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ABSTRACT

This educational simulation is designed to develop planning, decision-making, problem-solving, and writing skills to teach students about U.S. history and geography as they travel the Oregon, California, and Mormon trails as emigrants. The manual is divided into two parts. Part 1, "Product Instructions," contains: (1) "The Product at a Glance"; and (2) "Getting Started." Part 2, "Classroom Resources," includes: (1) "Classroom Ideas"; (2) "Student Activity Sheets"; (3) "Background Information"; (4) "Notes on the Simulation and Its Underlying Models"; and (5) "Bibliography." Of particular interest to teachers is the Classroom Ideas section containing 16 activities, including: (1) "Mapping the Western Trails"; (2) "The Prairie Schooner"; (3) "Who Should Go West with Me?"; (4) "Planning for the Trip West"; (5) "Supplies To Take with Me"; (6) "Journal of the Westward Journey"; (7) "Diversity of People on the Western Trails"; (8) "Native American Nations along the Western Trails"; (9) "Historical Figures"; (10) "Strategies for Success"; (11) "At the End of the Trail"; (12) "Write about Someone You Met on the Trail"; (13) "Role-play for an Oral or Written Report"; (14) "An 1800s Newspaper"; (15) "The United States in 1850"; and (16) "Follow-up Session." Contains a selected bibliography of 56 items. (EH)

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Oregon Trail® II CD

No. CD-644
Instructional Computing Courseware
for Macintosh® Computers
and Microsoft® Windows™

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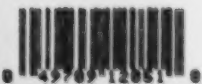
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CD644M



Oregon Trail® II CD

No. CD-644
Instructional Computing Courseware
for Macintosh® Computers
and Microsoft® Windows™



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This manual is compatible
with
the *Oregon Trail*[®] II CD
Version 1.x

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1 computer laser optical disk: sd., col., 4 3/4 in. + 1 manual.

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System requirements for disk with Windows: Windows-compatible PC with 486 microprocessor; 4 MB RAM (8 MB RAM recommended); DOS 5.0 or later; Windows 3.1 or higher; hard disk with 12 MB free space; double-speed CD-ROM drive; SVGA color monitor (256 color); Windows-compatible sound card; Windows-compatible mouse.

Title from title screen.

Ed. statement from disk label.

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Audience: Grades 5-12.

Summary: An educational simulation designed to develop planning, decision-making, problem-solving, and writing skills and teach students about American history and geography as they travel the Oregon, California, and Mormon trails as emigrants.

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Product Instructions

This part of the manual includes the following sections:

The Product at a Glance provides a brief summary of the product, including grade range, hardware requirements, and learning objectives.

Getting Started provides start-up instructions.

For step-by-step operating instructions, please refer to the on-line Help or on-line User's Guide included on the CD.

The Product at a Glance



Oregon Trail® II

The *Oregon Trail® II* educational simulation lets students experience U.S. history firsthand as they travel the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails as an emigrant, facing daily dangers while bringing a wagon party across the continent. Just like the emigrants of 1840 to 1860, students must rely on an authentic handbook for guidance and can record their thoughts and impressions in the built-in diary.

To begin, students choose one of four jumping-off towns, select the year in which they want to travel (from 1840 to 1860), set the skill level, and buy supplies. As they travel, they can talk with nearly 200 different people, some of whom will help, and others who may be tricksters or fools. If they don't linger too long, they can also take time to appreciate the breathtaking scenery and three-dimensionally rendered towns and forts. Students need to plan their time to avoid getting caught in the mountains after the snow starts to fall!

Oregon Trail II can motivate students whether they are learning about movement across North America, exploring the significance of the Louisiana Purchase, studying women as immigrants or as settlers, or investigating controversy surrounding U.S. expansion. It's a big challenge to cross the

The Product at a Glance

country by covered wagon—a challenge that students will find difficult to meet—but that's part of the learning experience!

Curriculum Areas: Social studies, language arts

Subject: American history and geography

Grade Range: 5–12

Required Hardware: Microsoft® Windows™

- 486 or higher
- Microsoft Windows 3.1 or higher
- DOS 5.0 or later
- 256-color SVGA display
- 4 MB RAM required, 8 MB recommended
- 8 MB RAM required to use this product with Windows for Workgroups
- Mouse
- 12 MB hard-disk space
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive
- Windows-compatible sound card

Macintosh®

- 68030 required (LC III or greater)
- 68040 or Power Macintosh recommended (accelerated for Power Macintosh)
- System 7.1 or later
- 5 MB RAM required, 8 MB recommended
- 13" or larger color display required (640x480, 256 colors)
- 12 MB hard-disk space required
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive required

Learning Objectives: This program is designed to help students:

- relive a period in time that forever changed the United States
- learn about American history and geography by traveling the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails
- gain insight into different perspectives on migration and U.S. expansion
- enhance decision-making skills by wrestling with the hard choices faced by the pioneers

The Product at a Glance

- gain experience in problem-solving by overcoming a unique set of trials at each stage of the journey and with each new game
- learn about planning by forming long-term strategies and carrying them out through day-to-day decisions
- improve writing skills by using the built-in diary to capture the people and events encountered en route

Getting Started

Installing the Program

Windows

To install the program in Windows:

1. From Windows Program Manager or File Manager, pull down the File menu and choose Run.
2. Type **D:Setup** and press Enter. (If your CD-ROM drive is not drive D:, type the appropriate letter.)
3. Follow the on-screen prompts until the installation is complete.
4. To start the program, double-click on the *Oregon Trail II* icon in the MECC group on your desktop, keeping the CD in your CD-ROM drive.

Macintosh

To install the program on a Macintosh:

1. Insert the CD in your CD-ROM drive. Double-click on the Installer icon.
2. Follow the on-screen prompts until the installation is complete.
3. To start the program, double-click on the *Oregon Trail II* icon on your hard disk, keeping the CD in your CD-ROM drive.

Running the Program

Windows


All of the information you need for running the program is available while you play. After you start the program, pull down the Help menu and choose *Oregon Trail II Help* to see a list of topics.

A condensed version of the Help file is available in the *Oregon Trail II User's Guide*, which is with the *Oregon Trail II* program icon in the MECC group. Click on the User's Guide to open it.

Getting Started

For troubleshooting information related to installing or starting the program, see the README.txt file on the CD.

Macintosh

All of the information you need for running the program is available while you play. After you start the program, pull down the Guide Menu  (in the upper right corner of your screen) and choose *Oregon Trail II Help* to see a list of topics.

A condensed version of the Help file is available in the *Oregon Trail II User's Guide*, which is at the main level of the *Oregon Trail II* CD. Double-click on the User's Guide to open it.

For troubleshooting information related to installing or starting the program, see the README file on the CD.

Classroom Resources

*This part of the manual provides a variety of materials to help you use **Oregon Trail II** in the classroom.*

Classroom Ideas *provides lesson plans and other materials to help you integrate **Oregon Trail II** into your curriculum.*

Student Activity Sheets *provides materials that you can copy and distribute to your students.*

Background Information *provides information about how the product was designed.*

Notes on the Simulation. . . *provides additional information on pioneer experiences as well as on the underlying models used for the simulation.*

Bibliography *provides a list of additional resources related to the westward trails and this period in history.*

Classroom Ideas

Mapping the Western Trails

- Objective:** To familiarize students with a map of the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails (based on the one that can be accessed in *Oregon Trail II* via the Game menu's Map command) and to encourage them to find various locations on it.
- Materials:** One "Mapping the Western Trails" student activity sheet (page 22) per student or small group of students.
- Activity:** The student activity sheet on page 22 shows a map of the western United States and lists a number of places for students to locate on the map. Ask the students to work individually, in pairs, or small groups to label the map, following the directions on the student activity sheet.

You may want to make sure that students understand that borders are in many cases very different today than they were in the mid-1800s. This map uses present-day borders and state names. However, of the 12 states that students are asked to designate on this map, only Illinois and Missouri were states with their present borders during the entire 1840–1860 period of *Oregon Trail II*.

Two other states—Iowa and California—were created during this period, and three others—Kansas, Oregon, and Nevada—were created only a few years later. Further, the entire territory of the states of California, Nevada, and Utah, plus other territory not directly involved in the *Oregon Trail II* simulation, was part of Mexico during the early years of this period. Modern state and national borders are used on this map simply to provide students with familiar references in helping them learn about the western trails.

The Prairie Schooner

- Objective:** To learn about the "prairie schooner," the most common type of covered wagon used on the western trails in the 1840s and 1850s.

- Materials:** One "The Prairie Schooner" student activity sheet (page 24) per student or small group of students.
- Activity:** This is a very simple activity that younger students may find especially enjoyable. The activity sheet shows several views of a typical covered wagon, or "prairie schooner," of the kind that traveled the western trails. Some of the key parts of the wagon are labeled, and students are asked to speculate about the functions of several of those parts. (Wagon tongues were attached to the animals' yoke assembly. The bows were the wooden or, occasionally, metal frames that supported the wagon cover. A grease bucket was necessary because wagon wheels and axles needed frequent lubrication.) Students also learn about the contents of a typical wagon.

Who Should Go West with Me?

- Objective:** To practice problem-solving and critical-thinking skills by considering a group of twelve would-be travelers and determining which four of them would be the best companions on a journey on the Oregon, California, or Mormon Trail.
- Materials:** One "Who Should Go with Me?" student activity sheet (page 27) per student or small group of students.
- Activity:** This is an intriguing problem-solving activity in which students—either individually or in small groups—try to decide on the best group of potential travelers to accompany them on a hypothetical journey on the western trails. Students should carefully consider the skills and talents—as well as possible disadvantages—each candidate would bring to the wagon party. Once they've settled on the "ideal" party, students should be prepared to explain and justify their selections. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, although choices should be supported by sound reasoning. You might encourage students to discuss and debate each other's choices. (Note that these characters do not appear in *Oregon Trail II*. They're simply part of this problem-solving activity.) The "Answer Key: Who Should Go with Me?" on page 28 provides some but not all of the considerations.

Planning for the Trip West

- Objective: To give students practice with planning and research skills as they consider the kinds of decisions they would need to make before embarking on the Oregon, California, or Mormon Trail.
- Materials: One "Planning for the Trip West" student activity sheet (page 29) per student or small group of students.
- Activity: Students will answer a series of questions that require them to plan for their journey. Most of the questions have no single correct answer. Teachers may wish to perform this activity orally, using a "What do you think . . . ?" format that leads students to answers. Students can obtain the information they need to answer the questions from classroom texts, lectures, and discussions, research in a library, historical society, or museum, or previous experience with *Oregon Trail II*.

Supplies to Take with Me

- Objective: To encourage students to think about the kinds of supplies they might want to buy before setting out on the trail.
- Materials: One "Supplies to Take with Me" student activity sheet (page 25) per student or small group.
- Activity: Ask students to review the list of items listed on the student activity sheet on page 25. For each item, they should decide whether or not it would be a good item to take along and why.

Although *Oregon Trail II* always provides players with the option to buy a "basic set" of supplies (mostly food) before beginning their journey, this basic set doesn't include a number of items that can prove beneficial along the way. The underlying model of *Oregon Trail II* recognizes whether players have various supplies and will modify the likelihood of certain events occurring or having a positive resolution, depending on whether those supplies are present. For instance, players who have a pick ax or shovel among their supplies are more likely to be able to clear a trail blocked by fallen rocks than those who don't have one of those tools. Players who have boots, mittens, and warm clothing are

much less likely to suffer frostbite in cold weather than those who do not have such items.

There's a degree of subjectivity involved in this activity. While a grandfather clock may not seem a wise thing to take along with you on a long wagon journey (it costs a lot; it is heavy and takes up a good deal of room in the wagon; it might easily get broken), some students may devise a fairly sound rationale for taking one (it might prove to be a highly desirable item for trading; it might be a good "investment," worth even more at the end of the trail than it was at its beginning). The most important thing is that students consider the advantages and disadvantages of each item and come up with good reasons for their decisions.

