

# The Railroad



CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA HS10142E v1.0



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This book is based primarily on the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards. This C3 Framework is an effective tool offering guidance and support for rigorous student learning. The assignments encourage students to be active participants in learning and to explore the parts of history that they find most compelling. Central to the C3 Framework and our use of it is its Inquiry Arc—a set of four interrelated dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies. The lessons in this book are based on all four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc. While the C3 Framework analyzes each of the four dimensions separately, they are not entirely separable in practice—they each interact in dynamic ways. As a result, the lessons combine some or all of the dimensions in various ways.



#### Four Dimensions of the Inquiry Arc

#### 1 Developing compelling and supporting questions and planning inquiries

Questions shape social studies inquiries, giving them broader meaning and motivating students to master content and engage actively in the learning process.

### 2 Applying disciplinary concepts and tools

These are the concepts and central ideas needed to address the compelling and supporting questions students pose. The C3 Framework stresses four subject fields: history, civics, economics, and geography. Each lesson addresses all of these disciplines.

### 3 Evaluating sources and using evidence

The purpose of using primary and secondary sources as evidence is to support claims and counterclaims. By assessing the validity and usefulness of sources, including those that conflict with one another, students are able to construct evidence-based explanations and arguments.

#### 4 Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

While this may take the form of individual essays and other writing assignments, these lessons stress other kinds of individual and collaborative forms of communication, including debates, policy analyses, video productions, diary entries, and interviews. Meaningful forms of individual or collaborative civic action are also incorporated into each lesson.

#### How to Use This Book

This book offers you the chance to implement the entire C3 Inquiry Arc in brief, carefully structured lessons on important topics in U.S. history. Each lesson is driven by a central compelling question, and disciplinary supporting questions are provided. Each lesson asks students to apply understandings from all of the C3 disciplines—history, civics, economics, and geography—and includes individual and group tasks in an integrated way.

Each lesson includes an introductory essay, detailed teaching instructions, a set of primary sources, and the handouts needed to implement the lesson's assignments. Rubrics for student evaluation and sources for further study are also provided. The teaching instructions suggest a time frame for completion of each lesson, but the assessments can easily be adapted to fit into any lesson plan.

Each lesson is aligned with several C3 Framework standards and Common Core State Standards. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Literacy emphasize the reading of information texts, making these lessons ideal for integration into English Language Arts instruction.





# The Railroad

How Did It Transform America?

Overview

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#### Introduction

After the Civil War, railroads were perhaps the key industry as the United States surged ahead to become the world's number-one industrial nation. The railroad was itself an enormous consumer of iron, steel, and coal. It, therefore, gave a big boost to the growth of those other industries. By offering fast transportation of all sorts of goods, it knit the nation into one mass market. This gave an advantage to new, giant factories and corporations that could sell huge quantities at low cost to the entire nation and the world. Rails seemed to hold out the promise of reuniting the recently divided nation as nothing else could. Was the promise of the railroad fulfilled? How did the railroad transform America? That is the compelling question this lesson will focus on. In this lesson, students will work with short passages from ten primary sources. These primary sources form the core content for a set of tasks that will help students answer the lesson's compelling question.

#### Objectives

Students will work individually and in small groups to respond in a meaningful way to a compelling question about the railroad's impact on the nation. They will apply discipline-specific background knowledge, use scaffolding, and engage in instructional activities to interpret primary sources before presenting their ideas to the class.

#### C3 Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- D1.4.6-8. Explain how the relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.
- **D1.5.6-8.** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.
- D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time
- **D2.His.11.6-8.** Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.
- D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.
- D2.His.16.6-8. Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- ♦ D2.Civ.8.6-8. Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United

States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

- D2.Eco.7.6-8. Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- **D2.Geo.5.6-8.** Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.
- D2.Geo.6.6-8. Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.
- D3.1.6-8. Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- ◆ **D3.2.6-8.** Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.
- **D3.3.6-8.** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

- **D3.4.6-8.** Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.
- D4.1.6-8. Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- ◆ D4.3.6-8. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays,

letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

• **D4.6.6-8.** Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

#### Common Core Anchor Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

#### **Teaching Instructions**

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#### **Compelling Question**

How did the railroad transform America?

#### Preparation

Provide all students with a copy of the Introductory Essay. Assign this reading as homework. In addition, assign all relevant parts of your course textbook or other basic reading material. Remind students to keep the compelling question for the lesson in mind as they read.



Asking Questions about the Railroad This part of the lesson stresses Dimensions 1 and 2 of the C3 Framework

#### Day One

- 1. Briefly discuss the Introductory Essay in class, and address any initial questions students may have.
- 2. Distribute the How to Analyze a Primary Source handout. Review each suggestion with the class, and remind students to refer back to the handout as they read the primary sources in this lesson.
- 3. Divide the class into four small groups. Each group will focus its work on one of the four basic disciplines identified in Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework—history, civics, economics, or geography. As they work, the groups should keep in mind the lesson's overall compelling question. However, for Day One and Day Two, each group will work mainly with a second compelling question—one related specifically to its assigned discipline.
- 4. Provide each group with one copy of its discipline-specific Assignment Sheet. Give each student a copy of all the primary sources for this lesson. Each group may share a primary source packet, if necessary.
- 5. Have students complete the Day One section of their Assignment Sheets. The objective for Day One is for groups to read three primary sources and then formulate one supporting question about each of those sources. The supporting questions should be recorded in the spaces provided on the Assignment Sheet.



Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Evaluating Sources and Evidence This part of the lesson stresses Dimensions 2 and 3 of the C3 Framework

#### Day Two

6. Students will return to their previously assigned groups and formulate a claim addressing their group's compelling question. After reading the remaining seven primary sources, they will select one that supports their claim.

7. Using the evidence gathered from primary sources, each group will then prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation about the impact of the railroad from their group's disciplinary perspective. The presentation can be in the form of an oral report, a debate among group members, or a PowerPoint or similar type of presentation. Allow time for students to prepare by discussing and debating topics among themselves.

#### Day Three

8. Each group will deliver its presentation (prepared by the students as their final task on Day Two). Following each presentation, allow time for class discussion and for a final effort to answer the central compelling question for the lesson.

Communicating Results and Taking Action This part of the lesson stresses Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework

Students will complete a final project that expresses an understanding of the topic and responds clearly to the lesson's central compelling question. The project may be completed in groups, but students should be evaluated individually.

