

# UNIT

## 2

### CHAPTER 5

**Changes on the  
Western Frontier  
1877–1900**

### CHAPTER 6

**A New Industrial Age  
1877–1900**

### CHAPTER 7

**Immigrants and  
Urbanization  
1877–1914**

### CHAPTER 8

**Life at the Turn of  
the 20th Century  
1877–1917**

## UNIT

## PROJECT

### **Oral Report**

This unit describes how the United States transformed itself from a rural, agricultural society to an urban, industrial one. Prepare an oral report that summarizes one or more of the factors that caused this change. Create visuals to accompany your report.

*Champions of the Mississippi* by Currier and Ives

# Bridge to the 20th Century 1877—1917





CHAPTER  
**5**

# CHANGES ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER

## Essential Question

How did westward migration after the Civil War affect the United States?



## What You Will Learn

In this chapter you will learn about the settlers who moved into the new frontier to mine, ranch, and farm.

### SECTION 1: Cultures Clash on the Prairie

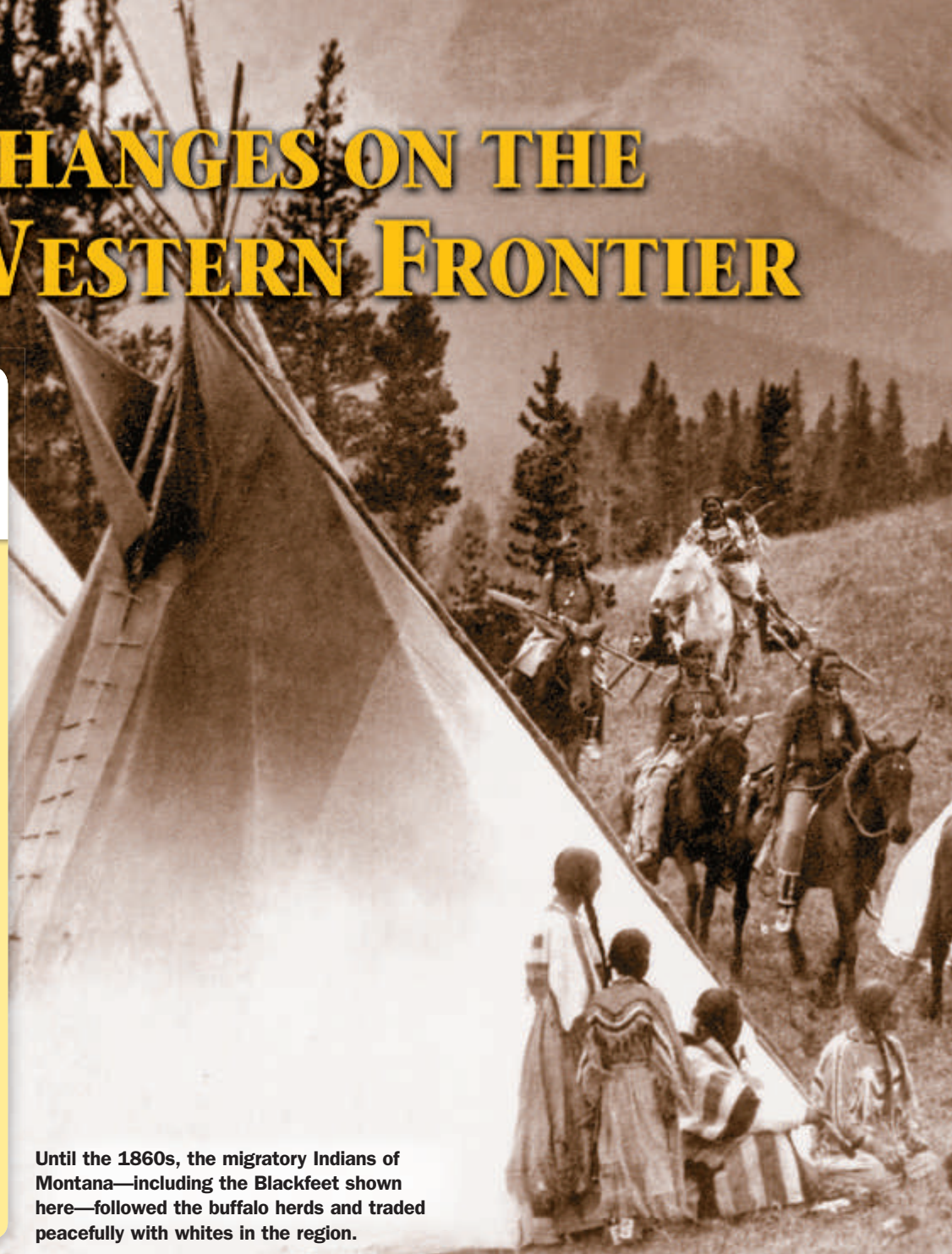
**Main Idea** The cattle industry boomed in the late 1800s, as the culture of the Plains Indians declined.

### SECTION 2: Settling on the Great Plains

**Main Idea** Settlers on the Great Plains transformed the land despite great hardships.

### SECTION 3: Farmers and the Populist Movement

**Main Idea** Farmers united to address their economic problems, giving rise to the Populist movement.



Until the 1860s, the migratory Indians of Montana—including the Blackfeet shown here—followed the buffalo herds and traded peacefully with whites in the region.

**1870** Red Cloud, chief of the Oglala Sioux, states his people's case in Washington, D.C.



**1880** James Garfield is elected president.

**1881** Garfield is assassinated. Chester Arthur becomes president.



**1884** Grover Cleveland is elected president.

USA  
WORLD

1870

1880

**1869** Suez Canal is opened.



**1872** Secret ballot is adopted in Britain.

**1881** French occupy Tunisia.



**Sitting Bull: Chief of the Lakota Nation**

[hmhsocialstudies.com](http://hmhsocialstudies.com) VIDEO ACTIVE MAP

## INTERACT WITH HISTORY

It is the late 1890s. The American West is the last frontier. Ranchers, cowboys, and miners have changed forever the lives of the Native Americans who hunted on the Western plains. Now westward fever intensifies as “boomers” rush to grab “free” farm land with the government’s blessing.