Journal of the Westward Journey

Objective: To provide practice in writing, organizing, and imagining skills as students keep a journal or diary describing their simulated journey on the Oregon, California, or Mormon Trail, including its beginning and conclusion.

Materials: Word-processing program for working with the diary exported from *Oregon Trail II*.

Ask the students to keep a journal of their activities in preparation for and during their journey. They can use the Diary available with *Oregon Trail II*, recording their thoughts on a regular basis during the journey west and making additional entries when major events occur. You may want to encourage students to use their imagination to add interesting details not included in the simulation itself. For instance, they might write about an impromptu dance held around the campfire one night, with fellow emigrants playing fiddles, guitars, and "mouth organs" (harmonicas). Or they might write about an interesting or thrilling event, such as a severe storm or a chance meeting with a group of Native Americans.

Students can use the Export feature (under the File menu) to export their diaries for use with a word-processing program. From here, they can embellish their entries, turn the text into a story, or compare their record with those of published diaries from the same year (see "Bibliography" beginning on page 63). Students may also enjoy sharing and comparing journal entries.

Diversity of People on the Western Trails

Objective: The purpose of this lesson is twofold: (1) to encourage students to use the "talk features" of *Oregon Trail II* and (2) to help them understand and appreciate the fact that a wide diversity of people traveled the western trails and lived in the western part of North America during the mid-1800s.

Materials: One "Diversity of People on the Western Trails" student activity sheet (page 31) per student or small group.

Activity: Travelers on the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails may have encountered a great diversity of people on their long journey. Some of them would have been fellow members of their wagon train or other travelers with whom they crossed paths. Others would have been people who lived at various points along the way.

Ask students to identify the different people they may encounter while using *Oregon Trail II* by using the program's "See who's around" and "Talk to this person" features. For each person that they meet, ask the students to record the person's name and where they met that person. (They probably won't meet all of the people in any one journey.)

Native American Nations Along the Western Trails

Objective: To provide students with information about some of the Native Americans that emigrants on the western trails encountered and that they themselves may "encounter" while playing *Oregon Trail II*. Also, to encourage students to use the program's "talk features" and to gather information about Native Americans.

Materials: One "Native American Nations Along the Western Trails" student activity sheet (page 35) per student or small group.

Activity: Ask students to answer the questions on the "Native American Nations Along the Western Trails" activity sheet, using library references, local museums, personal interviews, and information available as they play *Oregon Trail II*.

The "Answer Key: Native American Nations Along the Western Trails" on page 36 summarizes some of the

information that students may discover about these Native American nations while using *Oregon Trail II*.

Historical Figures

- Objective:** This activity is designed (1) to help students distinguish between those persons that appear or are mentioned in *Oregon Trail II* who are actual historical figures and those who are simply fictional characters that represent some of the "typical" people one might have met along the western trails; and (2) to encourage students to conduct research about a historical figure and to write or present a report about that person.
- Materials:** One "Historical Figures" student activity sheet (page 38) per student or small group.
- Activity:** As you determine the length and format of the report, keep in mind that information about some of these people is much easier to obtain than for others. *Oregon Trail II* itself—particularly in the program's Glossary feature—contains some information about many (though not all) of these people. Additional information can be obtained from encyclopedias, textbooks, and books about the western trails.

The names of actual pioneers who traveled the Oregon, California, and/or Mormon Trails during the mid-1800s appear in the program's default "List of Legends." Some of them are considerably more famous than others. Jesse Applegate blazed the Applegate Cutoff into southern Oregon. George Washington Bush was an African American who led the first wagon train to the Puget Sound region of modern-day Washington state in 1845. In 1842, Stephen Meek served as a trail guide for what was probably the first Oregon Trail wagon train consisting of more than one hundred persons. Ezra Meeker traveled the Oregon Trail in 1852; in his old age, in 1906, he traveled back along the same route from memory, providing historians with valuable information about the trail. Eliza Hart Spalding was a missionary who, along with her husband, traveled with the Whitmans to Oregon. Elisha Stephens led the first large wagon train over the Sierra Nevadas in 1844. The less well-known Mary Bartlett, Celinda Hines, and Thomas Knight were other early emigrants along the

Classroom Ideas

western trails; it may be especially difficult for students to locate information about these three.

The final group of eight persons who, among others, are mentioned in passing in *Oregon Trail II* should pose relatively little difficulty to students conducting research about the western migrations. Their names are relatively well-known and information about them should be fairly easy to come by. Certain trail segments and/or landmarks are actually named after Samuel Barlow, Kit Carson, Lansford Hastings, Frederick Lander, and Peter Lassen. John C. Frémont is famed as an explorer of the American West, Mexican War hero, and later unsuccessful presidential candidate. After having traveled much of the trail himself, Francis Parkman wrote the book *The Oregon Trail*, recognized as a classic of American literature. And Brigham Young is, of course, the famous Mormon leader who led the first great Mormon exodus to the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847.

Strategies for Success

- Objective:** To encourage students to think about the various challenges they face in *Oregon Trail II*, how they go about trying to avoid them, and how they deal with them when they occur. It also asks them to compare their views with each other; in this way, it becomes a cooperative-learning activity.
- Materials:** One "Strategies for Success" student activity sheet (page 40) per student or small group.
- Activity:** In this activity, students are asked to describe what they believe to be the best strategies for avoiding and/or coping with various challenges they face on the trail. This activity can be done either individually or in small groups. Students should then compare and discuss their views with the class as a whole and evaluate them. In this way, students may learn from each other about new strategies for success.

Some information about how students might overcome problems in *Oregon Trail II* can be found in the program's on-line sources of information: the Guidebook and Glossary, as well as statements made by various characters that students may encounter during the simulation. But it has long been said that "experience is the best teacher," and that's certainly true in *Oregon Trail II*. The best way for

students to learn how to deal with the challenges in the program is to face them head-on, make decisions, observe the outcomes, and make future decisions based on what they have observed. Of course, different students who use the program can share their experiences and benefit from each other's success and mistakes.

At the End of the Trail

- Objective:** To help students practice their skills at recall and comprehension as they answer a set of questions about a just-completed simulated journey on the westward trails.
- Materials:** One "At the End of the Trail" student activity sheet (page 43) per student or small group.
- Activity:** In this activity, students answer a series of questions about a journey they have just completed. In anticipation of this activity, you may encourage students to take notes along the way or to save and print copies of their Diaries before they exit the program. (An excellent time to do this is when they arrive at their destination.) Students should also be encouraged, as they run the simulation, to use its Guidebook and talk features to obtain additional information.

Write About Someone You Met on the Trail

- Objective:** Students will practice their writing, observation, and imagining skills to create a character sketch of one of the people appearing in *Oregon Trail II*.
- Materials:** One "Write About Someone You Met" student activity sheet (page 46) per student.
- Activity:** As students run the simulation, have them pay special attention to the options that allow them to talk with people along the trail. Ask them to select one of these characters, give that character a name (if he or she doesn't already have one), and create a written sketch of that character based on appearance, attitudes, and experiences, as well as what they themselves have to say. They might incorporate quotations from that character into the sketch.

Alternatively, students might read all or part of an actual diary and write a sketch of a historical person. Various diaries are noted in the "Bibliography," beginning on page 62.

Role-play for an Oral or Written Report

- Objective:** To help students develop their skills at using their imagination, making an oral or written presentation, and viewing facts and concepts from the perspective of a person from a different time, place, and cultural background.
- Materials:** One "Role Play" student activity sheet (page 47) and writing materials for each student
- Activity:** This activity asks students to try to "walk in the moccasins" of a Native American living in the Great Plains region during the early and later periods of the overland migration. The activity sheet describes three scenes from the life of a young Native American living in the mid-1800s. Students may want to work with just one of these scenes, two of them, or all three. They might contrast, for instance, the period before 1849 with the period after 1865.

Students can be given questions to consider when they assume their role, such as "What do I see?" "How do I feel?" "What do others in my village say?" "What are my expectations?" and "What are my fears?"

If this activity is done orally, you could have students play their roles individually, in pairs, or in groups. Students can use their imaginations to create new scenes or to elaborate upon the ones described on the activity sheet. For instance, students playing the role of a young adult Native American might be reporting to their elders what they have just witnessed. The elders can ask questions to which the young adult can respond. A debate might then ensue regarding a possible course of action.

Incidentally, before students role-play nineteenth-century American Indians, you may want to discuss the issue of inaccurate and offensive stereotyping with them and provide them with guidance in trying to avoid it. For example, students should be encouraged to use their natural manner of speaking in their presentations. Remind them that

the Native Americans of the 1800s were just as fluent in their own languages as we are in ours. If stereotypes nevertheless emerge from the presentations, you may want to continue this discussion afterward, soliciting students' feelings and opinions.

Conclude the activity by listing on the chalkboard all of the changes reported from one time period to the next. Discuss the implications for Native Americans, overland emigrants, and the western states and territories. If a database is being maintained, you might enter these items into the database.

An 1800s Newspaper

Objective: To help students practice their research, writing, and cooperative skills as they work together to simulate an 1800s newspaper.

Materials: One "An 1800s Newspaper" student activity sheet (page 48), additional writing materials, a word-processing program, computer printing capabilities, and perhaps a desktop-publishing program.

Activity: In this activity, which will probably require a week or more of work, the class will create a simulated newspaper from a year in the 1800s that you've settled on as pertinent to your study of westward expansion. Assign students to different tasks (or ask for volunteers), with the ultimate goal to have the class create a newspaper covering the people, places, and events of the year in question.

A good deal of research will be necessary and, perhaps, require library time. For some tasks, such as desktop publishing (if you decide to use such a program), the students may need an especially high degree of teacher assistance.

Please Note: Some towns in *Oregon Trail II* have newspaper offices, where students can see headlines from the period in which they are traveling.

The 1800s-style newspaper produced as a result of this activity might be suitable for display on a bulletin board or for duplication and distribution.

The United States in 1850

- Objective: To help students practice their skills in map-reading and historical perspective by examining a map of the United States as it was in 1850 and answering a pair of related questions, one of which requires them to consider the modern-day boundaries of the United States as well.
- Materials: One "The United States in 1850" student activity sheet (page 49) per student or per small group.
- Activity: Students have an opportunity to examine a map of the United States as it appeared in 1850, the middle of the time period during which *Oregon Trail II* is set.

Follow-up Session

- Objective: To help the teacher and the students evaluate the success of the *Oregon Trail II* simulation and associated activities in terms of their educational value.
- Materials: None required (there is no accompanying student activity sheet).
- Activity: You and your students can consider the following set of questions as you evaluate your use of *Oregon Trail II* and your study of the western trails and westward migration. These questions relate the overall experience to learning objectives for social studies and language arts, as presented in "The Product at a Glance," beginning on page 2. You may want to pose them orally to students in class, soliciting different student opinions and observations, perhaps (but not necessarily) coming to consensus on some questions.
1. Has using the *Oregon Trail II* simulation and associated activities given you:
 - a. a new awareness of decisions and their consequences? (For example, if you decide to save money by not buying spare parts, what might happen?)
 - b. new skills in forming or organizing ideas based on a large body of information? (For example, what

- are the common elements in the movements of large groups of people?)
- c. a new understanding of how a group of people living in another time and/or place acted under difficult circumstances? (For example, have you ever been on a bike, bus, or automobile ride and wondered how long it would take you to reach your destination? Can you imagine a 2,000-mile trip that was at times slower than walking?)
 - d. new skills in making group decisions? (For example, if you want to take a longer route, but other members of the wagon train want to take the short cut, how is the decision made? What might you do or say to persuade others to take the longer route?)
5. Has using *Oregon Trail II* and associated activities helped you to:
- a. look for details and try to understand how they add to the importance of the whole? (For example, in the simulation, Chimney Rock is a "detail." What is the significance of this detail in the program? On the trail?)
 - b. interpret a small piece of information and try to understand its relationship to the whole? (For example, another emigrant on the trail might warn you not to push your animals too hard. What's the relevance of this piece of advice?)
 - c. imagine yourself back in another time and place, experiencing life in a different way? (For example, if you had lived in the mid-1800s instead of the late 1900s, how would your life be different? In what ways, if any, might it be very similar?)
 - d. think of people today in other parts of the world who experience life differently than you do? (For example, are there groups of people in the 1990s who leave their homes, either willingly or unwillingly, with little expectation of ever returning?)
 - e. cooperate with others in trying to achieve a common goal? (For example, what problems,

Classroom Ideas

discussions, disagreements, compromises, and decision-making strategies occurred along the trail? Were their outcomes satisfactory? For you individually? For the group? What might you—both as an individual and as a group—have done differently to achieve a more satisfactory result?)