Distribute the Communicating Results and Taking Action handout, and decide whether you will assign the projects or allow students to form groups and choose tasks on their own. Set a reasonable deadline. Students should review the Railroad Rubric so they can understand how their performance will be evaluated. The projects are summarized below.

#### Communicating Results

- Have students reread Primary Sources 2.6 and 2.7. Ask them to create an exchange of letters between the two authors of these sources. Have students first pretend to be Richard Ely. As Ely, they will write letters to David Phillips commenting on the passage by him in Primary Source 2.6. Then have Phillips reply to Ely's letter and his comments in Primary Source 2.7. Have students share some of these exchanges of letters in a class discussion.
- Separate students into small groups. Have each group do more research into the three men in the illustration in Primary Source 2.8. Ask the groups to learn what they can about these three men and about the issue that may have inspired Joseph Keppler to draw the cartoon about them in December 1879. Have each group write an editorial to accompany the cartoon as a way to help others understand its point better. Then ask each group member to write a letter to the editor about this editorial and the cartoon as if he or she John Sherman (Primary Source 2.2), Charles Lee Raper (Primary Source 2.5), or Richard Ely (Primary Source 2.7). Have the groups use the editorial, the cartoon, and the letters to design a single editorial page and share it with the rest of the class.
- Ask students to choose among this lesson's primary sources two that they think best answer the lesson's compelling question: "How did the railroad transform America?" Students will write a brief essay answering the question and explaining why the two sources they have chosen are the best ones to use in support of their views.

#### **Taking Action**

- In recent years, high-speed, intercity passenger rail has become a more prominent issue in many states and localities. Have students consider their own community's long-distance transportation needs to decide whether or not high-speed railroads might play a role in meeting those needs. Identify local or regional planning officials who may be able to help the class learn more. Invite one or more such officials to speak to the class and help it get started in learning about high-speed rail, evaluating possible routes, determining economic costs and benefits, and deciding whether or not high-speed rail is a viable option for the region. Based on what the class learns, have small groups of students produce brief position papers arguing for or against the idea of proceeding with such an effort.
- Using the ideas generated by the previous assignment, students will use social media to let others know what the class has produced regarding the idea of a high-speed rail project for the region. Choose a group of students to create a summary report of the best ideas from these exchanges and send it to local newspapers and other news sources with an invitation to do stories about it.

Introductory Essay

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# The Railroad



Union Pacific railroad freight train, Alray, California.

After the Civil War, many inventions, new industrial methods, and new forms of business organization vastly increased production in the United States. In steel, tobacco, sugar refining, meatpacking, and other industries, some companies grew rapidly. In time, a few huge corporations came to dominate key industries. By growing large, they could take advantage of what are called *economies of scale*. These are savings that come from using the best machinery and large-scale factory organization to produce huge amounts of a product. When this is done, each unit of a product can often be manufactured at a relatively low cost.

To grow large enough, however, a business has to find enough customers. That usually means finding a way to sell products all across the nation, not just in a local or statewide market. In the late 1800s, one thing above all made this possible—the railroad. More accurately, a *system* of rail lines made this commerce possible by linking all key parts of the nation into one vast national marketplace.

In the thirty years before the Civil War, railroad lines had already begun to spread across the land. By 1865, the United States had about 30,000 miles of track. Yet no well-organized

railroad system existed. The width of the tracks (its gauge) varied from line to line. On long trips, trains often had to be unloaded and their goods transferred to a new line several times. Lines were located to meet local or state needs. Little attention was given to any larger national system. After the Civil War, that would change.

In 1869, the Union Pacific Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroad linked up in Utah to form the nation's first transcontinental line. Until then, a journey from New York to San Francisco took about one hundred days by boat around the tip of South America. With the new railroad, it took just six to eight days across the continent.

Soon, four other transcontinental lines tied parts of the Pacific coast to the rest of the nation. A single standard track gauge was agreed upon. Short lines linked to larger trunk lines to create a vast network connecting communities across the nation. From 1865 to 1895, the total mileage of main line track rose from about 35,000 miles to 180,000 miles.



Map of routes for a Pacific railroad.

Railroads were perhaps the key industry as the United States surged ahead to become the world's number-one industrial nation. The railroad was itself an enormous consumer of iron, steel, and coal. It, therefore, gave a big boost to the growth of those other industries. By offering fast transportation of all sorts of goods, it knit the nation into one mass market. This gave an advantage to new, giant factories and corporations; they could sell huge quantities of their goods at low cost to the entire nation and the world. Rails seemed to hold out the promise of reuniting the recently divided nation as nothing else could.

Was the promise of the railroad fulfilled? That is not an easy question to answer. Americans expected a great deal from the railroads. Towns, states, and especially the federal government loaned railroads millions of dollars. Governments gave the railroads millions of acres of public land to sell to help pay for their roads. This enabled the railroad companies to play a key role in settling the vast area west of the Mississippi. The railroads actively encouraged millions of farmers to buy land and establish homesteads throughout the West.

Railroads fostered America's industrial growth and the settlement of the West. In doing so, they helped provide a better life for millions of ordinary citizens. Yet many railroad companies often misused their power. Government loans and land grants encouraged waste, corruption, and the overbuilding of roads. Many railroad companies went bankrupt. Some railroad owners said the land grants were essential to getting the roads built. Yet one transcontinental line, James J. Hill's Great Northern, was built largely without land grants or subsidies and went on to become one of the most profitable railroads.

Major conflicts also arose over the rates railroads charged. Low rates were set for long hauls, where two or more railroads competed. Rates were often higher for shorter hauls, where only one railroad existed. Rates varied in many other ways that often seemed unfair, especially to farmers who depended on the railroads heavily. In time, the government began to regulate the railroads and set their rates. Some say this helped check their abuses. Others say it only gave the railroads a better way to control and limit their competition.

Clearly, the impact of the railroad was many-sided and hard to assess. The primary sources for this lesson should help you better understand at least some of the ways the railroad transformed American society.



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## The Railroad

Your group's task is to explore the history of the railroads of the late 1800s. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow the steps to complete the task.

#### Day One

- 1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us answer a compelling question.
- 2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

How did public criticism of the railroads change from the decades before the Civil War to the decades after the Civil War?