### Explore the Issues

- What might be some ways to make a living on the Western frontier?
- If native peoples already live in your intended home, how will you co-exist?
- How might settlers and Native Americans differ regarding use of the land?



**1889** Oklahoma opened for settlement; the land rush begins.

**1890** Sioux are massacred at Wounded Knee.

**1893** Diminished U.S. gold reserve triggers the panic of 1893.

**1896** William McKinley is elected president.

**1896** William Jennings Bryan runs for president.

**1890**



**1893** France takes over Indochina.

**1899** Berlin Conference divides Africa among European nations.

**1900**

**1900** Boxer Rebellion takes place in China.



SECTION  
1

# Cultures Clash on the Prairie

## MAIN IDEA

The cattle industry boomed in the late 1800s, as the culture of the Plains Indians declined.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Today, ranchers and Plains Indians work to preserve their cultural traditions.

## Terms & Names

- Great Plains
- Treaty of Fort Laramie
- Sitting Bull
- George A. Custer
- assimilation
- Dawes Act
- Battle of Wounded Knee
- longhorn
- Chisholm Trail
- long drive

## One American's Story



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### TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on cultures in the American West.

Zitkala-Ša was born a Sioux in 1876. As she grew up on the Great Plains, she learned the ways of her people. When Zitkala-Ša was eight years old she was sent to a Quaker school in Indiana. Though her mother warned her of the “white men’s lies,” Zitkala-Ša was not prepared for the loss of dignity and identity she experienced, which was symbolized by the cutting of her hair.

### A PERSONAL VOICE ZITKALA-ŠA

“I cried aloud . . . and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit. Since the day I was taken from my mother I had suffered extreme indignities. . . . And now my long hair was shingled like a coward’s! In my anguish I moaned for my mother, but no one came. . . . Now I was only one of many little animals driven by a herder.”

—*The School Days of an Indian Girl*

Zitkala-Ša experienced firsthand the clash of two very different cultures that occurred as ever-growing numbers of white settlers moved onto the Great Plains. In the resulting struggle, the Native American way of life was changed forever.



## The Culture of the Plains Indians

Zitkala-Ša knew very little about the world east of the Mississippi River. Most Easterners knew equally little about the West, picturing a vast desert occupied by savage tribes. That view could not have been more inaccurate. In fact, distinctive and highly developed Native American ways of life existed on the **Great Plains**, the grassland extending through the west-central portion of the United States. (See map on page 205.)

To the east, near the lower Missouri River, tribes such as the Osage and Iowa had, for more than a century, hunted and planted crops and settled in small villages. Farther west, nomadic tribes such as the Sioux and Cheyenne gathered wild foods and hunted buffalo. Peoples of the Plains, abiding by tribal law, traded and produced beautifully crafted tools and clothing.

**THE HORSE AND THE BUFFALO** After the Spanish brought horses to New Mexico in 1598, the Native American way of life began to change. As the native peoples acquired horses—and then guns—they were able to travel farther and hunt more efficiently. By the mid-1700s, almost all the tribes on the Great Plains had left their farms to roam the plains and hunt buffalo.

Their increased mobility often led to war when hunters in one tribe trespassed on other tribes' hunting grounds. For the young men of a tribe, taking part in war parties and raids was a way to win prestige. A Plains warrior gained honor by killing his enemies, as well as by "counting coup" This practice involved touching a live enemy with a coup stick and escaping unharmed. And sometimes warring tribes would call a truce so that they could trade goods, share news, or enjoy harvest festivals. Native Americans made tepees from buffalo hides and also used the skins for clothing, shoes, and blankets. Buffalo meat was dried into jerky or mixed with berries and fat to make a staple food called pemmican. While the horse gave Native Americans speed and mobility, the buffalo provided many of their basic needs and was central to life on the Plains. (See chart on page 207.)

**FAMILY LIFE** Native Americans on the plains usually lived in small extended family groups with ties to other bands that spoke the same language. Young men trained to become hunters and warriors. The women helped butcher the game and prepared the hides that the men brought back to the camp; young women sometimes chose their own husbands.

The Plains Indian tribes believed that powerful spirits controlled events in the natural world. Men or women who showed particular sensitivity to the spirits became medicine men or women, or shamans. Children learned proper behavior and culture through stories and myths, games, and good examples. Despite their communal way of life, however, no individual was allowed to dominate the group. The leaders of a tribe ruled by counsel rather than by force, and land was held in common for the use of the whole tribe.

## Settlers Push Westward

The culture of the white settlers differed in many ways from that of the Native Americans on the plains. Unlike Native Americans, who believed that land could not be owned, the settlers believed that owning land, making a mining claim, or starting a business would give them a stake in the country. They argued that the Native Americans had forfeited their rights to the land because they hadn't settled down to "improve" it. Concluding that the plains were "unsettled," migrants streamed westward along railroad and wagon trails to claim the land.



▲ A portrait of a Sioux man and woman in the late 19th century.

### Vocabulary

**coup:** a feat of bravery performed in battle

### MAIN IDEA

### Summarizing

**A** How did the horse influence Native American life on the Great Plains?

▼ This Yankton Sioux coup stick was used by warriors.



**THE LURE OF SILVER AND GOLD** The prospect of striking it rich was one powerful attraction of the West. The discovery of gold in Colorado in 1858 drew tens of thousands of miners to the region.

Most mining camps and tiny frontier towns had filthy, ramshackle living quarters. Rows of tents and shacks with dirt “streets” and wooden sidewalks had replaced unspoiled picturesque landscapes. Fortune seekers of every description—including Irish, German, Polish, Chinese, and African-American men—crowded the camps and boomtowns. A few hardy, business-minded women tried their luck too, working as laundresses, freight haulers, or miners. Cities such as Virginia City, Nevada, and Helena, Montana, originated as mining camps on Native American land.