- f. gain a greater appreciation for respecting the needs of others in group activities? (For example, were there times when you did something you didn't want to do or didn't do something you wanted to do because of the wishes or needs of someone else in the wagon train? Did you make any sacrifices for the well-being of others—or did anyone else make sacrifices for your well-being? What were the advantages and disadvantages of having to take into account the wants and needs of others?)

After discussing these and other questions, you may want to use *Oregon Trail II* again to determine if this discussion had an impact on student success in reaching their destination, experiencing less frustration and fewer deaths, or attaining higher scores in the game.

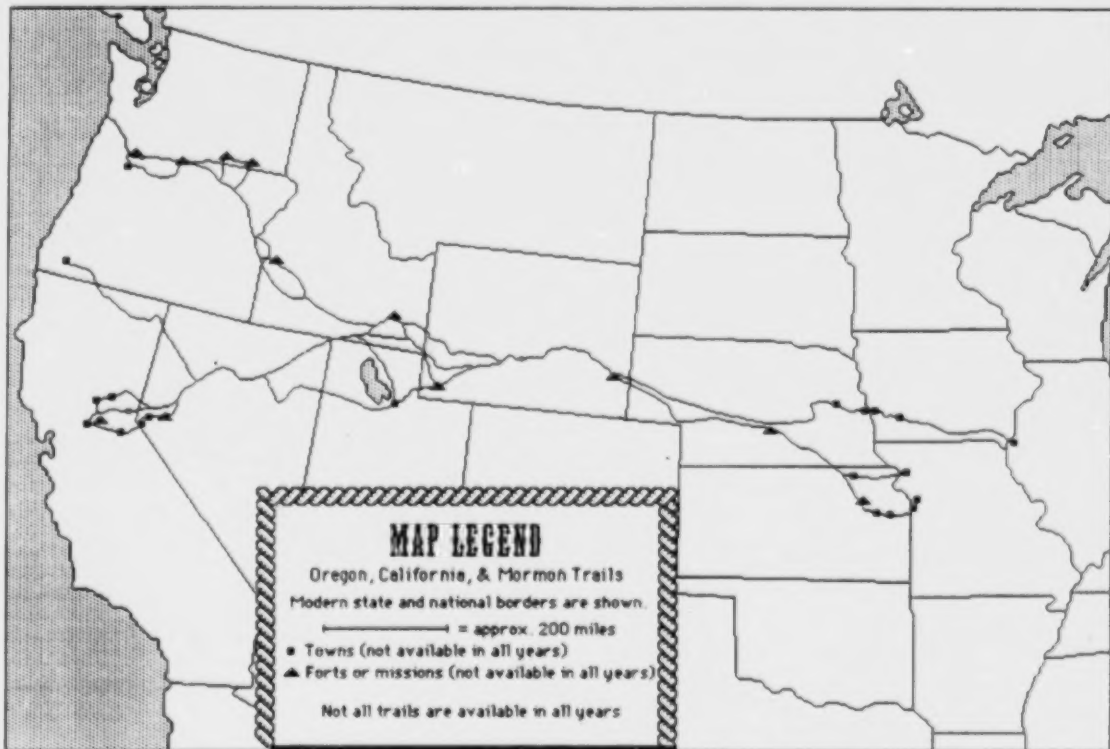
Student Activity Sheets

Use the following handouts with activities described in "Classroom Activities."

1. Mapping the Western Trails	22
Answer Key: Mapping the Western Trails	23
2. The Prairie Schooner	24
3. Supplies to Take with Me	25
Answer Key: Supplies to Take with Me	26
4. Who Should Go with Me?	27
Answer Key: Who Should Go with Me?	28
5. Planning for the Trip West	29
Answer Key: Planning for the Trip West	30
6. Diversity of People on the Western Trails	31
Answer Key: Diversity of People on the Western Trails	32
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Mapping the Western Trails

1

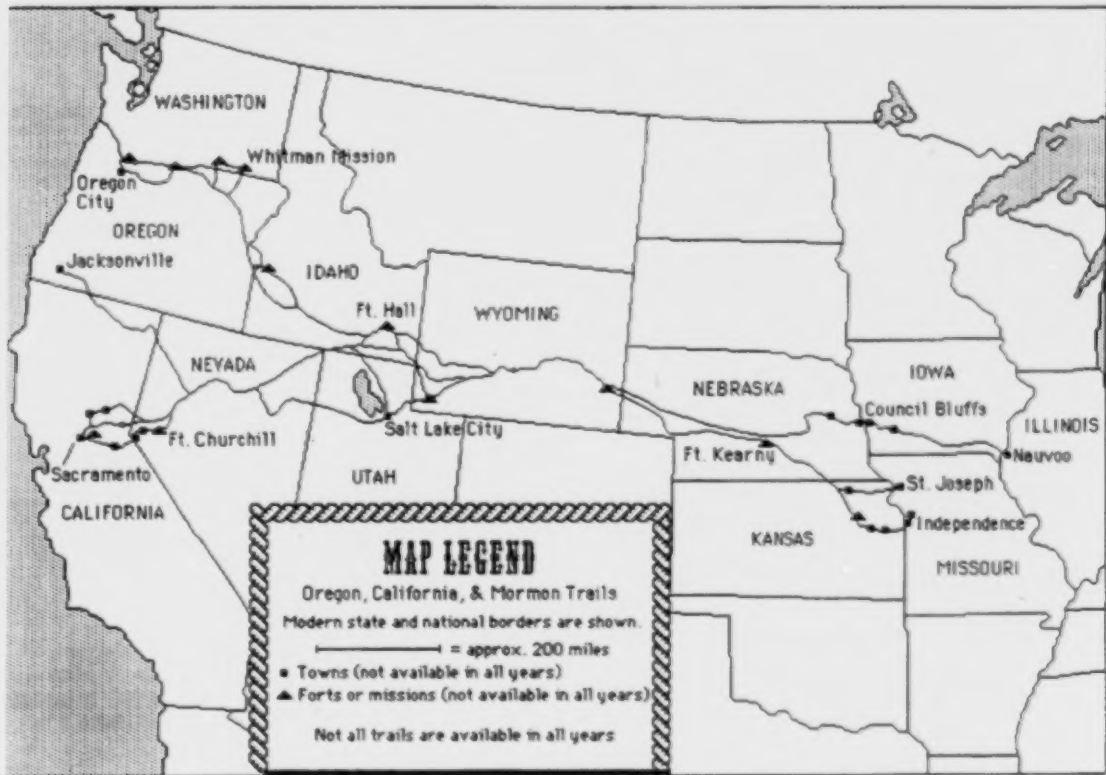


On the map above, indicate the following:

1. The names of the 12 states through which the trails pass.
2. The locations of the following jumping-off towns:
 - a. Independence
 - b. St. Joseph
 - c. Nauvoo
 - d. Council Bluffs (originally called Kanesville)
3. The locations of the following trail destinations:
 - a. Willamette Valley/Oregon City
 - b. Sacramento Valley/Sacramento
 - c. Rogue River Valley/Jacksonville
 - d. Salt Lake City (originally Great Salt Lake City)
4. The locations of the following selected forts and missions:
 - a. Fort Kearny
 - b. Fort Hall
 - c. Whitman Mission
 - d. Fort Churchill

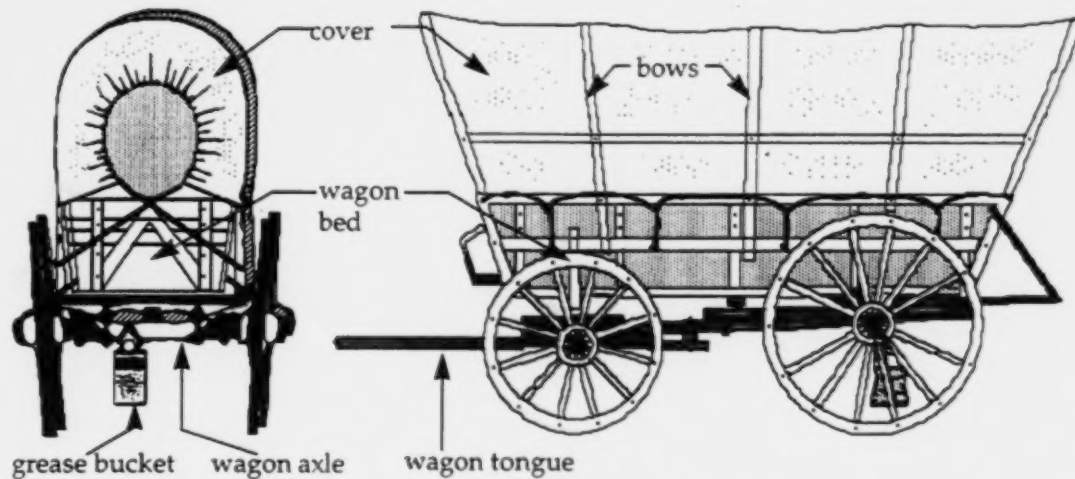
Answer Key: Mapping the Western Trails

The places that students are asked to locate on the map are indicated on the map below, which essentially serves as an "answer key."

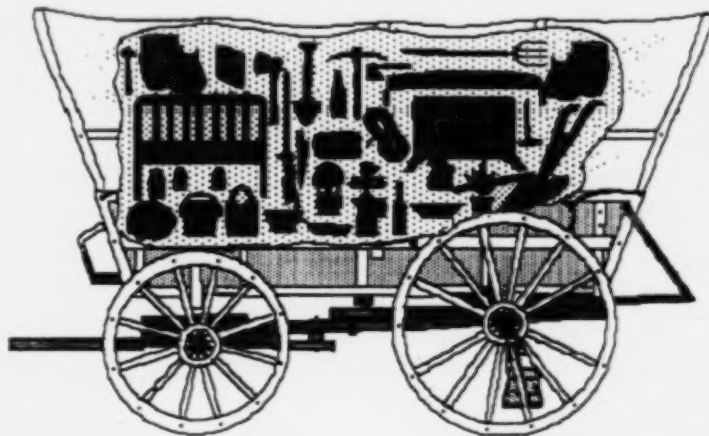


The Prairie Schooner

2



What was the function of the wagon tongue? Of the bows? Why would travelers need a grease bucket?



What kinds of supplies can you find in this wagon?

Travelers rarely rode inside covered wagons. Instead, wagons were loaded with several thousand pounds of supplies.

Supplies varied from wagon to wagon, but most included tools (such as axes, shovels, saws, and pitchforks), cooking utensils, blankets, ammunition, strong rope, and, of course, food (mostly canned). People would also often bring furniture and family heirlooms along, but these were frequently left abandoned along the trail in an effort to lighten the load.

Supplies to Take with Me

3

Out on the trail, maybe hundreds of miles from the nearest town or trading post, pioneers were pretty much on their own. When getting ready for their long journey west, they had to consider carefully the kinds of things they would need along the way. Every item they took with them had some disadvantage: it cost money to buy in the first place, it took up space in the wagon, and its weight added to the burden on the wagon and the animals that pulled it. So each item's possible advantages had to outweigh these disadvantages.