- 3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 2.1, 2.7, and 2.8.
- 4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

The first U.S. railroad chartered was the Baltimore & Ohio. Construction on it began in 1828. Attitudes toward the railroads were mixed from the start. Many were fascinated by them. Most could see their economic benefits. Many thrilled at the speed and efficiency of the railroads. Opponents were often people—for example, stagecoach operators or owners of canal companies—who feared the competition the railroads threatened. Sometimes innkeepers feared their businesses would be hurt. Others opposed the railroads for the danger they posed. Many resented their noisy intrusion into the peaceful countryside.

The completion of the first transcontinental railroad, in 1869, was a moment of enormous pride for millions of Americans. Yet a new, darker kind of fear about railroads was also setting in. The post–Civil War railroads were huge, all-powerful corporations. Western farmers resented them as monopolies able to set unfairly high rates. Others feared the railroads' political power, depicting their owners as corrupt giants who were able to bribe politicians to get enormous favors—such as millions of acres in land grants. Many said the entire rail system was massively overbuilt. It was far too prone to bankruptcies. It wasted resources. All of these negative impacts were seen as national, not local or regional.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 2.1

Primary Source 2.7

Primary Source 2.8

#### Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

How did public criticism of the railroads change from the decades before the Civil War to the decades after the Civil War? State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.

**Civics Group** 

GROUP MEMBERS:

The Railroad

Your group's task is to explore the civics issues raised by the railroads of the late 1800s. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

#### Day One

- 1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us answer a compelling question.
- 2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

"It was mainly the railroad that first made federal, not state, regulation of the economy more important than ever." Explain why you do or do not agree with this claim.

- 3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 2.4, 2.7, and 2.9.
- 4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Transcontinental rail lines were not the only ones to cross state borders. By the late 1800s, many railroads were huge corporations with a national reach. Several also relied heavily on federal land grants to help finance their roads. This led many to see federal, not state, regulation of railroads as reasonable.

In the 1870s, farm groups and other angry critics claimed the railroads were powerful monopolies in many areas. If only one line ran through a region, that line could indeed operate in a monopolistic way. That means it could set rates high and force those who relied on it to pay those high rates. In such places, the railroad could charge high short-haul rates, while lowering them on longer hauls where it did face competition. At times, railroads might band together in "pools" and agree to keep rates high. Anger about railroad rates led Congress to pass the Interstate Commerce Act in 1887. That act said railroad rates had to be "reasonable and just." It also banned short-haul, long-haul price discrimination. It set up the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to enforce these rules. However, the ICC's powers were weak. It often acted for the railroads as much as it worked to correct their abusive practices. Nevertheless, the Interstate Commerce Act was the first federal law to regulate a private industry in this way. It began a trend that has continued ever since.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources the group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 2.4

Primary Source 2.7

Primary Source 2.9

#### Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

"It was mainly the railroad that first made federal, not state, regulation of the economy more important than ever." Explain why you do or do not agree with this claim.

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.

**Economics Group** 

The Railroad 19

GROUP MEMBERS:

## The Railroad

Your group's task is to explore the economics of the railroads of the late 1800s. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

#### Day One

- 1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us answer a compelling question.
- 2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

"The railroad made possible the age of large-scale industrial development in America. Without the railroad, such industrialization never could have happened." Explain why you do or do not agree with this claim.

- 3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 2.2, 2.5, and 2.6.
- 4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Up to the Civil War, America was still made up largely of farmers, rural villages, and small businesses. However, roads and canals and a few railroads had already begun to link these rural communities together into a more organized national society. Driving this change were huge business corporations. They served customers all over the nation. They employed hundreds or thousands of workers. They needed managers at many levels to keep things functioning. No longer could a business be run by a single owner in a single office or shop.

Above all, it was the railroad that pioneered this new business form. Even before the Civil War, railroads realized they could not operate out of one office with a few managers. They had to organize dozens of stations and other facilities on various lines. Facilities had to be hundreds of miles apart. The big roads had to hire thousands of workers. They needed people with many different kinds of technical skills. They relied on outside contractors for many services. They needed office workers, managers, and financial departments. They had to coordinate schedules and various operations the way an army would. Above all, they needed capital financing far beyond what a few partners—even very rich partners—could provide. In this way, the railroads paved the way for the stock-issuing giant corporations of the era just getting under way.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 2.2

Primary Source 2.5

Primary Source 2.6

#### Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

"The railroad made possible the age of large-scale industrial development in America. Without the railroad, such industrialization never could have happened." Explain why you do or do not agree with this claim. State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.

Geography Group

HANDOUT

The Railroad

Your group's task is to explore the geography of the railroads of the late 1800s. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

#### Day One

- 1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us answer a compelling question.
- 2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Why were federal land grants so much more important to the railroads west of the Mississippi River than those east of the Mississippi?

- 3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 2.3, 2.4, and 2.6.
- 4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

A government subsidy gives public funds to people to help them do or produce something. Railroads received various kinds of subsidies, even before the Civil War. Along with cash or loans, the most important subsidies were grants of public lands. A railroad would get public lands along its route. It could use those lands itself, or it could sell them to help pay for the line. Because these lands were near the rail line, they would go up in value over time. Farmers were willing to pay more for such land in order to be near the rail lines that would take their farm products to market.

The largest grants went to four of the five large transcontinental lines built in the late 1800s. They were given lands in alternate one-square-mile sections on each side of the line. In some cases, they got up to twenty such sections for each mile of track. East of the Mississippi River, states had less public land to disburse. It was easier to plan lines through public lands west of the Mississippi. The bulk of the land grants were given out there between 1862 and 1871. Farmers later complained that the railroads were keeping the lands too long, waiting for their value to go up. Overall, however, the grants led to a more rapid settlement of the Western territories than would have happened otherwise.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 2.3

Primary Source 2.4

Primary Source 2.6

#### Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Why were federal land grants so much more important to the railroads west of the Mississippi River than those east of the Mississippi? State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation. ///////

For this lesson, you will be studying several primary source documents. This handout offers suggestions for how best to read and analyze historical primary sources. Studying such sources is challenging. They were created in a different time and place. Their language and use of certain key terms often differ from ours. They assume things we might not accept. They arise out of historical circumstances and settings that differ greatly from our own times. To use such sources as evidence, you need to apply some special historical thinking skills and habits. Here are some guidelines to help you do this.

#### ♦ Question the source

Since no primary source was written with you and your interests in mind, you need to be clear about what you are looking for when you examine a source. You need to stay in charge of the investigation. Act like a detective, and ask questions. Above all, keep your own most important compelling questions in mind as you read and think about a source.