**VIDEO**

Sitting Bull:  
Chief of the  
Lakota Nation

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## The Government Restricts Native Americans

While allowing more settlers to move westward, the arrival of the railroads also influenced the government’s policy toward the Native Americans who lived on the plains. In 1834, the federal government had passed an act that designated the entire Great Plains as one enormous reservation, or land set aside for Native American tribes. In the 1850s, however, the government changed its policy and created treaties that defined specific boundaries for each tribe. Most Native Americans spurned the government treaties and continued to hunt on their traditional lands, clashing with settlers and miners—with tragic results. **B**

**MASSACRE AT SAND CREEK** One of the most tragic events occurred in 1864. Most of the Cheyenne, assuming they were under the protection of the U.S. government, had peacefully returned to Colorado’s Sand Creek Reserve for the winter. Yet General S. R. Curtis, U.S. Army commander in the West, sent a telegram to militia colonel John Chivington that read, “I want no peace till the Indians suffer more.” In response, Chivington and his troops descended on the Cheyenne and Arapaho—about 200 warriors and 500 women and children—camped at Sand Creek. The attack at dawn on November 29, 1864 killed over 150 inhabitants, mostly women and children.

**DEATH ON THE BOZEMAN TRAIL** The Bozeman Trail ran directly through Sioux hunting grounds in the Bighorn Mountains. The Sioux chief, Red Cloud (Mahpiua Luta), had unsuccessfully appealed to the government to end white settlement on the trail. In December 1866, the warrior Crazy Horse ambushed Captain William J. Fetterman and his company at Lodge Trail Ridge. Over 80 soldiers were killed. Native Americans called this fight the Battle of the Hundred Slain. Whites called it the Fetterman Massacre.

Skirmishes continued until the government agreed to close the Bozeman Trail. In return, the **Treaty of Fort Laramie**, in which the Sioux agreed to live on a reservation along the Missouri River, was forced on the leaders of the Sioux in 1868. **Sitting Bull** (Tatanka Iyotanka), leader of the Hunkpapa Sioux, had never signed it. Although the Ogala and Brule Sioux did sign the treaty, they expected to continue using their traditional hunting grounds.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Issues**

**B** What was the government’s policy toward Native American land?

### KEY PLAYER



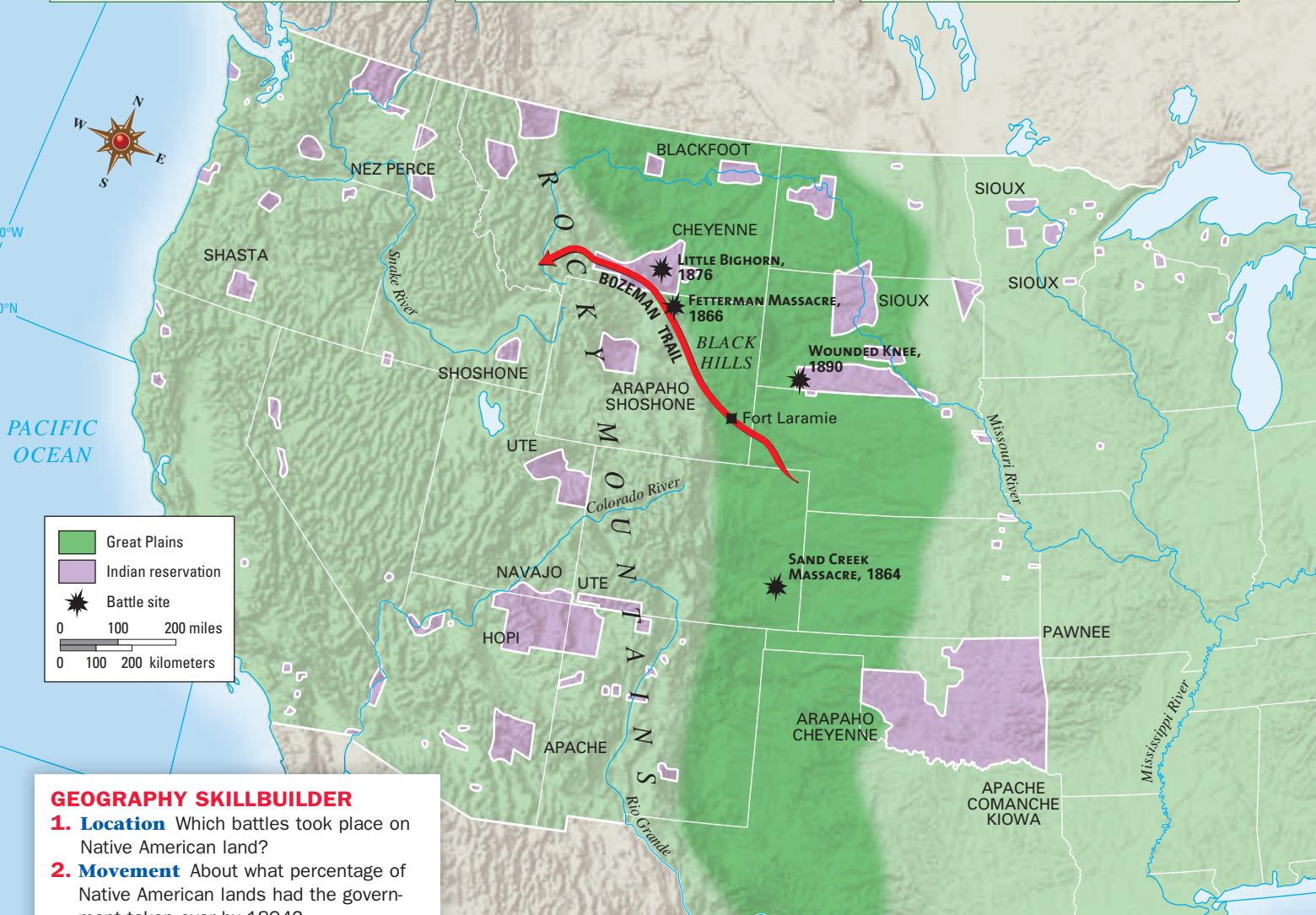
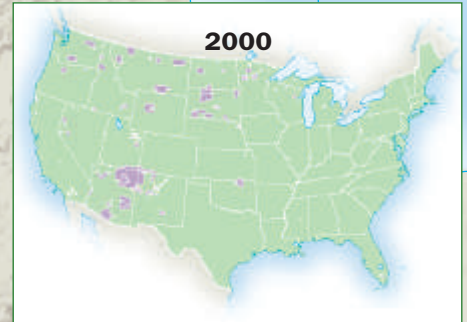
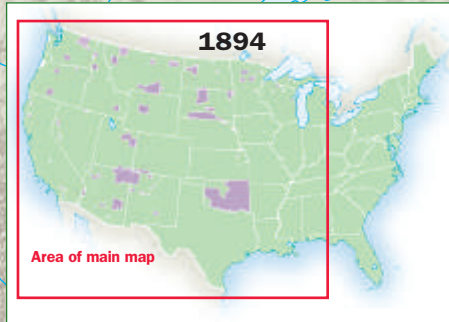
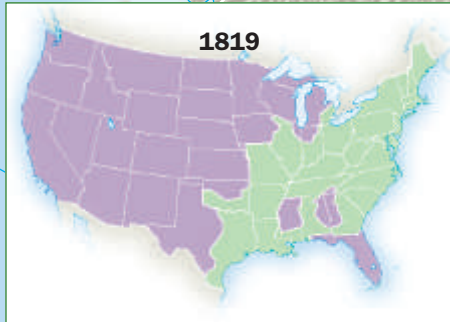
**SITTING BULL**  
1831–1890