Think about each of the following items that might be included among your supplies on the trail. Would you buy that item? (Would it make a difference whether or not you had a lot of money to spend?) How would that item be used, or what good would it do you on your long journey? (An example is provided.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Buy it?</i>	<i>Why or why not?</i>
Example: boots	yes	They may help keep your feet warm and protect you from snakebites.
salt		
canteen		
mirror		
hammer		
iodine		
fishing pole		
matches		
guitar		
grandfather clock		
rope		
hatchet		
dried fruit		
hat		
set of china		
butter churn		

Answer Key: Supplies to Take with Me

The following "answers" are only illustrative, not definitive. (Please see discussion under "Supplies to Take with Me" on page 10.)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Buy it?</i>	<i>Why or why not?</i>
Example: boots	yes	They may help keep your feet warm and protect you from snakebites.
salt	yes	To season food and help preserve fresh meat.
canteen	yes	To allow you to travel longer and more safely in dry regions.
mirror	no	Its cost, size, weight, and breakability outweigh its advantages.
hammer	yes	To help make wagon repairs.
iodine	yes	To help disinfect wounds.
fishing pole	yes	To catch fish at rivers along the way.
matches	yes	To more easily light fires for cooking, warmth, and light.
guitar	maybe	It may help boost morale despite its cost and other disadvantages.
grandfather clock	no	Its cost, size, weight, and breakability outweigh its advantages.
rope	yes	It may prove useful going up and down hills and crossing rivers.
hatchet	yes	For chopping wood and clearing fallen timbers that block the trail.
dried fruit	yes	To help provide a well-balanced diet—especially to prevent scurvy.
hat	yes	To block the sun and to provide additional warmth in cold weather.
set of china	no	Its cost, size, weight, and breakability outweigh its advantages.
butter churn	maybe	If you have a milk cow, it can be used to churn the fresh milk into butter, which "keeps" longer.

Who Should Go with Me?

4

The year is 1848. Let's say you're a banker and you have no family. You're getting ready to move west on the Oregon, California, or Mormon Trail. You're acquainted with 12 other would-be travelers, but you have room in your wagon party for *only four*. It's up to you to decide who should go with you. Keep in mind that you'd be wise to choose those who will prove most helpful along the way.

Read the following descriptions. Then choose the four you're going to take along. Be prepared to explain your choices.

Saul Martin - A 28-year-old carpenter who has lived most of his life in Boston.

Willie Jones - A 46-year-old frontiersman with experience as a tracker, hunter, trapper, and scout.

Sarah Danford - A 30-year-old missionary who has lived and worked among the Lakota Indians (with whom she has very good relations) and knows several Indian languages.

Amos Wilson - A 51-year-old medical doctor from Atlanta, Georgia.

Silas Granger - A 31-year-old farmer and riverboat worker who plays the fiddle.

Ned Jenkins - A 26-year-old former slave who's worked as a blacksmith and cook.

Henry Smith - A strong, healthy 16-year-old orphan from St. Louis who's eager for a new life out West.

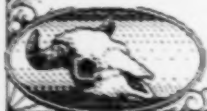
Juliet LaFarge - The 24-year-old widow of a French trader (whom she had often assisted with trading) with six years' experience living in the mountains.

Fred Wheaton - A 35-year-old Philadelphia scientist well-trained in biology, chemistry, and astronomy, who's also a very talented artist.

Juan Rodriguez - A 23-year-old Mexican immigrant who's worked as a cattle driver and speaks Spanish, English, and French and knows Indian sign languages.

Elizabeth Brown - A 39-year-old wealthy British adventurer, world traveler, and former actress who also happens to be a crack sharpshooter.

Spike - A large two-year-old German shepherd trained as a watchdog.



Answer Key: Who Should Go with Me?

The following are examples of some, but not all, of the considerations:

Saul Martin – As a carpenter, he'd help repair broken wagon parts. His urban background, however, may work against him on a long frontier journey.

Willie Jones – His frontier experience (especially in hunting) would be valuable. In the mid-1800s, however, 46-year olds were often considered past their prime.

Sarah Danford – Her experience with American Indian people might be very helpful. Those who are religious might also like having a missionary along for the journey, whereas others might not.

Amos Wilson – A medical doctor could help prevent and cure illness, treat injuries, and save lives. His age works against him.

Silas Granger – He has experience with farm animals and rivers. His fiddle could also provide entertainment and boost morale.

Ned Jenkins – As a blacksmith, he could help with wagon repair. And with his skill as a cook, he'd probably be able to prepare nutritious, appetizing meals.

Henry Smith – A strong, enthusiastic youth could be a valuable asset on a long journey. He seems, however, to lack any special skills.


Juliet LaFarge – Her experience in trading and mountain life could be helpful.

Fred Wheaton – His knowledge of plants, animals, minerals, and astronomical observation could prove helpful on the trail. Some might consider his skills too academic in nature, however.

Juan Rodriguez – His experience might help ensure better care and health of the draft animals. His language skills could help in communicating with the many different kinds of people you may meet on your way to Oregon.

Elizabeth Brown – She has money (always useful) and travel experience, and her acting skills could help with morale. Her skill with a gun can't hurt either.

Spike – A healthy dog could assist in hunting. He could also keep watch at night, alerting the party to thieves and marauders.



Planning for the Trip West

5

_____! I hear you're planning to move out west!

1. Why are you going? Give me three or four reasons.
2. Who else is going with you? Are you traveling alone?
3. What will you travel in? Tell me what it looks like.
4. How many and what kinds of animals are going with you?
5. What food will you take?
6. What will you take besides food?
7. What is the best time to leave?
8. What is a "jumping-off" place?
9. About how many miles is it from your jumping off point to your destination?
10. What long rivers will you follow for much of the trail?



Answer Key: Planning for the Trip West

Most of the questions have more than one answer. Below are some acceptable answers and information to help round out the questions.

1. Times are hard in the East; adventure; free land in the West; to follow friends and relatives who have already made the journey.
2. A covered wagon. Typically, emigrants used a farm wagon with a flat bed about ten feet wide with sides two feet high, built of seasoned hardwood and covered with canvas. It was often called a "prairie schooner." (The prairie schooner was not the same as the older and larger Conestoga wagon, which was too big and heavy for such a long trip.)
3. People usually (but not always) traveled with their families, often in groups of wagons called wagon trains. Early wagon trains were small. They grew larger after the 1849 Gold Rush.
4. Usually eight to twelve oxen were used to pull a wagon. Oxen were cheaper and easier to care for than horses and they could feed more easily on the plains grasses. They were harder to steal and, once in Oregon, better for clearing the land. Horses were often brought along for scouting the trail or for trading.
5. Staple food items included flour, bacon, coffee, sugar, and salt. Of course, additional items would be brought along according to individual tastes.
6. Spare parts: wagon tongues, spokes, axles, wheels, grease buckets, water barrels, and heavy rope. Kitchenware: kettle, frying pan, coffee pot, tin plates, cups, knives, forks, and spoons. Clothing, bedding, and other household items varied greatly. Iron bedsteads, oak cupboards, and even pianos were abandoned along the trail.
7. Early spring. Feed was sometimes carried for the first weeks. The livestock was expected to feed on grass for the remainder of the journey.
8. "Jumping off" places were such towns along the Missouri River as Independence and, later, St. Joseph. Council Bluffs was the usual starting place for Mormon emigrants.
9. It was about 2,400 miles from the Missouri River to the rich farmland of the Willamette Valley. "Cutoffs" could shorten—or lengthen—the distance.
10. The Platte joins the Missouri River and continues for a thousand miles, wide and muddy. The Platte formed a virtual two-lane highway with emigrants traveling along both banks. Depending on their routes, emigrants might also follow the Kansas, Sweetwater, Snake, and Humboldt Rivers for lengthy stretches of the trail.

Diversity of People on the Western Trails

6

Travelers on the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails encountered a great diversity of people on their long journey. The people they encountered included fellow members of their wagon train, other travelers, and people who lived along the way. Use the following list and the program's "See who's around" and "Talk to this person" features to record some of the different people you encounter while using *Oregon Trail II*. (You probably won't meet all of these people in any one journey.)

<i>Person</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Where You Met Them</i>
Irish immigrant		
Bannock Indian		
Methodist missionary		
African-American cowhand and former slave		
Mexican army officer		
French trapper		
Shoshoni chief		
African-American seamstress		
Chinese immigrant		
Aristocratic Hispanic woman		
Potawatomi trader		
Russian immigrant		
Mormon businessman		
Southern woman, a former slave owner		
British doctor		
German immigrant		
Other groups		

Answer Key: Diversity of People on the Western Trails

The following information summarizes how students might "fill in the blanks" as requested in this activity.

<i>Person</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Irish immigrant	The only Irish immigrant in the program is a fictional character named Casey O'Neill, whom students may encounter in many different locations in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> .
Bannock Indian	There are several Bannock Indian characters, all of them fictional. Among those whose names are given in the program are a young man named Strong Hand, a middle-aged woman named Woman Who Came Back, a youth named Badger Keeper, and a man named Bear Tooth. They may be encountered at various locations along or near the Snake River in modern-day Idaho.
Methodist missionary	The two Methodist missionaries who appear in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> are the actual historical figures of Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife, Narcissa Whitman. Students will probably encounter one or both of them at the Whitman Mission before November 1847.
African-American cowhand and former slave	The African-American cowhand and former slave is a fictional character named Austin Billings. Because he's always a member of the same wagon train that students travel with while using <i>Oregon Trail II</i> , they're likely to meet him at many different points along the trail.
Mexican army officer	Two Mexican army officers, both of them fictional, appear in the program along the California Trail before 1846, when the trail passed through what was at that time Mexican territory. One is Capt. Juan Santayana, who speaks English and whom students may meet at Big Meadows in present-day Nevada. The other is Capt. Ernesto Muñoz, who does not speak English. Students may encounter him at the American River crossing near modern-day Sacramento, California.
French trapper	Two fictional French trappers appear in the program, but only one of them is given a name: François du Brec. Students may meet him at The Dalles before the construction of the Barlow Toll Road in 1846.
Shoshoni chief	The Shoshoni chief who appears in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> is the actual historical figure of Washakie, a leader of the Wind River Shoshoni who lived along the Green River in what is today southwestern Wyoming. Students may meet him at the Green River crossings on the main trail to Fort Bridger.

Answer Key; Diversity of People on the Western Trails (continued)

<i>Person</i>	<i>Notes</i>
African-American seamstress	The African-American seamstress is a fictional character named Sophie Billings, who happens to be the wife of Austin Billings, described previously. Like her husband, she's a member of the wagon train and thus may appear frequently along the way.
Chinese immigrant	Two Chinese immigrants are fictional characters in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> . a young woman named Li Tzu-chen and a man named Jin Sim. Students may encounter them in California. Incidentally, an unnamed Asian-American woman also appears in the program as a member of your wagon train, but as a native-born American (she doesn't speak with a Chinese accent) she should not be confused with the Chinese immigrants.
Aristocratic Hispanic woman	The aristocratic Hispanic woman in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> is a fictional character named Josefina Iturrieta de Panisello (pronunciation: HO-suh-FEE-na EE-tur-ee-AY-tah duh PAN-ee-SAIL-yo). As a traveler through the West—though not a member of your wagon train—she may be encountered at various sites.
Potawatomi trader	Two Potawatomi traders appear in the program, both of them fictional characters: Joseph Mascouten and his sister, Naomi Mascouten. (By the mid-1850s, many Potawatomis had adopted the name patterns of European-Americans, often using their traditional "clan names" as their surnames.) They may be found along the Mormon Trail at the Potawatomi settlement known as Indian Town, in present-day Iowa. Students may also consider the historical Potawatomi chief and bridge-keeper Louis Vieux (whom they may meet at the Red Vermillion River crossing on the main Oregon Trail) as a "trader" since they can trade with him if they wish.
Russian immigrant	The Russian immigrant who appears in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> is a fictional character named Natalia Nyasnakovich. Students may meet her at any number of different spots along the trail.
Mormon businessman	Any number of different people that students may encounter in Nauvoo, Kaneshville/Council Bluffs, or Salt Lake City, as well as along the Mormon Trail, may be interpreted by them as being "Mormon businessmen." The only character in the program who is specifically identified as a businessman and who, as a citizen of Salt Lake City in the 1850s, is almost certainly Mormon, is the fictional character Augustus Parkinson.