#### Consider the source's origins

This is often simply called "sourcing." It means asking who created the source, when and where the source was created, and why. If you know the source's purpose, you will be more likely to see how it is shaped by its creator's point of view. Among other things, sourcing can help you decide how reliable or typical a source might be.

#### ♦ Contextualize the source

"Context" here means the broader historical setting for the source. Sources are always a part of a larger historical context. You need to consider how this context helps clarify the meaning of the source. You also need to decide which context is most important. Sources might be understood best in connection with a local context or a recent event. Alternatively, they might be understood better within a national or international context, or as part of a long-term trend in society at large. Your guiding questions should help you decide which context is most important.

#### ♦ Corroborate the source

This means you must think about your source in relation to other sources. Does the source agree with or support those other sources, or does it seem to be at odds with the other sources? Might there be additional sources, which have not been provided to you, that could support or conflict with your source?

#### ♦ Above all, read the source carefully

Look at language closely. Pay attention to images, emotional language, metaphors, and other literary devices. Think about what is implied, not merely what is stated or claimed in so many words. Think about what is left out as well as what is included. Make inferences based on your close reading. This will help you get more out of your source than even the source's creator might have seen in it.

HANDOUT

PRIMARY SOURCE

2.1

The "Dreadful" Railroad

This poster was displayed in Philadelphia in 1839 to discourage the coming of the railroad. The poster reads in part: "PHILADELPHIANS, your RIGHTS are being invaded! Regardless of your interests, or the LIVES OF YOUR LITTLE ONES. THE CAMDEN AND AMBOY, with the assistance of other companies without a Charter, and in VIOLATION OF LAW as decreed by your Courts, are laying a LOCOMOTIVE RAIL ROAD! RALLY PEOPLE in the Majesty of your Strength and forbid THIS OUTRAGE!"



Original Document Source: Poster circulated in Philadelphia in 1839 to discourage the coming of the railroad, National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Public Roads, Record Group 30, National Archives Identifier 513347. Available online from the National Archives and Records Administration at https://catalog.archives.gov/id/513347.

PRIMARY SOURCE 2.2

This passage is from a letter from Senator John Sherman to his brother, the famous Civil War general William Tecumseh Sherman. The letter is dated November 10, 1865.

#### **Original Document**

The truth is, the close of the war with our resources unimpaired gives an elevation, a scope to the ideas of leading capitalists, far higher than anything ever undertaken in this country before. They talk of millions as confidently as formerly of thousands. No doubt the contraction that must soon come will explode merely visionary schemes, but many vast undertakings will be executed. Among them will be the Pacific R.R. and extensive iron works, like some in England. Our manufactures are yet in their infancy, but soon I expect to see, under the stimulus of a great demand and the protection of our tariff, locomotive and machine shops worthy of the name.

#### **Adapted Version**

The truth is that, with our resources unharmed by the war, our leading capitalists have plans far greater than anything the country has ever taken on before. They talk of millions as confidently as they formerly talked of thousands. No doubt some temporary slowdown in the economy will ruin some wild schemes. However, many vast undertakings will be carried out successfully. Among them will be the Pacific railroad. Also we will see extensive ironworks, like some in England. Our manufacturing is still in its infancy. But with the stimulus of great demand and our tariff's protection, we will soon see many locomotive and machine shops worthy of the name.

Original Document Source: John Sherman, letter to William Tecumseh Sherman dated November 10, 1865, in The Sherman Letters: Correspondence between General and Senator Sherman from 1837 to 1891, edited by Rachel Sherman Thorndike (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894), 258. Available online from Google Books at https://books.google.com/books?id=SSdAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

HANDOUT

PRIMARY SOURCE

2.3

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Working on the Railroad

These Chinese laborers were working for the Central Pacific Railroad on the Humboldt Plains in Nevada sometime in the 1860s. They were helping build part of the nation's first transcontinental railroad. That 1,912-mile road was completed in 1869, when two rail lines were joined at Promontory Summit, Utah. The Central Pacific's line was built from California to link up with the Union Pacific Railroad line begun near Omaha, Nebraska. This photograph merely hints at the thousands of workers and the millions of tons of rails and other equipment needed to build the great railroad trunk lines of the late nineteenth century. The image (technically a stereograph), taken in the 1860s, is by Alfred A. Hart.



Original Document Source: Alfred A. Hart, "End of Track, on Humboldt Plains." Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number LC-DIG-stereo-1s00618. Available online from the Library of Congress at http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005683011/. PRIMARY SOURCE

2.4

**Railroad Land Grants** 

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Federal and state governments often gave railroads large land grants to help them finance their rail lines. With federal grants, the railroads normally got alternating sections of land on either side of the rail line. The railroads could make money selling these lands, which were likely to rise in value once the line was completed. Farmers would pay more to be close to rail lines that would ship their crops to market. From 1862 to 1871, Congress granted nearly 128 million acres to corporations for the construction of railroads. This map shows how large the land grants were for railroads in the western United States.



Original Document Source: James Muhn and Hanson R. Stuart, "Limits of the Railroad Land Grants," in Opportunity and Challenge: The Story of BLM (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1988). Available online from the National Park Service at https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\_books/blm/history/chap1.htm. PRIMARY SOURCE

The railroads were the first truly large-scale business corporations. This passage on that theme is from Charles Lee Raper, *Railway Transportation: A History of Its Economics and of Its Relation to the State.* 

#### **Original Document**

2.5

The railway business, to be efficient, must be on a large scale, and the great systems must work in the manner and after the spirit of co-operation. The process which has converted thousands of small, disconnected, and inefficient lines into big systems, whether of one form or another, has been one of the most significant things in the history of railways of the United States. In spite of one proclamation of illegality or another, they have come to group themselves according to the economic divisions of a vast and varied country—into practical monopolies....

The systems of the United States, while they are largely monopolistic so far as the producer of railway service in a certain territory is concerned, are still and will long continue to be under the force of competition at certain great strategic centres. They are also under a still more powerful force—that of the competition of markets with markets. The fact that the products of many sections of a country, yes of the world, may compete in their sale in the same common market will always have a profound influence upon the railway management.

#### **Adapted Version**

To be efficient, the railway business must be on a large scale. Just as important, these great systems must work in a spirit of cooperation. Thousands of small, disconnected, and inefficient lines have already been linked into big systems. In one form or another, this process has been one of the most significant things in the history of railways in the United States. There have been various efforts to proclaim this to be illegal. Yet in spite of that, the railroads have come to group themselves according to the economic divisions of a vast and varied country. That is, they have made themselves into practical monopolies.

