic, write the letter of the item. If it does not, don't write anything. (**Hint:** Only five items will fit your main topic.)

- a what Indian tribe names mean
- b why Indians fought white men
- c why Indians were killed by white men
- d how Indians celebrate holidays
- e where pioneers came from
- f why Indians had to move farther west
- g what happened to the Indians' source of food
- h how Indians lost their land