Answer Key: Diversity of People on the Western Trails (continued)

Southern woman, a former slave owner	The Southern woman and former slave owner (specifically identified as such) in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> is a fictional character named Helen Whitney, whom students may encounter at various points along the way. A recent convert to the cause of abolition, she speaks of her family having freed their slaves and heading out west in search of a new home where slavery is not permitted.
British doctor	The only British doctor in the program is an actual historical figure: Dr. John McLaughlin, whom students may meet at Fort Vancouver before it is taken over by the Americans in 1846.
German immigrant	The German immigrant in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> is a fictional character named Ilsa Weismann. As is the case with many other characters, students may encounter her at different locations.
Other people	If students choose to identify other groups of people in the program, they have a wide range to choose from, including an assortment of European Americans of various backgrounds and occupations, other African American and Hispanic characters, and other Native Americans (including members of the Arapaho, Cayuse, Cheyenne, Kansa, Lakota, Paiute, Pawnee, Tsinuk, and Umatilla nations, as well as others not identified by nation). Students may also distinguish people by age groups; <i>Oregon Trail II</i> includes children and teenagers as well as young, middle-aged, and elderly adults. Other people that students may identify include soldiers and army officers, "mountain men" (and one "mountain woman"), traders, trappers, townspeople, "snakeoil salesmen," officers of the law, blacksmiths, doctors, ferry operators, bridgekeepers, people from different regions of the country, and so on. Because there are nearly 200 different characters in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> , students may have a good deal of latitude in this "other" category.

Native American Nations Along the Western Trails

7

Many of the emigrants traveling along the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails during the mid-1800s never encountered any American Indians (Native Americans) during the entire course of their journey. Others did. More often than not, these encounters were peaceful, sometimes with trading taking place. Only occasionally were the encounters violent. The common movie or television "western" incident of hostilities between wagon train emigrants and American Indians was the rare exception, not the rule.

Wagon trains passed through the traditional lands of many different Native American nations on their way to the Far West. The names of some of these nations are listed below. In playing *Oregon Trail II*, use the "See who's around" and "Talk to this person" features often in hopes of encountering people who belong to these Native American nations. Check off the ones you encountered, tell where you met them, and provide some additional information about them. For example, did they tell you their name? Were they interested in trading with you? And so on.

<i>Native American Nation (Actual Name)</i>	<i>More Familiar Name of That Nation</i>	<i>If Encountered, Where?</i>	<i>Other Information</i>
Bannock	Bannock		
Cayuse	Cayuse		
Inuna-ina	Arapaho		
Kansa	Kansa (or Kaw)		
Lakota	Sioux		
Paiute	Paiute		
Pawnee	Pawnee		
Potawatomi	Potawatomi		
Shoshoni	Shoshone		
Tsinuk	Chinook		
Tsistsistas	Cheyenne		
Umatilla	Umatilla		

Answer Key: Native American Nations Along the Western Trails

The students' answers may include the following information:

- Bannock** A Great Basin people whom westward emigrants sometimes encountered in what is today western Wyoming and southern Idaho, particularly along the Snake River. Several fictional Bannock characters appear in *Oregon Trail II*, including a middle-aged woman named Woman Who Came Back, a youth named Badger Keeper, a young man named Strong Hand, and an older man named Bear Tooth.
- Cayuse** A Plateau nation that pioneers encountered in present-day northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington. Two unnamed Cayuse characters appear in the program, only one of whom has a "speaking role."
- Inuna-ina** More commonly but incorrectly known as the Arapaho (a name possibly of Pawnee origin), these are a Plains Indian nation that emigrants might encounter along the North Platte River in what is today western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming. Two fictional Inuna-ina characters appear in the program: a middle-aged trader named White Hawk and a young part-white woman named Green Eyes, who serves as an English translator for her chief, Talks to the Coyote (also a fictional figure).
- Kansa** Also known as the Kaw, this is another nation of the Plains Indian culture group. Westward emigrants might encounter them in the area around the Kansas River in what is now northeastern Kansas. Two fictional Kansa appear in *Oregon Trail II*: an unnamed woman and a man named Brown Fox.
- Lakota** The Lakota, together with their close relatives the Dakota and Nakota (who are collectively often referred to as the Sioux, a word that many of them dislike intensely because it's derived from an Ojibwa term of insult), are the most familiar and wide-ranging of the Plains nations. In *Oregon Trail II*, they may appear in the region of present-day western Nebraska and eastern and central Wyoming. Two fictional Lakota characters appear in the program: an unnamed young girl and a man named Running Elk.
- Paiute** The Paiute are a nation of the Great Basin culture group. In *Oregon Trail II*, you may encounter them along the California Trail in the region of modern-day Nevada. Two fictional Paiute characters appear in the program: an unnamed young man and a young woman named Lucia, who has been raised by Spanish missionaries.

Answer Key: Native American Nations Along the Western Trails (continued)

- Pawnee** Another Plains nation, the Pawnee may be encountered in the region of present-day eastern and central Nebraska. In fact, a Pawnee settlement known as "Pawnee Village" is located on the Mormon Trail on the north side. Two fictional Pawnee appear in the program: a trader named Tall Rain Cloud and an unnamed woman.
- Potawatomi** The Potawatomi, who often referred to themselves as the "Fire Nation," had been so strongly influenced by European-American culture by the time of the westward migrations, that many had adopted "white dress" and European-sounding names. Although originally based in the region of modern-day Michigan, by the mid-1800s they had been forced southwestward into Iowa and Kansas. *Oregon Trail II* includes three Potawatomi characters. One is an actual historical figure, Louis Vieux, a part-French Potawatomi chief who ran a toll bridge across the Red Vermillion River. The other two are fictional traders, Joseph Mascouten and his sister Naomi, who may be encountered at the Potawatomi settlement known as "Indian Town," located on the Mormon Trail.
- Shoshoni** The wide-ranging Shoshoni belong to the Great Basin culture group. In the program, they may be encountered in the area of present-day western Wyoming and eastern Idaho. Four Shoshoni characters appear in *Oregon Trail II*, including the actual historical figure Washakie, a chief of the Wind River Shoshoni who often helped emigrants cross the Green River. The other Shoshoni are fictional characters: Young Woman Who Sings, Many Horses, and Dancing Water Woman (who, because she is the wife of a white trader, travels beyond the usual Shoshoni lands into eastern Wyoming).
- Tsinuk** The Tsinuk (more often spelled "Chinook") were famed as traders, traveling all over the northwest. Their language, in fact, became something of a lingua franca during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries among travelers in the modern-day regions of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia. In *Oregon Trail II*, you may meet an unnamed Tsinuk trader at or near Fort Walla Walla.
- Tsistsistas** Often called the Cheyenne, the Tsistsistas are a Plains people who, in *Oregon Trail II*, may be encountered in western Nebraska and eastern and central Wyoming. Several fictional Tsistsistas appear in the program: an unnamed woman and two young men named Counting Coups and Stares at the Sun.
- Umatilla** The Umatilla are a Plateau people who live in eastern Oregon. One Umatilla character appears in the program, an unnamed woman.

Historical Figures

8

As you use *Oregon Trail II*, you'll meet a large number of characters. (In fact, *Oregon Trail II* includes nearly 200 different characters.) You can usually get advice from these characters and/or have "conversations" with them either by clicking on them when they appear on the screen or clicking the "Talk with this person" button when it's available. Most of these characters are fictional, although they represent the kinds of people one might have met along the western trails back in the mid-1800s. Some of the characters in *Oregon Trail II*, however, are historical figures who actually lived along the western trails. An alphabetical list of the historical figures who appear in *Oregon Trail II* is provided below.

Choose one of these historical figures as the subject of a brief report. Do some research (using encyclopedias, other reference books, and even *Oregon Trail II* itself) to learn more about this person. Tell who he or she was, describe their significance to the westward migration, and provide any other interesting information you can find. Some of these people are more historically significant than others. As a result, information about some of them will be harder to find than for others. If you find that you're unable to obtain any information about your chosen person, you may need to choose a different historical figure as the subject of your report.

Historical figures who appear in *Oregon Trail II*

James (Jim) Beckwourth	Thomas "Peg-Leg" Smith	Dr. Marcus Whitman
Jim Bridger	Johann (John) Sutter	Narcissa Whitman
Dr. John McLaughlin	Louis Vieux	
Joseph Pappan	Washakie	

Additional historical figures whose names are listed in the *Oregon Trail II* default "List of Legends" (high-score list):

Jesse Applegate	Thomas Knight	Elisha Stephens
Mary Bartlett	Stephen Meek	William Wiggins
George Washington Bush	Ezra Meeker	
Celinda Hines	Eliza Hart Spalding	

Other historical figures who are mentioned in passing in *Oregon Trail II*:

Samuel Barlow	Frederick Lander
Christopher (Kit) Carson	Peter Lassen
John C. Frémont	Francis Parkman

Answer Key: Historical Figures

The following information provides a very brief description of each of these historical figures. Your students' reports should no doubt be more detailed.

James (Jim) Beckwourth	An African-American "mountain man," trail guide, and scout who discovered Beckwourth Pass through the Sierra Nevadas.
Jim Bridger	Another famous "mountain man," perhaps the first "non-Native" American to set eyes upon the Great Salt Lake; also the co-founder of Fort Bridger.
Dr. John McLaughlin	The British chief factor at Fort Vancouver until the Americans took over in 1846. Because he helped so many emigrants coming into the region, he is today revered as "The Father of Oregon."
Joseph Pappan	One of the more obscure figures on this list, Pappan was one of two part-Indian brothers who, beginning in 1844, ran a ferry across the Kansas River.
Thomas "Peg-Leg" Smith	A "mountain man" who ran a trading post along the Bear River from 1848 until around 1851.
Johann (John) Sutter	A Swiss immigrant who established a famous fort near where the American River flows into the Sacramento River in central California. He's also widely recognized as the founder of the town of Sacramento.
Louis Vieux	A chief of the Potawatomi who ran a toll bridge across the Red Vermillion River beginning in 1848.
Washakie	A chief of the Wind River Shoshoni who long maintained good relations with the Americans and often helped westward emigrants.
Dr. Marcus Whitman and Narcissa Whitman	A Methodist missionary couple who established a mission for the Indians near the present-day city of Walla Walla, Washington. Their mission was a frequent stop along the Oregon Trail until 1847, when it was destroyed and the Whitmans killed by a Cayuse party angry over a measles epidemic that was decimating their village.

Please Note: See "Historical Figures" beginning on page 13 for information about the other people mentioned in this activity.

Strategies for Success

9

As you use *Oregon Trail II*, you will encounter many different challenges, such as river crossings, hills to climb and descend, deserts, illnesses, injuries, wagon accidents, and bad weather. Some of these problems may be avoided with careful planning. Others are unavoidable. All of them, however, can be dealt with in different ways. The choices you make play an important role in determining your success in coping with these challenges.

The following list describes just some of the challenges you may encounter in *Oregon Trail II*. For each of the challenges you may face in *Oregon Trail II*, tell whether you think there's any way of avoiding this problem, or at least of reducing your chances of having this problem occur. Also tell what you think is the best way to deal with this problem.

River Crossings Is there any way to avoid crossing rivers? Are there any choices you can make before setting off on the trail that might make crossing rivers easier or less dangerous? What's the best way to cross a river? Or does it change depending on the river's current conditions?

Going Up and Down Hills Is there any way to avoid going up and down hills? Are there any choices you can make before setting off on the trail that might make going up and down hills easier or less dangerous? What's the best way to go up a hill? To go down a hill? Does it change depending on the hill's current conditions?

Snakebites Are there any choices you can make before setting off on the trail that might make snakebites less likely to occur or less dangerous if they do occur? What's the best thing to do if someone in your wagon party is bitten by a snake? Does it change depending on your current circumstances?

Cholera Are there any choices you can make before setting off on the trail that might make cholera less likely or less dangerous if it does occur? What's the best thing to do if someone in your wagon party comes down with cholera? Does it change depending on your current circumstances?

Desert Crossings Is there any way to avoid crossing deserts? Are there any choices you can make before setting off on the trail that might make crossing deserts easier or less dangerous? What's the best way to cross a desert? Or does it change depending on your current circumstances?