As a child, Sitting Bull was known as Hunkesni, or Slow; he earned the name Tatanka Iyotanka (Sitting Bull) after a fight with the Crow, a traditional enemy of the Sioux.

Sitting Bull led his people by the strength of his character and purpose. He was a warrior, spiritual leader, and medicine man, and he was determined that whites should leave Sioux territory. His most famous fight was at the Little Bighorn River. About his opponent, George Armstrong Custer, he said, “They tell me I murdered Custer. It is a lie. . . . He was a fool and rode to his death.”

After Sitting Bull’s surrender to the federal government in 1881, his dislike of whites did not change. He was killed by Native American police at Standing Rock Reservation in December 1890.

# Shrinking Native American Lands, and Battle Sites



## GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

- 1. Location** Which battles took place on Native American land?
- 2. Movement** About what percentage of Native American lands had the government taken over by 1894?

A Sioux encampment near the South Dakota-Nebraska border.





## Bloody Battles Continue

The Treaty of Fort Laramie provided only a temporary halt to warfare. The conflict between the two cultures continued as settlers moved westward and Native American nations resisted the restrictions imposed upon them. A Sioux warrior explained why.

### A PERSONAL VOICE GALL, A HUNKPAPA SIOUX

“[We] have been taught to hunt and live on the game. You tell us that we must learn to farm, live in one house, and take on your ways. Suppose the people living beyond the great sea should come and tell you that you must stop farming, and kill your cattle, and take your houses and lands, what would you do? Would you not fight them?”

—quoted in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

**RED RIVER WAR** In late 1868, war broke out yet again as the Kiowa and Comanche engaged in six years of raiding that finally led to the Red River War of 1874–1875. The U.S. Army responded by herding the people of friendly tribes onto reservations while opening fire on all others. General Philip Sheridan, a Union Army veteran, gave orders “to destroy their villages and ponies, to kill and hang all warriors, and to bring back all women and children.” With such tactics, the army crushed resistance on the southern plains.

Colonel George  
Armstrong Custer,  
1865

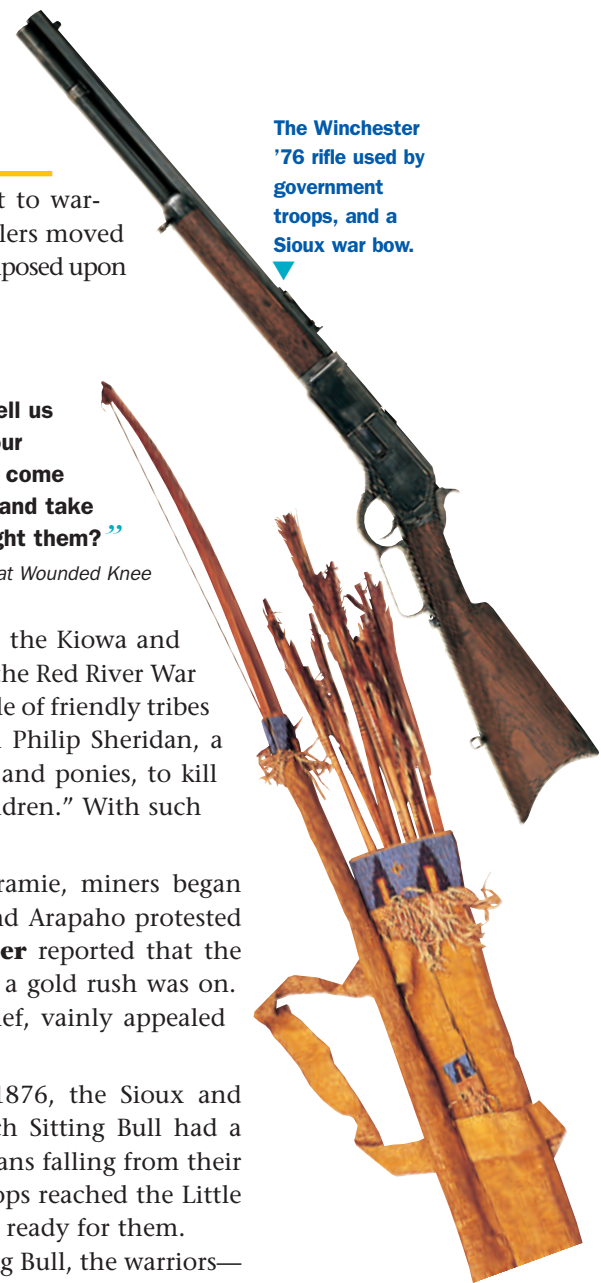


**GOLD RUSH** Within four years of the Treaty of Fort Laramie, miners began searching the Black Hills for gold. The Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho protested to no avail. In 1874, when Colonel **George A. Custer** reported that the Black Hills had gold “from the grass roots down,” a gold rush was on. Red Cloud and Spotted Tail, another Sioux chief, vainly appealed again to government officials in Washington.