It is true that these systems are largely monopolistic. Or at least they are so far as the railway service of each limited territory is concerned. However, they are still and will long continue to be under the force of competition where they meet in certain great strategic centers. They are also under a still more powerful force of competition—that is, the competition of the many markets for the goods they carry. The products of many sections of the country (or the world) usually compete in a common market. This will always force railway companies to keep transportation costs low.

Original Document Source: Charles Lee Raper, Railway Transportation: A History of Its Economics and of Its Relation to the State, Based, with the Author's Permission, upon President Hadley's "Railroad Transportation: Its History and Its Laws" (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), 212–213. Available online from Google Books at https://books.google.com/books?id=qlacVGYsyGEC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Impressed by the Railroads

David L. Phillips wrote an account of his trip to California in 1876. Among other things, he was deeply impressed by California's railroad system. This passage is from Phillips's book *Letters from California*, published in 1877.

#### **Original Document**

In 1862, the people here had no railroads. Plundering mail contractors and stage companies held the carrying trade and passenger business of California, and, as between the Pacific Coast and the Middle and Atlantic States, communications were had overland once in about two months, and by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, via Panama, in about the same time. The cost of transit from New York to San Francisco was about \$300, and the same by stage-coach overland. California was, agriculturally, and in all else except the mines, as poor as poverty. To-day, the cost by sea or overland from New York to San Francisco, excluding board, is \$140-time, overland, six days; and, as a result, almost all the trade between China, Japan and the islands of the Pacific Ocean, is now gathering at the docks of San Francisco, and will, in a great measure, pass overland to Chicago and New York, and at reduced rates of freight as well as time. I saw, myself, as I came over, train-loads of tea, from China and Japan, on the way to Chicago and New York. For these vast benefits, San Francisco, its merchants and people are indebted to the energetic railroad men of Sacramento. Again, the Central Pacific Railroad runs now from Redding, in Northern California, through the centre of the State, to Caliente, a distance of nearly 500 miles, north and south, thus opening up mainly the whole interior of the State to the hardy farmer, fruit-grower and lumberman, and increasing the value of the land more than six fold. Let us see: The line now open for traffic, in the very heart of the State, is, say, 500 miles long. Lying along this line of railway which has not cost the State one dollar, there is on each side a body of land 9 miles wide, which would be equal to 9,000 square miles, or 5,760,000 acres. This land, before the road was built, was worth, on the average, \$1.25 per acre, but no man will hesitate now to tell you that its average value is \$8 per acre. The net increased value, therefore, contributed directly to the wealth of the State, by the railroad company, is \$6.75 per acre, or a sum equal to \$48,888,000. To this sum may be fairly added the products, either present or prospective, of one-half the 5,760,000 acres of land thus directly affected. . . . Nor is this all. The railroad company has opened other lines, equal to 600 miles more, and have, in doing so, added tens of millions to the permanent wealth of the State, and infinitely to the comfort of the people. Nor does it stop here. It will continue to build roads until it shall have penetrated every accessible portion of

CONTINUED

2.6

, IMPRESSED BY THE RAILROADS CONTINUED

the State, thus opening up highways for the products of the people to markets, in all directions.

The question comes up, what are the crimes of this corporation, about which there is so much noise? I answer, they are two: First, the men who have poured untold millions of dollars into the various lines of these roads want reasonable passenger and freight rates for persons and property transported, of which they claim to be the judges-or, in other words, while they are conferring benefits they want some profits. Second, that Stanford and his associates have grown rich. As to the first, the rates charged for passengers is about four cents per mile, on the average. For freights, the local charges are a shade higher than in Illinois, but not in disproportion to the general charges for other things in California. As to the second, I don't think that any decent, reasonable man in the United States will say that Stanford and his associates have made any more than they should. No one charges them with being dishonest. They are only charged with exacting exorbitant freight and passenger rates from the patrons of the road. People in California pay Wells, Fargo Co. and the Coast Line Stage Company never less than ten, and often twenty cents per mile, for passage in their stages, and I hear no complaints. They pay those rates cheerfully. But when the Central Pacific Railroad Company charges four or five cents a mile on their cars, there is a general outcry among demagogues, politicians and rapacious members of the General Assembly. In my judgment, Gov. Stanford and his associates have added in fifteen years \$300,000,000 to the permanent wealth of California, and have done already, and will do in the future, more for its permanent wealth and prosperity than all the pseudo-reformers who have been or ever will be in the State.

CONTINUED
HANDOUT

#### **Adapted Version**

In 1862, the people here had no railroads. High-priced mail contractors and stage companies held the carrying trade and passenger business of California. Communications between the Pacific coast and the Middle and Atlantic states took place overland once every two months. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company made the trip via Panama in about the same time. The cost of transit from New York to San Francisco was about \$300. This was the same as by stagecoach overland. California was poor agriculturally and in every other way, except the mines. Today, it takes six days to travel overland from New York to San Francisco at a cost of \$140, excluding board. As a result, almost all the trade from Asia and the islands of the Pacific Ocean is now arriving at the docks of San Francisco. Most of it will pass overland to Chicago and New York by rail at reduced rates of freight as well as time. As I came here, I saw trainloads of tea from China and Japan on the way to Chicago and New York. For this, San Francisco's merchants and people can thank the energetic railroad men of Sacramento.

The Central Pacific Railroad runs now from Redding, in Northern California, through the center of the state, to Caliente. It is a distance of nearly 500 miles. This opens up mainly the whole interior of the state to the hardy farmer, fruit grower, and lumberman. It increases the value of the land more than sixfold. This 500-mile line in the very heart of the state is now open. It has not cost the state one dollar. Lying along each side of this line is a body of land nine miles wide. That amounts to 9,000 square miles, or 5,760,000 acres. Before the road was built, it was worth, on the average, \$1.25 per acre. Now, everyone agrees its average value is \$8 per acre. This means the railroad has increased the wealth of the state by \$6.75 per acre. That is a sum equal to \$48,888,000. Add to this the value of the products, present or future, of one-half the 5,760,000 acres of land. Nor is this all. The railroad company has opened other lines, equal to 600 miles more. In doing so, it has added tens of millions to the permanent wealth of the state and infinitely to the comfort of the people. Nor does it stop here. The railroad will continue to build roads until it reaches every accessible portion of the state. It will thus open up highways for the products of the people to markets, in all directions.