Other Challenges What are some of the other challenges you face in *Oregon Trail II*? What do you do to prepare for them or to try to avoid them? What decisions do you make when they occur?

Answer Key: Strategies for Success

Some good strategies for dealing with the challenges described in this activity are described below. Keep in mind that these strategies are neither comprehensive nor definitive. Students may come up with additional ideas that have equal merit.

River Crossings

There's no way to avoid crossing rivers; they're on every branch of the trail. Students who choose "riverworking" as one of their skills at the beginning of the game are less likely to have wagon accidents while crossing rivers. The best way to cross a river varies, depending on the circumstances. Ferries, if you can afford the toll, are always the safest means of crossing. Forging should never be attempted on rivers more than two-and-a-half feet deep.

Going Up and Down Hills

Like rivers, hills cannot be avoided, although some routes have fewer hills than others. Double-teaming is generally the best way to get up a steep hill, although on very steep hills, ropes or chains must be used. For this reason, students should make sure that they have a rope or chain with them at all times. (Remember: even if you buy one at the start of a journey, it may be lost in a river crossing or a wagon accident.) If necessary, students may need to lighten their wagon loads. Students should never go down a hill without at least locking their wagon wheels. Anchoring the wagon affords even more safety. Again, ropes or chains may be necessary for extremely steep hills.

Snakebites

Snakebites are more likely on some stretches of the trail than on others. Students are less likely to suffer snakebites if they count boots among their supplies. If a snakebite occurs, the tourniquet/suction method is invariably the best course of action. Resting immediately afterward (by clicking on the map and then choosing the Rest option) helps as well. Students who have medical skills (either because they choose doctor or pharmacist as their occupation or choose medical skills at the start of the game) are less likely to suffer snakebite deaths.

Cholera

In keeping with historical fact, cholera is one of the most common diseases on the trail. It's also one of the most fatal. "Instant" deaths from cholera are possible. (In fact, a person can die from cholera within a few hours.) The later your starting month, the greater your chances of cholera. Cholera is also more likely to occur during the historical epidemic years of 1849, 1850, and 1852, although this subtlety may be lost on students.

Answer Key: Strategies for Success (continued)

The best nineteenth-century treatment for cholera is laudanum, followed immediately by rest. If students don't have laudanum among their supplies, just resting is best, although peppermint may help. (Peppermint was a favored nineteenth-century remedy for stomach and intestinal problems.)

Desert Crossings

Unless they make a wrong turn, students won't encounter any real deserts on their way to the Willamette Valley of Oregon or to Salt Lake City, although some dry, semi-desert areas do indeed occur. One or more true deserts are unavoidable on the trails to the Sacramento Valley of California and the Rogue River Valley of Oregon. Students should always count at least a canteen and preferably a water keg among their supplies. These allow them to travel longer periods in desert and semi-desert regions. Shortly before encountering a true desert, students will have the opportunity to gather hay for their draft animals (unless there's snow on the ground, which eliminates this option). You should always take advantage of this opportunity; it greatly increases your animals' ability to survive the desert. When you come to a desert, you have the option of waiting until sunset before continuing. This "travel by night" option is always the best for crossing a desert. It's also a good idea to rush across the desert as quickly as you can, increasing your pace of travel to "12+ hours per day." Once you get across the desert, you can set your pace back to a "normal" 8 hours per day.

Other Challenges

There are many other challenges and difficulties in *Oregon Trail II* that can't be covered here. The important thing is that students should describe some additional "problems" and discuss the best ways of trying to avoid them or of coping with them should they occur.

At the End of the Trail

10

You're a newcomer to the western territories. You've rested after your long, hard journey. So now, before you get too busy, you should send your friends back home some information about the trail. Maybe they'll follow you here next year.

1. Which rivers did you cross?
2. Which rivers had ferry crossings?
3. How else could you cross a river?
4. What forts did you find along the trail?
5. Did supplies cost about the same from fort to fort?
6. What animals did you see along the way?
7. What mountains did you see?
8. What are the names of some of the American Indian nations who live in the regions along the trail?
9. Where did the trail split?
10. If you needed help crossing a river, whom could you hire?




Answer Key: At the End of the Trail

Many of the questions have no single correct answer. The following are some examples of answers as well as information to help round out the questions.

1. There are many rivers in the simulation; the ones crossed vary, depending on the route you take. Everyone must cross the North Platte River at least once and the Sweetwater River at least twice—and perhaps up to four times. Other rivers will vary according to the route.
2. If you travel in the early 1840s, you may not encounter *any* rivers with ferry crossings. In later years, a good number of rivers were spanned by ferries. Again, which ones will depend on the route.
3. If a river was very shallow, it might be crossed by fording it—that is, by pulling the wagon through with the draft animals still attached. Higher rivers could be crossed by turning the wagon bed over, caulking it with pitch to make it watertight, and piling the possessions on top so that it could be floated across as a “wagon boat.” Sometimes Indian guides could be hired to help. Some rivers had toll bridges or free bridges (especially in later years), and if a river is frozen, you might simply take your chances crossing on the ice.
4. Forts, too, vary with the year and the path taken. Among the forts that might appear in the simulation are Forts Kearny, Laramie (called Fort William or Fort John in early years), Bridger, Hall, Boise, Walla Walla, Vancouver, and Churchill, as well as Sutter’s Fort.
5. Generally, the farther west you traveled, the higher the prices. This was because of basic supply and demand. Interestingly, prices declined for a few items as you went west—most notably horses—since supply was greater in proportion to demand in the West than in the East.
6. In the hunting sequence, players can see squirrels, ground squirrels, rabbits, deer, elk, pronghorn, bison (buffalo), mountain goats, bears, geese, and ducks. Other animals are depicted in the program in other ways. In real life, emigrants might also see prairie dogs (a species of ground squirrel), prairie chickens, wolves, foxes, bighorn sheep, and cougars, among others.
7. This also varies with the path taken. South Pass crosses the Rocky Mountains’ Wind River Range. After Fort Boise, the Blue Mountains have to be crossed. The Barlow Toll Road passes through the Cascades. On the Mormon Trail to Salt Lake City, the Wasatch Range of the Rockies must be negotiated. Any path into California takes you over the Sierra Nevadas, as does the Applegate Road into southern Oregon, where one must also cross the Siskiyou Mountains. Traveling the Hastings Cutoff, you must cross the Pequop Mountains.

Answer Key: At the End of the Trail *(continued)*

8. Among the American Indian nations that appear in the program are the Bannock, Cayuse, Inuna-ina (Arapaho), Kansa, Lakota (Sioux), Paiute, Pawnee, Potawatomi, Shoshoni, Tsinuk (Chinook), Tsistsistas (Cheyenne), and Umatilla. As usual, the ones that students will particularly encounter will vary, depending on the routes they take.
9. There are several points at which the trails to Oregon and California split, although not all "splits" were available in earlier years: the Lander Cutoff, the "Parting of the Ways," Fort Bridger, Sheep Rock, and the California Trail Junction.
10. Indians were sometimes hired as guides to pilot emigrants across far-western rivers.



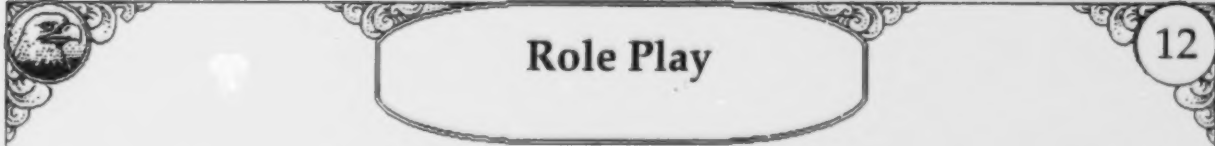
Write About Someone You Met

11

Directions: As you travel the trail with *Oregon Trail II*, use the program's "See who's around" and "Talk to this person" features. Write a character sketch about one of the people you see. Their speeches are short, but even a short speech can be full of hints about the speaker. What a speaker talks about can be a clue to what he or she considers important. Does a speaker mention the scenery or concentrate on the hardships? Does he or she seem to have a positive or negative attitude? Draw any conclusions you can about one of these characters and use your imagination to write a sketch.

You may choose to write about a real-life person based on accounts or diaries. Francis Parkman and Narcissa Whitman, among others, were westward emigrants who wrote about their experiences. If you choose to write a sketch about a historical person, you can use his or her own words to show character.





Role Play

12


The following scenes will call upon your imagination and require that you do some research before you can compare the experiences of an American Indian child and adult.

Scene 1: You are a twelve-year old member of the Cheyenne nation. Your people move camp to follow the buffalo and you have traveled many miles across the open plains with your family and other members of your nation. One day you're walking by yourself along a stream, out of sight from your camp. You suddenly see something very strange moving in the distance. You hide behind a small tree next to the stream and watch carefully. You see a group of large boxes on wheels covered over by odd-looking blankets. The boxes are being pulled by heavy-fleshed animals that look a little like buffalo, but different. Most of the people riding inside the boxes and walking beside them have lighter skin than you, but some have much darker skin. They all dress in unusual-looking garments, unlike any you have seen before. After they move out of sight, you run to tell your family about the amazing thing you have seen.

Scene 2: You're older now, an adult of thirty. You're with a group of family members and friends who are trading with the latest group of people crossing your traditional hunting territory in covered wagons. Your brother has just traded many deer and buffalo skins for a rifle. Some of the travelers are low on food and are eager to trade some of their blankets for the dried buffalo meat you have with you. You're thinking about it, wondering whether your elderly mother would like one of the brightly colored blankets.

Scene 3: You're the adult described in Scene 2. But you and your friends have now finished trading with travelers, and you're back in your village. You are listening to a meeting of elders who are discussing the increasing numbers of travelers through the region. Some of the elders like the greater trading opportunities brought by the travelers. Others are worried about the impact they are having on the land, including the effect on the herds of buffalo. You ask for permission to speak and they grant it. You tell how you feel, based on your experiences and how your family has been affected. How has your life changed since you first saw travelers like these when you were twelve years old? What things are different? Are the changes good or bad? What things have stayed the same?





An 1800s Newspaper

13

Your class is going to create a newspaper—not a modern-day newspaper, but one for a particular year in the mid-1800s, around the time when people were moving west on the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails.

Different members of the class will have different tasks. Maybe you can volunteer for certain jobs, or perhaps your teacher will let you know who will do what. Here are some of the many tasks that might be done:

- report on major news stories of the day
- find photographs or drawings to accompany some of those stories
- write editorials on controversial issues of the day
- draw a political cartoon about some important issue
- write a book or theater review that might have appeared at that time
- write about horse racing, sharpshooting, or other sports of the day
- write “letters to the editor”
- write an account of a wagon train journey to the western territories
- write an account of life for new settlers in the western territories
- report on a speech by the President or other governmental official
- create the design and layout of the newspaper
- write headlines
- type news copy
- proofread, correct, and edit the news copy
- perform paste-up and production work

For information about news stories of the day, you can use history textbooks, library books, or encyclopedias. Perhaps you can find and examine actual copies of old newspapers, which may be available on microfilm at your school library or your local public library.

After all this work is done, the final result should look like a newspaper that someone living in the United States in the mid-1800s might have read. Your class might decide to post the newspaper on a bulletin board. Or, it may be duplicated and distributed to students.