**CUSTER’S LAST STAND** In early June 1876, the Sioux and Cheyenne held a sun dance, during which Sitting Bull had a vision of soldiers and some Native Americans falling from their horses. When Colonel Custer and his troops reached the Little Bighorn River, the Native Americans were ready for them.

Led by Crazy Horse, Gall, and Sitting Bull, the warriors—with raised spears and rifles—outflanked and crushed Custer’s troops. Within an hour, Custer and all of the men of the Seventh Cavalry were dead. By late 1876, however, the Sioux were beaten. Sitting Bull and a few followers took refuge in Canada, where they remained until 1881. Eventually, to prevent his people’s starvation, Sitting Bull was forced to surrender. Later, in 1885, he appeared in William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s Wild West Show. **C**

The Winchester  
'76 rifle used by  
government  
troops, and a  
Sioux war bow.



### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Effects

**C** What were the results of Custer’s last stand?

## The Government Supports Assimilation

The Native Americans still had supporters in the United States, and debate over the treatment of Native Americans continued. The well-known writer Helen Hunt Jackson, for example, exposed the government’s many broken promises in her 1881 book *A Century of Dishonor*. At the same time many sympathizers supported **assimilation**, a plan under which Native Americans would give up their beliefs and way of life and become part of the white culture.

**THE DAWES ACT** In 1887, Congress passed the **Dawes Act** aiming to “Americanize” the Native Americans. The act broke up the reservations and gave some of the reservation land to individual Native Americans—160 acres to each

head of household and 80 acres to each unmarried adult. The government would sell the remainder of the reservations to settlers, and the resulting income would be used by Native Americans to buy farm implements. By 1932, whites had taken about two-thirds of the territory that had been set aside for Native Americans. In the end, the Native Americans received no money from the sale of these lands.

**THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BUFFALO** Perhaps the most significant blow to tribal life on the plains was the destruction of the buffalo. Tourists and fur traders shot buffalo for sport. U.S. General Sheridan noted with approval that buffalo hunters were destroying the Plains Indians' main source of food, clothing, shelter, and fuel. In 1800, approximately 65 million buffalo roamed the plains; by 1890, fewer than 1000 remained. In 1900, the United States sheltered, in Yellowstone National Park, a single wild herd of buffalo.

## The Battle of Wounded Knee

The Sioux continued to suffer poverty and disease. In desperation, they turned to a Paiute prophet who promised that if the Sioux performed a ritual called the Ghost Dance, Native American lands and way of life would be restored.

The Ghost Dance movement spread rapidly among the 25,000 Sioux on the Dakota reservation. Alarmed military leaders ordered the arrest of Sitting Bull. In December 1890, about 40 Native American police were sent to arrest him. Sitting Bull's friend and bodyguard, Catch-the-Bear, shot one of them. The police then killed Sitting Bull. In the aftermath, Chief Big Foot led the fearful Sioux away.

**WOUNDED KNEE** On December 28, 1890, the Seventh Cavalry—Custer's old regiment—rounded up about 350 starving and freezing Sioux and took them to a camp at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota. The next day, the soldiers demanded that the Native Americans give up all their weapons. A shot was fired; from which side, it was not clear. The soldiers opened fire with deadly cannon.

### Importance of the Buffalo

The buffalo provided the Plains Indians with more than just a high-protein food source.



1800 65,000,000



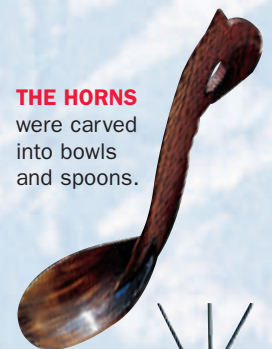
1870 1,000



2000 260,000



**THE SKULL** of the buffalo was considered sacred and was used in many Native American rituals.

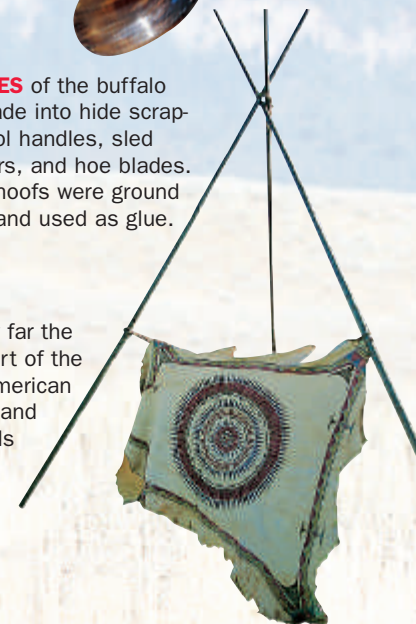


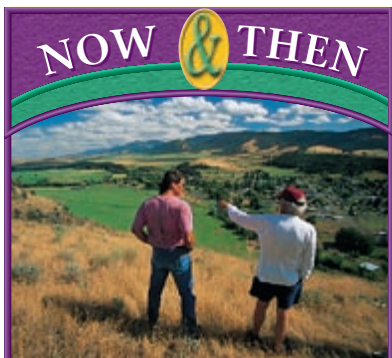
**THE HORNS** were carved into bowls and spoons.



**THE BONES** of the buffalo were made into hide scrapers, tool handles, sled runners, and hoe blades. The hoofs were ground up and used as glue.

**THE HIDE** was by far the most precious part of the buffalo. Native American clothing, tepees, and even arrow shields were made from buffalo hide.





### NEZ PERCE IN OREGON

Forced off their tribal lands in Wallowa County, Oregon, in 1877, the Nez Perce are returning almost 120 years later. 1999 figures put the number of Nez Perce in the Oregon area at around 3,000.

In 1997, Wallowa community leaders obtained a grant to develop the Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center—a cultural center that hosts powwows and other activities to draw tourists.

“I never thought I’d see the day,” said Earl (Taz) Conner, a direct descendant of Chief Joseph, the best known of the Nez Perce. And, in the words of Soy Redthunder, another tribe member, “[We] look at it as homecoming.”