The question comes up, what are the crimes of this corporation? We hear a great deal of noise about this. I answer, they are two: First, the men who have invested untold millions of dollars building the various lines want people to pay reasonable

2.6

, IMPRESSED BY THE RAILROADS CONTINUED

passenger and freight rates. They claim the right to be the judges of this. That is, since they are providing benefits they want some profits. Second, it is charged that Stanford and his associates have grown rich. As to the first complaint, the rate charged for passengers is about four cents per mile on the average. For freights, the charges are a shade higher than in Illinois but not out of line with the general charges for other things in California. As to the second complaint, I don't think that any decent, reasonable man will say that Stanford and his associates have made any more than they should. No one claims they are dishonest. They are only said to charge unfairly high freight and passenger rates from those who use the road. However, people in California usually pay Wells, Fargo & Company and the Coast Line Stage Company ten to twenty cents per mile for passage in their stages. I never hear complaints about this. But when the Central Pacific Railroad Company charges four or five cents a mile on their cars, there is a general outcry. That is, it is an outcry among demagogues, politicians, and greedy members of the General Assembly. In my judgment, Governor Stanford and his associates have added in fifteen years \$300,000,000 to the permanent wealth of California. They have already done more for its permanent wealth and prosperity than all the pseudo-reformers. And they will do more.

The Railroad 35

Richard T. Ely's Criticisms

This is a passage from an article by Richard T. Ely titled "The Economic Evils in American Railway Methods," appearing in *Harper's Magazine* in August 1886. Ely was one of the best-known economists of his day. He was a firm advocate of reform and greater government regulation of the economy.

## **Original Document**

My thesis is this: the needless waste of railway competition has been sufficient to provide good, comfortable homes—a whole house to a family—for that part of the entire population of the United States not already provided with such homes.

The first item in the count is needless expenditure in railway construction....

Second, every needless train is a waste, and parallel and competing roads necessitate a vast number of them daily.

Third, our railways have not been planned according to any intelligent scheme, so that they should become part of one grand system of communication and transportation, supplementing our natural and artificial waterways and other highways. On the contrary, they were often designed to injure other public highways, and are still managed with that view. Railways run along by the side of canals, and drive them out of existence. At times they buy the canal and stop using it, lest it should longer render any service to anybody. The Richmond and Alleghany Railroad of Virginia is an example. Here is a great waste of resources expended in canals. Railways prevent the use of natural waterways. Thus the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Pacific railways discriminate against those who use the Ohio River and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans respectively. These are examples of a waste of nature's bounty.

# RICHARD T. ELY'S CRITICISMS CONTINUED

### **Adapted Version**

My claim is this: Railway competition has been a needless waste. That waste is enough to have provided good, comfortable homes for all those in the United States who do not already have such homes.

First, there is the needless expenditure in railway construction.

Second, every needless train is a waste. All the parallel and competing roads near each other require a vast number of extra trains daily.

Third, our railways have not been planned according to any intelligent scheme. They should become part of one grand system of communication and transportation. It should supplement our natural and artificial waterways and other highways. Instead, the rail lines were often located so as to injure other public highways. They are still managed with that aim. Railways run along the side of canals and drive them out of existence. At times, a railroad company will buy the canal and then stop using it. The result is that it no longer renders any service to anybody. The Richmond and Alleghany Railroad of Virginia is an example. This is a great waste of the resources expended on canals. Railways prevent the use of natural waterways. Thus, the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Pacific railways discriminate against those who use the Ohio River and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, respectively. These are examples of a waste of nature's bounty.

> Original Document Source: Richard T. Ely, "The Economic Evils in American Railway Methods," Harper's Magazine 73 (August 1886): 375–394. Available online from Google Books at https://books.google.com/books?id=9ExDAQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

2.8

The Railroad 37

"Modern Colossus of (Rail) Roads"

The owners of the railroads were powerful men. This lithograph cartoon, by Joseph Keppler, is titled "Modern Colossus of (Rail) Roads." Each of these railroad giants holds the reins controlling trains, tracks, and railroad stations. These three men formed a single railroad trust out of their various lines. The largest giant here is William Vanderbilt, president of the New York Central Railroad and several other railroads. With him is Cyrus West Field of the New York Elevated Railroad Company and Jay Gould of the Union Pacific Railroad and other western railroads. The sign in the foreground reads, "All freight seeking the seaboard must pass here and pay any tolls we demand." The flag over Field's elevated railway station reads, "L Road; Many nickels stolen are millions gained; by C. W. Field."



Original Document Source: Joseph Keppler, "Modern Colossus of (Rail) Roads," Puck 6 (December 10, 1879): 650–651. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number LC-DIG-ds-05068. Available online from the Library of Congress at http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2014645351/.

Economic hard times spread throughout the nation in the 1870s. As revenues fell, American railroads searched for ways to cut costs. Pay cuts angered workers for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. They went on strike in 1877. Violence soon broke out. Sympathy for the strikers spread along the railroad lines and among many other workers. State militias were called out in several places. At one point, President Rutherford B. Hayes sent federal forces to several locations to reopen the roads. The railroad strike of 1877 was one of the largest labor conflicts in American history. This passage is part of an article on the strikes from the *St. Louis Dispatch* dated July 24, 1877.

# **Original Document**

2.9

The news from East St. Louis to-day is of an exciting and belligerent character. Violence was used this morning, and it may be said, the railroad war in St. Louis has actually begun. The strikers, not satisfied with stopping the freights, have resolved on seizing and holding passenger trains coming to and going from the city until their demands are satisfied.

An Eastern bound passenger train on the Vandalia road was stopped this morning at East St. Louis. A number of ladies aboard were greatly alarmed. The train was, after a short delay, allowed to pass on to its destination. It is not the intention of the strikers to interfere, as we understand, with mail or Government trains. At least such was proclaimed as the line of policy this morning.

Subsequent information, however, shows that one extreme, in violation of law and order, is followed by another. From a Dispatch reporter just returned from East St. Louis, we learn that the United States troops, ordered to this city, and under command of Jeff C. Davis, in arriving from the West and reaching St. Louis, were, by the strikers, switched off from the main road to a side track. This is the first overt act against the United States authorities on the part of the strikers, which the Government will be bound to take cognizance of and resent.