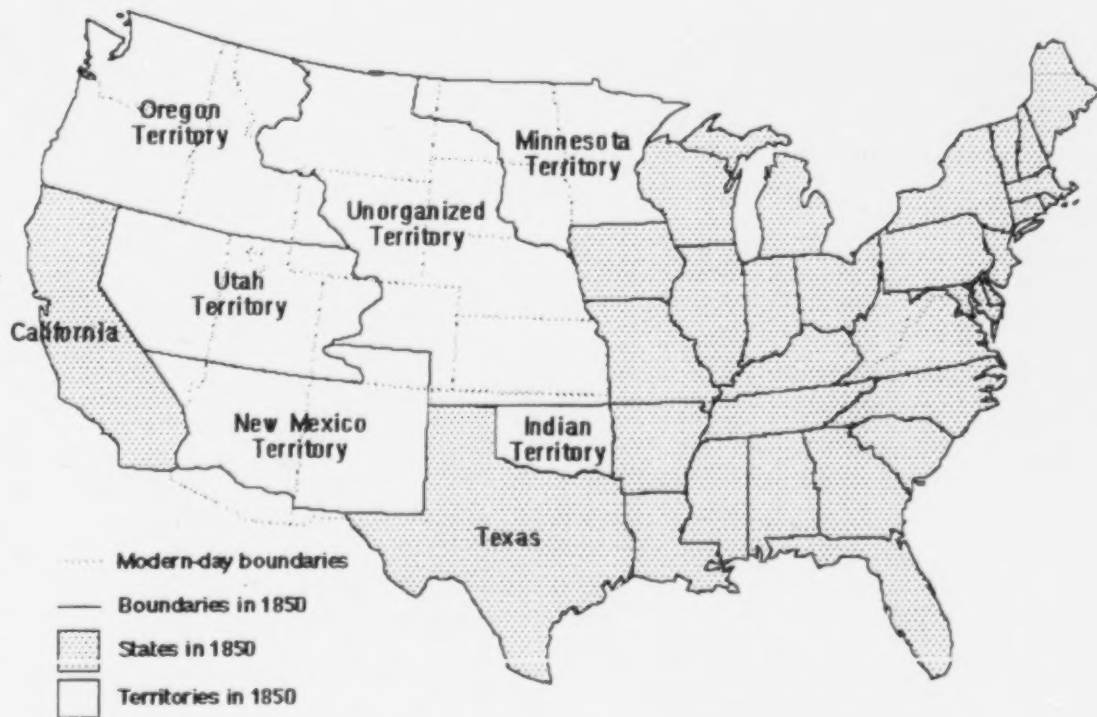


The United States in 1850

14

The map below shows the United States as it was in 1850. The middle of the time period during which *Oregon Trail II* is set. Answer the following questions related to this map:

1. What are the names of the five states that include land that was once part of the Oregon Territory?
2. In 1850, which state was completely separated by territories (that is, non-states) from all of the other states?



Answer Key: The United States in 1850

1. What are the names of the five states that include land that was once part of the Oregon Territory?

This question requires students to compare the boundaries in 1850 with those of today. The answer is Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana (partial), and Wyoming (partial).

2. In 1850, which state was completely separated by territories (that is, non-states) from all of the other states?

The answer is California, which became a state in 1850.

Background Information

The History of the Oregon Trail—The Trail Itself

The 1840s and 1850s were the peak years of westward migration over the Oregon Trail and other associated western routes—most significantly the California and Mormon Trails. Every spring, hundreds and often thousands of people would gather at one of the popular “jumping-off towns,” buy the supplies they would need for the long journey, and set off on the trail in wagon trains sometimes consisting of more than a hundred wagons (though usually the number was considerably less.) As has been pointed out by more than one historian, this overland trek represents perhaps one of the largest voluntary mass migrations of people in human history.

The western trails had been blazed during the first half of the nineteenth century by intrepid explorers who themselves were often following American Indian trails that had been established long before. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, traveling in the first decade of the century, were among the first and most famous to cover part of this route. But many other lesser-known figures, such as Robert Stuart, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Jedediah Smith, Christopher “Kit” Carson, Nathaniel Wyeth, Jim Bridger, James Beckwourth, and John C. Frémont, made important contributions in developing the western trails, sometimes blazing paths that later bore their names.

By the late 1830s, Americans living in the eastern half of North America began to view the territory west of the Mississippi River with increased interest. Only the part of that territory which was included in the Louisiana Purchase was recognized as a U.S. territory at that time. As reports filtered back east of the attractiveness of the far-western country, more and more Americans (as well as emigrants from overseas) were determined to settle the “new land” and to claim it for the United States. The Oregon Country (which included all of the present states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, plus parts of Wyoming and Montana as well as British Columbia) was jointly occupied and controlled by

Background Information

Great Britain and the United States, both of which had strong claims to the region. The equally attractive territory of California, plus other lands due east of it, was part of Mexico. But it was American settlers striking out for Oregon and California.

The First Large Organized Wagon Train

Although some small groups headed out earlier, the first large, organized wagon train set out from Independence, Missouri, in 1842. But the following year, 1843, is often recognized as the "real start" of the Oregon Trail. That was the year of what has come to be known as the "Great Migration." Led by Dr. Marcus Whitman (who had been living in the Oregon Territory for several years but had come back to attract additional settlers as well as support for his mission work) and John Gantt, the Great Migration consisted of 875 persons, roughly 75% of them women and children. The next year was the first in which more than a thousand people headed west in wagons.

Oregon's fertile Willamette Valley remained the predominant destination of the pioneers during the first several years of the migration. But in 1846 and 1847 a popular new destination and a new trail suddenly sprang up: the Great Salt Lake Valley, reached via the Mormon Trail, which began at Nauvoo, Illinois. That was when Brigham Young led the first group of Mormon immigrants to their "promised land" near the Great Salt Lake. During this period, nearly as many people went to Utah as to Oregon.

The California Trail

Before 1849, relatively few pioneers were bound for California, although the California Trail was known and in use. A few small parties went to California earlier, but Elisha Stephens led the first large wagon train over the Sierra Nevadas in 1844. Still, Oregon remained a far more popular destination. The discovery of gold in California in 1848 changed all that. It took a few months for word to spread, but in 1849 the Gold Rush was on. More than 20,000 people went to California in that one year alone, while fewer than 500 went to Oregon (whereas nearly three times that many had gone there the year before). Twice as many went to California in 1850. The numbers dropped off somewhat after that, although California would remain the preferred destination for most of the decade.

Not everyone who went to Oregon had their eyes on the Willamette Valley in the northwestern part of the state. The Rogue River Valley in southwestern Oregon also attracted emigrants. The opening in the late 1840s of an offshoot from the California Trail—the Applegate Road, later known as the Lassen Road or the Applegate-Lassen Road—allowed settlers to flood into southern Oregon.

By 1860

The great age of wagon trains on the western trails was over by 1860. After the Civil War, most of the people who went west would travel by stagecoach (service began in the late 1850s), railroad train (the Transcontinental Railroad was completed in 1869), or ship. Some small groups of wagons would continue west over the old trails as late as the 1880s, but in ever-decreasing numbers.

Here are some facts about the western trails that you and your students may find especially interesting:

- From 1840 to 1860, the total number of people who traveled the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails in wagon trains is estimated to be between 315,000 and 320,000.
- Although most of the pioneers survived to begin their new lives in the West, death was a frequent visitor along the trail. It's estimated that between four and six percent of the emigrants died in route—between 12,500 and 20,000 people. That translates to roughly one grave for every two football-field lengths (200 yards) of trail. A disproportionately large number of those who died were either children or elderly people.
- The four most common causes of death on the western trails were cholera, wagon accidents, drownings during river crossings, and accidental shootings.
- Contrary to popular belief, very few emigrants were killed in Indian attacks. During the entire period from 1840 to 1860, fewer than 350 emigrants were killed by Indians. That's only about one-tenth of one percent. Indian attacks were extremely rare, and most of the ones that did occur happened during the later years of the westward migration, when the emigrants began having significant negative effects on the

Background Information

American Indian nations of the region (the spread of disease, the decline of the buffalo herds, and increased encroachment on the land). In fact, encounters of any sort seldom took place between wagon-train emigrants and American Indians.

- Also contrary to popular perception, most of those who headed west in wagon trains were not poor, impoverished people desperate for a second chance. Rather, the westward migration was overwhelmingly a middle-class experience. Buying all of the supplies one would need for the journey wasn't cheap. In fact, the cost often amounted to well over the equivalent of a full year's wages for the average person. In short, very few poor people could afford to go west during the period 1840–60. Most of the people who traveled the western trails were relatively well-to-do folks who had led comfortable lives back East. But they yearned for even greater opportunity—not to mention sheer adventure. Essentially, most were successful people aiming to become more successful.
- Few people rode in their wagons, which were generally loaded to capacity with valuable supplies. Only very young children (under the age of five or so), the elderly, and the sick had the luxury of riding. Except for those who were fortunate enough to have horses to ride, everyone else walked the entire way.
- Although nearly every wagon party hunted for some food along the way, hunting was not the chief source of food on the trails. Before setting out on their journey, emigrants were advised to stock up on all the food they would need along the way. Hunting was unreliable at best as a source of food—especially in the 1850s and thereafter, when buffalo and other game became increasingly scarce. In addition, emigrants needed a lot more than just meat to survive. A diet consisting exclusively of meat left one susceptible to deficiency diseases.
- The most common deficiency disease on the trails was scurvy, which is caused by a lack of Vitamin C. People in the nineteenth century didn't know about Vitamin C, but they knew that fruits and vegetables, especially when fresh, could prevent scurvy. But because fresh

fruits and vegetables were hard to come by over much of the trail, pioneers would often prevent scurvy by eating pickles, brought with them, which were an excellent source of Vitamin C. Emigrants would sometimes also create a drink similar in taste to lemonade by watering down some vinegar and adding sugar. Since vinegar alone is a good source of Vitamin C, this also helped to combat scurvy.

The History of *The Oregon Trail*—The Educational Simulation

It's hard to believe that the story of *The Oregon Trail* educational simulation and its follow-up, *Oregon Trail II*, began more than 20 years ago. The original program was devised in 1971 by Don Rawitsch, then a student teacher, using a teletype machine and a mainframe computer. It was entirely text-based with no sound and graphics, a simple point-to-point simulation in which up to 16 students using terminals physically removed from the mainframe could play simultaneously. To hunt, students had to type BANG quickly enough to "shoot" the game. They had to wait several seconds before learning if their hunt was successful.

Rawitsch joined MECC at its founding in 1973, bringing his *Oregon* simulation with him. Employing the more powerful mainframe technology of the MECC Timeshare System, several hundred students at many different school sites could soon take part in the simulation at the same time. But the program was still entirely text-based. And so it remained for the next several years. Nevertheless, the simulation continued to grow in popularity.

A major leap forward occurred in 1979, when the trail simulation was first redeveloped for a microcomputer: the Apple II. The program was titled *Oregon*, and it was one of several programs on a 5 - 1/4" floppy disk called *Elementary Volume 6*. For the first time, students all over the country could enjoy this historical simulation. There were now simple graphics and sound, which look extremely primitive by today's standards, but which were a major breakthrough for the time. *Elementary Volume 6* quickly became MECC's best-selling product at the time, almost certainly because of the popularity of the *Oregon* simulation.

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Keep in mind that this was at the dawn of the microcomputing age. Few schools had microcomputers in 1979. A very strong argument can be made that **Oregon** was the first "hit" program in the field of educational computing. In fact, as the popularity of the program spread, the use of microcomputers in schools spread as well. The two phenomena fed each other: as microcomputer use grew, the popularity of **Oregon** grew, which further encouraged more microcomputer purchases and use. The Apple II soon dominated the school computer market. And the whole field of educational software developed. The **Oregon** simulation was, in fact, the first of the "founding programs" in the field.

Later versions of the **Oregon** simulation, still part of *Elementary Volume 6*, were developed for the Atari, Commodore 64, and Radio Shack computers. But the next really big step took place in 1985, when Apple II Version 1.0 of *The Oregon Trail* first appeared as a stand-alone product for the home market. The greatly expanded program had been totally redesigned with an increased emphasis on historical accuracy and validity as well as educational application. Graphics and sound were also enhanced. *The Oregon Trail* immediately became MECC's new best-seller.

Other versions of *The Oregon Trail* followed: Apple IIGs and networkable Apple versions in 1987; an MS-DOS version in 1988; an enhanced VGA/MCGA version for MS-DOS in 1991. Also in 1991, MECC introduced *Wagon Train 1848*, a Macintosh-only cooperative-learning version of *The Oregon Trail*, in which students playing together over a network could link their computers up to form wagon trains. In essence, each Macintosh computer became a separate wagon in the train, and students could communicate with each other and work together over the network. The Macintosh version of *The Oregon Trail* itself, with a whole new desktop interface, followed soon after. And in 1992 the Oregon desktop interface moved over to MS-DOS as well, with the added appeal of high-resolution VGA graphics, digitized sound, MIDI music, and other enhanced features.