Within minutes, the Seventh Cavalry slaughtered as many as 300 mostly unarmed Native Americans, including several children. The soldiers left the corpses to freeze on the ground. This event, the **Battle of Wounded Knee**, brought the Indian wars—and an entire era—to a bitter end. **D**

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

**D** What events led to the Battle of Wounded Knee?

### A PERSONAL VOICE BLACK ELK

“I did not know then how much was ended. When I look back . . . I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch. . . . And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people’s dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.”

—Black Elk Speaks

## Cattle Becomes Big Business

As the great herds of buffalo disappeared, and Native Americans were forced onto smaller and less desirable reservations, horses and cattle flourished on the plains. As cattle ranchers opened up the Great Plains to big business, ranching from Texas to Kansas became a profitable investment.

**VAQUEROS AND COWBOYS** American settlers had never managed large herds on the open range, and they learned from their Mexican neighbors how to round up, rope, brand, and care for the animals. The animals themselves, the Texas **longhorns**, were sturdy, short-tempered breeds accustomed to the dry grasslands of southern Spain. Spanish settlers raised longhorns for food and brought horses to use as work animals and for transportation.

As American as the cowboy seems today, his way of life stemmed directly from that of those first Spanish ranchers in Mexico. The cowboy’s clothes, food, and vocabulary were heavily influenced by the Mexican *vaquero*, who was the first to wear spurs, which he attached with straps to his bare feet and used to control his horse. His *chaparreras*, or leather overalls, became known as chaps. He ate *charqui*, or “jerky”—dried strips of meat. The Spanish *bronco caballo*, or “rough horse” that ran wild, became known as a bronco or bronc. The strays, or *mesteños*, were the same mustangs that the American cowboy tamed and prized. The Mexican *rancho* became the American ranch. Finally, the English words *corral* and

This 1877 painting by James Walker shows Mexican vaqueros in a horse corral. ▶



**MAIN IDEA****Drawing Conclusions**

**E** What does the American cowboy tradition owe to the Mexican vaquero?

rodeo were borrowed from Spanish. In his skills, dress, and speech, the Mexican vaquero was the true forerunner of the American “buckaroo” or cowboy. **E**

Despite the plentiful herds of Western cattle, cowboys were not in great demand until the railroads reached the Great Plains. Before the Civil War, ranchers for the most part didn’t stray far from their homesteads with their cattle. There were, of course, some exceptions. During the California gold rush in 1849, some hardy cattlemen on horseback braved a long trek, or drive, through Apache territory and across the desert to collect \$25 to \$125 a head for their cattle. In 1854, two ranchers drove their cattle 700 miles to Muncie, Indiana, where they put them on stock cars bound for New York City. When the cattle were unloaded in New York, the stampede that followed caused a panic on Third Avenue. Parts of the country were not ready for the mass transportation of animals.

**GROWING DEMAND FOR BEEF** After the Civil War, the demand for beef skyrocketed, partly due to the rapidly growing cities. The Chicago Union Stock Yards opened in 1865, and by spring 1866, the railroads were running regularly through Sedalia, Missouri. From Sedalia, Texas ranchers could ship their cattle to Chicago and markets throughout the East. They found, however, that the route to Sedalia presented several obstacles: including thunderstorms and rain-swollen rivers. Also, in 1866, farmers angry about trampled crops blockaded cattle in Baxter Springs, Kansas, preventing them from reaching Sedalia. Some herds then had to be sold at cut-rate prices, others died of starvation. **F**

**MAIN IDEA****Summarizing**

**F** What developments led to the rapid growth of the cattle industry?

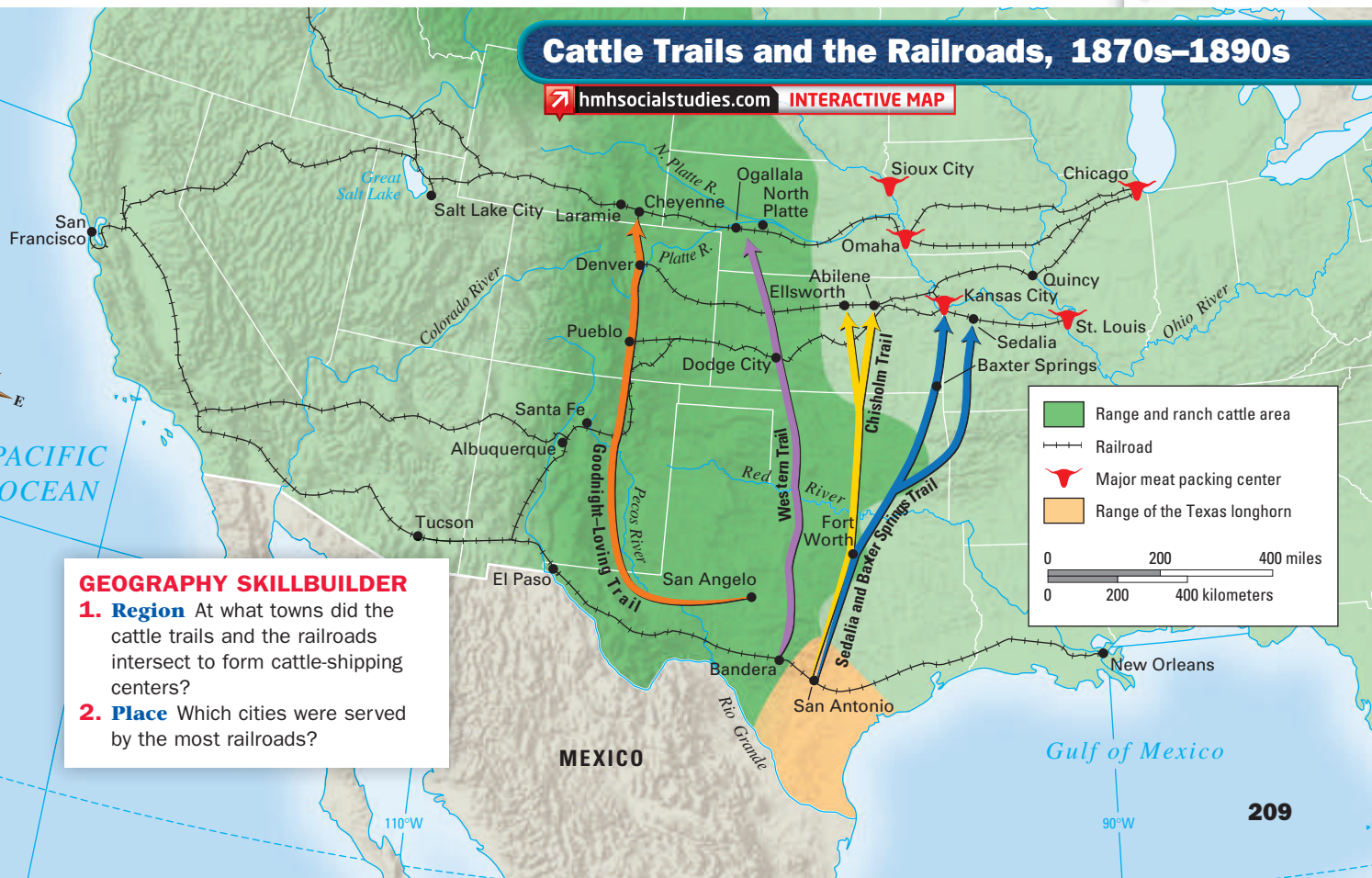
**THE COW TOWN** The next year, cattlemen found a more convenient route. Illinois cattle dealer Joseph McCoy approached several Western towns with plans to create a shipping yard where the trails and rail lines came together. The tiny Kansas town of Abilene enthusiastically agreed to the plan. McCoy built cattle pens, a three-story hotel, and helped survey the **Chisholm Trail**—the major cattle route from San Antonio, Texas, through Oklahoma to Kansas. Thirty-five thousand head of cattle were shipped out of the yard in Abilene during its first