The railway managers of this city and the malcontents who are seeking to bring them to terms by interrupting their business, stopping trains, etc., it was thought last night, would be able to adjust their difficulties amicably; but at this hour of writing (12 m.) no general and satisfactory understanding has been had, except we believe with the Missouri Pacific. The Toledo, Wabash and Western Railway and the Union Transit Company, which have issued bulletins in effect that they would cut down wages on their roads after the first of August, have rescinded that order, agreeing as a compromise to continue to pay as usual.

CONTINUED

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The Great Railroad Strike of 1877

THE GREAT RAILROAD STRIKE OF 1877 CONTINUED

We regret to say that some of the mechanics and working men of this city, irrespective of railroads, are inclined to increase the prevailing disorder, to damage business, and endanger the peace of the city, and incite rioting, by getting up strikes for higher wages just at this particular crisis—a condition of affairs, urged on, in many instances, by those who are after the spoils of pillage.

Such a course at this time, working men must see at a glance, is simply suicidal. Real workingmen cannot afford to have the criminal classes make them a pretext for incendiarism and pillage. Real workingmen do not cut their own throats in this way. The idle, vicious, dissolute and criminal classes have taken the leadership, and are using the most ignorant and reckless of the laborers to destroy their own livelihood.

The riot at Pittsburgh has developed into an incendiarism as senseless as that of the Paris petrolists, which has destroyed a vast quantity of the means of employment of laborers, has disabled the Pennsylvania Railroad Company from giving the usual amount of employment to laborers for a long time to come. In Baltimore the strikers have exceeded every bound in their outrages; disabling the fire engines while at work, cutting hose, attacking officers of the law, and, in short, acting in a manner which destroys every particle of sympathy which their side of the story might ever have enlisted. The strikers, as strikers, certainly have a case, but as desperadoes and murderers they have thrown away every right to merciful treatment. Let those of St. Louis avoid the mistakes of their brethren of Baltimore and Pittsburgh.

On the other hand, let the railroad companies, for the common good as for their own interest inclined to hold out against the strikers, recognize the fact that they are, in the absence of Government aid which cannot reach them now in time, in a manner powerless to put down a movement of such a formidable character. And this is an occasion when policy may be wisely adopted and discretion may be practiced as the better part of valor.

THE GREAT RAILROAD STRIKE OF 1877 CONTINUED

### **Adapted Version**

The news from East St. Louis today is of an exciting and angry sort. Violence was used this morning in what could be called a railroad war. The strikers are not satisfied with stopping the freights. They have decided to seize and hold passenger trains coming into and out of the city until their demands are satisfied.

An eastern-bound passenger train on the Vandalia road was stopped this morning at East St. Louis. A number of ladies aboard were greatly alarmed. After a short delay, the train was allowed to pass on to its destination. The strikers do not plan to interfere with mail or government trains. At least that is what they say this morning.

Yet further reports show that one extreme act in violation of law and order is followed by another. A *Dispatch* reporter from East St. Louis tells us that United States troops under command of Jeff C. Davis were ordered into the city. Strikers switched them off from the main road to a side track after they reached St. Louis. This is the first overt act against the United States authorities on the part of the strikers. The government is sure to see this and resent it.

Last night, it seemed as if the railway managers of this city and the malcontents interrupting their business and stopping trains would be able to settle things amicably. But at this hour (12 midnight), no general settlement has been reached, except, we believe, with the Missouri Pacific. The Toledo, Wabash and Western Railway and the Union Transit Company had announced they would cut wages on their roads after the first of August. Now they have canceled that order and agreed as a compromise to continue to pay as usual.

We regret to say that some of the mechanics and workingmen of this city, independent of the railroads, are adding to the disorder. They seek to damage business, endanger the peace of the city, and incite rioting by getting up strikes for higher wages to take advantage of this particular crisis. This is urged on, in many instances, by those who are after the spoils of pillage.

Workingmen should see that this is simply suicidal. Real workingmen cannot afford to have the criminal classes use them as an excuse for incendiarism and pillage. Real workingmen do not cut their own throats in this way. The idle,

THE GREAT RAILROAD STRIKE OF 1877 CONTINUED

vicious, dissolute, and criminal classes have taken the leadership. They are using the most ignorant and reckless of the laborers to destroy their own livelihood.

The riot in Pittsburgh has become as destructive and senseless as that of the recent Paris terrorists. It has destroyed a vast quantity of equipment and has prevented the Pennsylvania Railroad Company from being able to hire the same number of workers for a long time to come. In Baltimore, the strikers have exceeded every bound in their outrages. They have disabled the fire engines while at work. They have cut hose, attacked officers of the law, and acted so as to destroy all sympathy for their side of the story. The strikers certainly have a case—as strikers. But as desperadoes and murderers they have given up their right to merciful treatment. Let those of St. Louis avoid the mistakes of their brethren of Baltimore and Pittsburgh.

The railroad companies are inclined to hold out, for the common good as for their own interest. On the other hand, they must recognize that without government aid they are powerless to put down a movement of such formidable character. That aid cannot reach them now in time. Hence for the moment, it may be best to practice a policy of discretion as the better part of valor.

HANDOUT

Singing "The Age of Progress"

The lyrics to the song "The Age of Progress" appear below. They were published around 1860 in a song sheet by H. De Marsan and extol the technological wonders of the age.

#### **Original Document**

The age of giant progress, Americans all hail! The land all interwoven With telegraph and rail; No sluggish chains shall bind us, No tardiness delay; The morning light is breaking (waking), O'er our destiny.

The age of trained lightning. "Despatching" human thought; What wondrous revolution The scheme of Morse hath wrought! No time, no space can hinder The quick, electric fire; Intelligence is flashing, (dashing), O'er the magic wire.

The age of grand conceptions, The "cable of the deep!" It "snapped," but we will mend it, We have no time to weep. The great Pacific Railroad! 'Twill not be long before The railroad cars are flying (hieing), From the golden shore.

The age of priceless knowledge,— The scholar's jubilee! The land all dotted over With institutions free. Our public schools! O, hail them! They offer treasures cheap: The boys and girls are scaling (hailing), Science's rugged steep.

> Original Document Source: "The Age of Progress," in Songs, Ballads, &c (New York: H. De Marsan, c. 1860). Available online from Library of Congress at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amss.sb10001b.0/?st=text.