The first CD-ROM versions of *The Oregon Trail* (MECC's first CD-ROM product ever) appeared in 1993. These were basically the previously released Macintosh and MS-DOS versions of the program with improvements in sound, music, and graphic, but now, of course, delivered on the

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increasingly popular CD. These, too, quickly became best-sellers.

But even as these first CDs were being shipped, MECC was already making plans for a new version of the program—one that would from its very conception be totally redesigned with digital technology and CD storage capabilities in mind. It would be the culmination of nearly two full years of research and development. It would be the first of a whole new generation of MECC programs. And it would be so different, so much more advanced than any previous version of *The Oregon Trail* that it had to have a new name: *Oregon Trail II*. So while there had already been many different Oregon Trails, this was the first one that virtually demanded those Roman numerals—to signal to the user that something really new had taken place.

In short, the Trail would never be the same again.

Notes on the Simulation and Its Underlying Models

The *Oregon Trail II* simulation reflects experiences typically encountered by overland emigrants during the peak years of U.S. westward expansion, 1840–1860. Experiences in the simulation are based on actual diary accounts, documents, and historical research. A selected list of sources are listed in the “Bibliography,” beginning on page 62.

Hazards

Diaries of the period are filled with references to accidents, illness, injuries, deaths, and such inconveniences as river crossings, steep hills, broken wagon parts, disabled animals, and lack of water and grass. Understandably, comments are frequent and heartfelt on the subject of the weather, which could make conditions pleasant or intolerable on the long trek from Missouri, Illinois, or Iowa to Oregon, California, or Utah. In the simulation, just as in real life, events and decisions affect the progress of the journey and the health of the participants. For example, heavy rains will swell the rivers and make them more hazardous to cross. Decisions to over-pace the draft animals, neglect rest, and eat poorly will increase the likelihood of accidents and illness.

Landmarks

Most of the more than 200 notable landmarks of the western trails appear in *Oregon Trail II*. Some landmarks come and go through the years of the simulation (there is no Fort Kearny in 1840, for instance), some undergo changes (rivers spanned by bridges; trading posts abandoned), and still others' names are changed (the California town of Dry Diggins becomes Hangtown and later Placerville). These changes, as reflected in the simulation, are historically accurate. Students using the simulation have access to the forts, trading posts, and towns that existed in any given year, where they can stop, rest, explore, have conversations, and buy supplies. Of course, many sites do not change with the years and can still be visited today: Courthouse and Jail Rocks, Chimney Rock, Independence Rock, and Soda Springs, among others.

Notes on the Simulation and Its Underlying Models

Underlying Models

To provide realism and make the simulation as accurate and interesting as possible, the underlying models of *Oregon Trail II* are quite complex. The principal models involve weather, health, supplies, wagon-train progress, river crossings, hills, personal skills, and miscellaneous events, all of which interact and are based on real-life facts and events.

Weather provides a good example of how the *Oregon Trail II* models work. Most of the weather in the simulation is generated randomly, based on actual average and extreme monthly temperature and precipitation patterns for a large number of sites along the western trails. Daily temperature and precipitation affect health, river depths, the condition of the trail, wagon-train progress, the availability of water and grazing, and the probability of various events. The daily accumulation of snowfall or rainfall is taken into account as well as the melting of snow, the evaporation of surface water, and the freezing and thawing of rivers.

Some cases of historically significant weather-related events are forced to occur by the weather model, such as the notorious Donner Party Blizzard of late October 1846. In other words, since heavy snow in the Sierra Nevadas is possible in October during any year and thus may occur in any year of the *Oregon Trail II* simulation, heavy snow will always occur in the Sierra Nevadas in late October 1846.

The events that occur in the simulation, ranging from cholera to broken wagon parts, from locusts to severe thunderstorms, are not totally random, as is sometimes believed. All events are generated by the underlying models that take into account both actual patterns of occurrence and the decisions made by those running the simulation. For instance, the chances of a broken wagon axle occurring at any given time are affected by several different factors: (1) how heavy a load is being carried by the wagon; the heavier the load, the greater the chances of a broken wagon axle, with an overloaded wagon having a significant chance of a broken part at any given time; (2) how long the wagon and/or that wagon axle has been out on the trail; the older the axle, the greater its chances of breaking; (3) the condition of the trail; the chances for a broken axle increase over rough stretches of trail; (4) your current pace of travel; the chances for a broken axle increase if you're traveling ten hours per day (as opposed to the "normal" eight hours per day), and they increase even more if you're traveling 12 or more hours

Notes on the Simulation and Its Underlying Models

per day; (5) whether you have certain supplies, such as grease (for lubricating the axles and wheels) and turpentine (for treating wagon parts against the weather); if you don't have the pertinent supplies, the odds for a broken axle again increase; and (6) whether you have recently visited a blacksmith shop at a town or fort; the chances of a broken axle are reduced for a period following any visit to a blacksmith.

Similarly, your options for dealing with a broken wagon axle are also affected by the underlying models. Should a broken axle event occur, your options are to try to fix the broken part, to replace it from your supplies, or to trade for a replacement part. You always have some chances of success at trying to fix the broken part without drawing upon a "spare" among your supplies, but the odds for success are greater if you count blacksmithing or carpentry among your personal skills (selected at the beginning of the simulation) or if you have certain supplies useful in making repairs, such as a hammer and nails. If you're unable to repair the broken axle (or simply choose to skip that option), you can replace the part with a spare—but only, of course, if you currently have a spare axle among your supplies. If not, you'll need to buy an axle or trade for one from your fellow emigrants before continuing on the trail. The value of an axle at any given time—and thus how much people are willing to sell it for or what they're willing to trade for it—is also determined by an underlying model.

As you can see, there's tremendous complexity to the model governing wagon axles in *Oregon Trail II*—and that's just wagon axles. The *Oregon Trail II* models are too many and too complex to describe in detail here. But here's one important point that you may wish to stress to your students: the importance of resting. Resting has a major influence on the health models of the program (as well as certain other models). Regular periodic rests of a day or two contribute greatly to the overall health of a wagon party, both its human members and its animals. And resting is almost always one of the best responses (though not always *the best*) to illness and injury. Wagon parties that rest regularly are less likely to suffer illness, and a sick or injured person or animal who rests is usually more likely to recover.

Keep in mind the role that probability plays in these models. There are few "guarantees" in *Oregon Trail II*. For example,

Notes on the Simulation and Its Underlying Models

if your occupation in the simulation is that of a doctor, or if you otherwise have medical skills, that fact increases the likelihood that people in your wagon party will recover from various illnesses and injuries. It doesn't, however, guarantee that they'll recover. And it doesn't override the importance of making good decisions. A doctor who makes a bad decision in response to an illness won't fare better than a person without medical skills who makes a good decision; rather, the doctor will probably fare worse. But a doctor who makes a good decision has a somewhat greater chance of a positive outcome to an illness or injury than a person without medical skills who makes the same decision. But, again, there are few guarantees. It's all based on modified probabilities.

Using the Guidebook

The Guidebook feature of *Oregon Trail II* provides a large number of hints that should help students deal with the challenges posed by the simulation. For instance, it discusses in some detail various strategies for crossing rivers. For instance, it describes how fording is usually the best option for rivers less than two-and-a-half feet deep, while caulking and floating is generally best for rivers deeper than that. It also describes various illnesses and the best treatments for them. These are just some examples of the kinds of useful information that the Guidebook provides. Students should be encouraged to use it.

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More than 200 primary and secondary sources were consulted in the extensive research that went into creating *Oregon Trail II* and ensuring its historical and geographical accuracy. It would be impractical to try to list all of these sources here, but the following selected bibliography cites the books that proved most consistently useful and provided the greatest amount of information actually incorporated into the program.

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Credits

- Title Screen Painting:** Used with permission from the National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC / Art Resource, NY
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Leutze, Emanuel Gottlieb. Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way. (Mural Study, U.S. Capitol). 1861. National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC.
- Guidebook:** The Guidebook "Advice" text is based on an 1849 publication (now in the public domain), "Accompaniment to the Map of the Emigrant Road from Independence, Mo., to San Francisco, California," by T. H. Jefferson. Various edits, deletions, and additions have been made to the text to make it more helpful for users of *Oregon Trail II*.
- Characters:** Except for designated historical individuals, the characters depicted in this software program are fictional and are not intended to represent or suggest any other specific persons. Any resemblance or similarity whatsoever to any other persons, fictional or nonfictional, living or dead, are entirely unintentional and coincidental.
- Design Team:** Craig Copley, Charolyn Kapplinger, Steven D. Splinter, and Wayne Studer
- Producer:** Craig Copley
- Project Director/
Historian:** Wayne Studer
- Soundtrack
Composer:** Eric Speier
- Lead Programmer:** Steven D. Splinter
- Programmers:** Beth H. Daniels, Susan M. Gabrys, Kevin A. Job, John Ojanen, Steven D. Splinter, James L. Thompson, and Douglas N. Wheeler
- Additional
Programming:** Vincent J. Erickson, Lon Koenig, Al Lathrop, Tom Naughton, Alan B. Nelson, Brian S. Nesse, Randy E. Rasmussen, Kirk Sumner, Richard Wells, and Jeff White
- Lead Artist:** Charolyn Kapplinger
- Artists:** Tim Courteau, John Diebel, Sandra Forslund, Charolyn Kapplinger, Jan Tockman, Michael Tschimperle, and Dave Wood
- Additional Artwork:** Craig Copley, Dee Dee Daus, Dave Denninger, Steven D. Splinter, and Wayne Studer
- Photography/
Videography:** Craig Copley, Dee Dee Daus, Sara Ann Garvey, Charolyn Kapplinger, John Ojanen, Tracy Schruth-Panning, Wayne Studer, Michael Tschimperle, Paul Wieser, Dave Wood, and Accent Media Productions, Inc.
- Costuming:** Michael Tschimperle and Theatrical Costume Company
- Stock Footage
Courtesy:** Accent Media Productions, Inc., Archive Photos, Inc., EMA Video Productions, Inc., The University of St. Thomas, and The WPA Film Library
- Video Production:** Sara Ann Garvey, Paul Wieser, Janet Wolnik, and Accent Media Productions, Inc.
- Audio/Video
Dialogue
Sequencing:** Ruth Kivisto and Korey Schulz
- Dialogue and Diary :** Catherine Baxter and Wayne Studer
- Music Coordinator:** Larry Phenow

Credits

Additional Music:	William Pensoneau, Larry Phenow, Eric Speier, Mark Stillman, and Jan Tockman
Sound/Audio Production:	Glen Anderson, Sara Ann Garvey, Chad Iverson, Lon Koenig, and Paul Wieser
Sound Effects:	Glen Anderson, Lon Koenig, and Larry Phenow
American Indian Culture Consultants:	Rich Bergeron, Levi Eagle Feather, Cherie Neima, and William Pensoneau
Spanish Translation :	Claudio Valenzuela
Lead Tester:	Mark Schneider
Testing:	Rose Enriquez, Marty Euerle, Todd George, Jody Johnson, Mark Larson, Josef Ling, Barry Mansur, Timothy Roseth, Mark Schneider, Troy Small, Wayne Studer, Vang Thao, and Dawn Wichmann
Documentation:	Catherine Baxter and Wayne Studer
On-Line Help and On-Line User's Guide:	Catherine Baxter
Title Sequence Production:	Michael Tschimperle
Title Sequence Narration:	John Arthur Olson
Actors:	To see credits for the actors who appeared in <i>Oregon Trail II</i> , please use the program's "About Oregon Trail II" command.
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To the Reader: MECC has made every effort to ensure the instructional and technical quality of this courseware package. Your comments—as user or reviewer—are valued and will be considered during any revision of the product. Please address your comments to:

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