**HISTORY**

**VIDEO**  
Wild West:  
Cattle Drive  
[hmsocialstudies.com](http://hmsocialstudies.com)

**Cattle Trails and the Railroads, 1870s–1890s**

[hmsocialstudies.com](http://hmsocialstudies.com) INTERACTIVE MAP

**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER**

- 1. Region** At what towns did the cattle trails and the railroads intersect to form cattle-shipping centers?
- 2. Place** Which cities were served by the most railroads?

Range and ranch cattle area  
 Railroad  
 Major meat packing center  
 Range of the Texas longhorn

0 200 400 miles  
 0 200 400 kilometers

## History Through

### Art

#### STAMPEDED BY LIGHTNING (1908)

Painter and sculptor Frederic Remington is best known for his romantic and spirited depictions of the Western frontier. Remington liked to paint in a single dominant color. Native Americans, cowboys at work, and other familiar Western scenes were all subjects of Remington's work.

**What do you learn about the work of the cowboy in this painting?**



year in operation. The following year, business more than doubled, to 75,000 head. Soon ranchers were hiring cowboys to drive their cattle to Abilene. Within a few years, the Chisholm Trail had worn wide and deep.

## A Day in the Life of a Cowboy

The meeting of the Chisholm Trail and the railroad in Abilene ushered in the heyday of the cowboy. As many as 55,000 worked the plains between 1866 and 1885. Although folklore and postcards depicted the cowboy as Anglo-American, about 25 percent of them were African American, and at least 12 percent were Mexican. The romanticized American cowboy of myth rode the open range, herding cattle and fighting villains. Meanwhile, the real-life cowboy was doing nonstop work.

**A DAY'S WORK** A cowboy worked 10 to 14 hours a day on a ranch and 14 or more on the trail, alert at all times for dangers that might harm or upset the herds. Some cowboys were as young as 15; most were broken-down by the time they were 40. A cowboy might own his saddle, but his trail horse usually belonged to his boss. He was an expert rider and roper. His gun might be used to protect the herd from wild or diseased animals rather than to hurt or chase outlaws.

**ROUNDUP** The cowboy's season began with a spring roundup, in which he and other hands from the ranch herded all the longhorns they could find on the open range into a large corral. They kept the herd penned there for several days, until the cattle were so hungry that they preferred grazing to running away. Then the cowboys sorted through the herd, claiming the cattle that were marked with the brand of their ranch and calves that still needed to be branded. After the herd was gathered and branded, the trail boss chose a crew for the long drive.

**THE LONG DRIVE** This overland transport, or **long drive**, of the animals often lasted about three months. A typical drive included one cowboy for every 250 to 300 head of cattle; a cook who also drove the chuck wagon and set up camp; and a wrangler who cared for the extra horses. A trail boss earned \$100 or more a month for supervising the drive and negotiating with settlers and Native Americans.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Comparing**

**G** How did the cowboy's life differ from the myth about it?

During the long drive, the cowboy was in the saddle from dawn to dusk. He slept on the ground and bathed in rivers. He risked death and loss every day of the drive, especially at river crossings, where cattle often hesitated and were swept away. Because lightning was a constant danger, cowboys piled their spurs, buckles, and other metal objects at the edge of their camp to avoid attracting lightning bolts. Thunder, or even a sneeze, could cause a stampede. **G**

**LEGENDS OF THE WEST** Legendary figures like James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok and Martha Jane Burke (Calamity Jane) actually never dealt with cows. Hickok served as a scout and a spy during the Civil War and, later, as a marshal in Abilene, Kansas. He was a violent man who was shot and killed while holding a pair of aces and a pair of eights in a poker game, a hand still known as the "dead man's hand." Calamity Jane was an expert sharpshooter who dressed as a man. She may have been a scout for Colonel George Custer.

## The End of the Open Range

Almost as quickly as cattle herds multiplied and ranching became big business, the cattle frontier met its end. Overgrazing of the land, extended bad weather, and the invention of barbed wire were largely responsible.

Between 1883 and 1887 alternating patterns of dry summers and harsh winters wiped out whole herds. Most ranchers then turned to smaller herds of high-grade stock that would yield more meat per animal. Ranchers fenced the land with barbed wire, invented by Illinois farmer Joseph F. Glidden. It was cheap and easy to use and helped to turn the open plains into a series of fenced-in ranches. The era of the wide-open West was over.

### HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT

#### THE WILD WEST SHOW

In the 1880s, William F. Cody toured the country with a show called Buffalo Bill's Wild West. The show featured trick riding and roping exhibitions. It thrilled audiences with mock battles between cowboys and Indians.