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#### **Communicating Results**

- ♦ Reread Primary Sources 2.6 and 2.7 and create an exchange of letters between the two authors of these sources. First pretend to be Richard Ely. As Ely, write a letter to David Phillips commenting on the passage by him in Primary Source 2.6. Then have Phillips reply to Ely's letter and his comments in Primary Source 2.7. Share some of these exchanges of letters during class discussion.
- ◆ In your group, research the three men in the illustration in Primary Source 2.8. Learn what you can about these three men and about the issue that may have inspired Joseph Keppler to draw the cartoon about them in December 1879. With your group, write an editorial to accompany the cartoon as a way to help others understand its point better. Then write a letter to the editor about this editorial and the cartoon as if you were Senator John Sherman (Primary Source 2.2), Charles Lee Raper (Primary Source 2.5), or Richard Ely (Primary Source 2.7). Use the editorial, the cartoon, and the letters to design a single editorial page, and share it with the rest of the class.
- Choose among this lesson's primary sources two that you think best answer the lesson's compelling question: "How did the railroad transform America?" Write a brief essay answering the question and explaining why the two sources you have chosen are the best ones to use in support of your views.

#### Taking Action

- In recent years, high-speed, intercity passenger rail has become a more prominent issue in many states and localities. Consider your own community's long-distance transportation needs to decide whether or not high-speed railroads might play a role in meeting those needs. Your instructor will identify local or regional planning officials who may be able to help the class learn more. Invite one or more such officials to speak to the class and help it get started in learning about high-speed rail, evaluating possible routes, determining economic costs and benefits, and deciding whether or not high-speed rail is a viable option for the region. Based on what the class learns, produce a brief position paper with your group, arguing for or against the idea of proceeding with such an effort.
- Using the ideas generated by the previous assignment, use social media to let others know the class's ideas concerning a high-speed rail project for the region. Your instructor will choose a group of students to create a summary report of the best ideas from these exchanges and send it to local newspapers and other news sources, inviting them to do stories about it.

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| Criteria                           | Unacceptable  | Developing  | Proficient  | Excellent   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Focus                              | Tries to respond to<br>task instructions but<br>lacks clear focus<br>on a central idea or<br>thesis   | Addresses the<br>task instructions<br>adequately but focus<br>on a central idea or<br>thesis is uneven  | Responds to the<br>task instructions<br>appropriately and<br>convincingly; has<br>a consistent focus<br>on a central idea or<br>thesis                      | Responds to all<br>task instructions<br>convincingly; has<br>a clear and strong<br>focus on a well-<br>developed central<br>idea or thesis  |
| Research                           | Refers to some<br>sources but fails to<br>connect these in a<br>relevant way to the<br>task instructions  | Refers to relevant<br>sources well but<br>does not always<br>connect these<br>clearly to the task<br>instructions   | Refers to relevant<br>sources accurately<br>and usually<br>connects these to<br>the task instructions<br>and a central idea                                 | Refers to relevant<br>sources accurately<br>and in great detail<br>and connects these<br>clearly to the task<br>instructions and a<br>central idea  |
| Development and<br>Use of Evidence | Uses some details<br>and evidence from<br>sources but does<br>not make clear the<br>relevance to the<br>task purpose or<br>instructions                             | Uses details and<br>evidence from<br>sources generally<br>but not always in<br>support of a clear<br>focus relevant to<br>the task purpose or<br>instructions | Uses details and<br>evidence from<br>sources in a way that<br>effectively supports<br>a focus relevant to<br>the task purpose or<br>instructions            | Uses details and<br>evidence from<br>sources along with<br>clear explanations<br>demonstrating deep<br>understanding of<br>the task purpose or<br>instructions                                |
| Content                            | Refers to<br>disciplinary content<br>without clearly<br>understanding it<br>or while using it<br>in an irrelevant or<br>inaccurate manner                           | Refers to disci-<br>plinary content with<br>some understanding<br>but not always<br>with a clear idea of<br>its relation to the<br>overall task               | Accurately uses<br>disciplinary content<br>and demonstrates<br>a clear idea of<br>its relation to the<br>overall task                                       | Uses disciplinary<br>content effectively<br>and explains<br>thoroughly and<br>in-depth its relation<br>to the overall task  |
| Conventions                        | Demonstrates only<br>limited control of<br>standard English<br>conventions, with<br>many errors in<br>spelling, punctua-<br>tion, grammar, and<br>other conventions | Demonstrates<br>some command of<br>standard English<br>conventions with<br>limited errors in<br>spelling, punctua-<br>tion, grammar, and<br>other conventions | Demonstrates<br>adequate command<br>of standard English<br>conventions with few<br>errors in spelling,<br>punctuation,<br>grammar, and other<br>conventions | Demonstrates a<br>well-developed com-<br>mand of standard<br>English conventions<br>with few errors and<br>a use of language<br>appropriate to the<br>audience and the<br>purpose of the task |

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- 2.2 Sherman, John. Letter to William Tecumseh Sherman dated November 10, 1865, in *The Sherman Letters: Correspondence between General and Senator Sherman from 1837 to 1891*, edited by Rachel Sherman Thorndike. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894, 258. Available online from Google Books at https://books.google.com/books?id =SSdAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v =onepage&q&f=false.
- 2.3 Hart, Alfred A. "End of Track, on Humboldt Plains." Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number LC-DIG-stereo-1s00618. Available online from the Library of Congress at http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005683011/.
- 2.4 Muhn, James, and Hanson R. Stuart. "Limits of the Railroad Land Grants," in *Opportunity and Challenge: The Story of BLM*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1988. Available online from the National Park Service at https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\_books/blm/history/chap1.htm.
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- 2.7 Ely, Richard T. "The Economic Evils in American Railway Methods." Harper's Magazine 73 (August 1886): 375–394. Available online from Google Books at https://books.google .com/books?id=9ExDAQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\_ge\_summary \_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.
- 2.8 Keppler, Joseph. "The Modern Colossus of (Rail) Roads." Puck 6 (December 10, 1879): 650–651. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number LC-DIG-ds-05068. Available online from the Library of Congress at http://www.loc.gov /pictures/item/2014645351/.
- 2.9 "The Strike." St. Louis Dispatch, July 24, 1877. Available online from University of Nebraska at http://railroads.unl.edu/documents/view\_document.php?views=Strike&rends =newspaper&publication=St.+Louis+Dispatch&id=rail.str.0309.
- 2.10 "The Age of Progress," in *Songs, Ballads, &c.* New York: H. De Marsan, c. 1860. Available online from Library of Congress at https://www.loc.gov/resource/amss .sb10001b.0/?st=text.

# Sources for Further Study

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