Wild Bill Hickok, Annie Oakley, Calamity Jane (shown here), and even Sitting Bull toured in Wild West shows. Their performances helped make Western life a part of American mythology.



**SECTION 1**

### ASSESSMENT

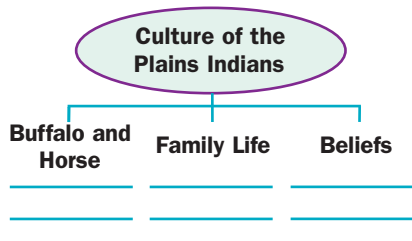
**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Great Plains
- Treaty of Fort Laramie
- Sitting Bull
- George A. Custer
- assimilation
- Dawes Act
- Battle of Wounded Knee
- longhorn
- Chisholm Trail
- long drive

### MAIN IDEA

**2. TAKING NOTES**

Fill in supporting details about the culture of the Plains Indians.



### CRITICAL THINKING

**3. MAKING INFERENCES**

Why do you think the assimilation policy of the Dawes Act failed? Support your opinion with information from the text.

**Think About:**

- the experience of Native Americans such as Zitkala-Ša
- the attitudes of many white leaders toward Native Americans
- the merits of owning property
- the importance of cultural heritage

**4. ANALYZING CAUSES**

What economic opportunities drew large numbers of people to the Great Plains beginning in the mid-1800s?

**5. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS**

Identify the reasons for the rise and the decline of the cattle industry.

# Gold Mining

**GOLD!** Some struck it rich—some struck out. Between the Civil War and the turn of the century, deposits of the precious yellow metal were discovered in scattered sites from the Black Hills of South Dakota and Cripple Creek, Colorado, to Nome, Alaska. The dream of riches lured hundreds of thousands of prospectors into territories that were previously inhabited only by native peoples. The fortune seekers came from all walks: grizzled veterans from the California gold rush of 1849, youths seeking adventure, middle-class professionals, and even some families.

## PANNING FOR GOLD ▶

At the start of a gold rush, prospectors usually looked for easily available gold—particles eroded from rocks and washed downstream. Panning for it was easy—even children could do it. They scooped up mud and water from the streambed in a flat pan and swirled it. The circular motion of the water caused the sand to wash over the side and the remaining minerals to form layers according to weight. Gold, which is heavier than most other minerals, sank to the bottom.



## ◀ SLUICES AND ROCKERS

In 1898, prospectors like this mother and son in Fairbanks, Alaska, found sluicing to be more efficient than panning, since it could extract gold from soil. They would shovel soil into a sluice—a trough through which water flowed—and the water would carry off lightweight materials. The gold sank to the bottom, where it was caught in wooden ridges called cleats. A rocker was a portable sluice that combined the mobility of panning with the efficiency of sluicing.

# DATA

## FILE

### ▼ IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH

Although surface gold could be extracted by panning and sluicing, most gold was located in veins in underground rock. Mining these deposits involved digging tunnels along the veins of gold and breaking up tons of ore—hard and dangerous work. Tunnels often collapsed, and miners who weren't killed were trapped in utter darkness for days.

Heat was a problem, too. As miners descended into the earth, the temperature inside the mine soared. At a depth of about 2,000 feet, the temperature of the water that invariably flooded the bottom of a mine could be 160°F.

Cave-ins and hot water weren't the only dangers that miners faced. The pressure in the underground rock sometimes became so intense that it caused deadly explosions.



### ▲ A FAMILY AFFAIR

This early placer, or surface, mine at Cripple Creek attracted many women and children. It grew out of the vision of a young rancher, Bob Womack. He had found gold particles washed down from higher land and was convinced that the Cripple Creek area was literally a gold mine.

Because Womack was generally disliked, the community ignored him. When a German count struck gold there, however, business boomed. Womack died penniless—but the mines produced a \$400 million bonanza.

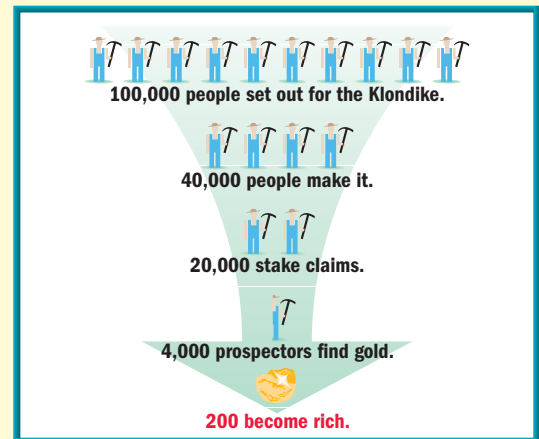
### BOOM TO BUST

Gold-rush towns could blossom out of the wilderness virtually overnight—but they could also die out almost as quickly.



### LONG ODDS

These statistics for the Klondike gold rush, from 1896 to 1899, show the incredible odds against striking it rich.



### DEADLY DIGGING

An estimated 7,500 people died while digging for gold and silver during the Western gold rushes. That was more than the total number of people who died in the Indian wars.

### THINKING CRITICALLY

#### CONNECT TO HISTORY

- 1. Creating Graphs** Use the Data File to create a bar graph that shows the percentage of people who set out for the Klondike who did not get there, got there, staked claims, found gold, and became rich.



SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R30.

#### CONNECT TO TODAY

- 2. Researching Ghost Towns** Research the history of a ghost town from boom to bust. Present a short report on life in the town and its attempts to survive beyond the gold rush.



[hmhsocialstudies.com](http://hmhsocialstudies.com) RESEARCH WEB LINKS



# Settling on the Great Plains

## MAIN IDEA

Settlers on the Great Plains transformed the land despite great hardships.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The Great Plains region remains the breadbasket of the United States.

## Terms & Names

- Homestead Act
- exoduster
- soddy
- Morrill Act
- bonanza farm

## One American's Story

### hmhsocialstudies.com TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes about settling the Great Plains.

When Esther Clark Hill was a girl on the Kansas prairie in the 1800s, her father often left the family to go on hunting or trading expeditions. His trips left Esther's mother, Allena Clark, alone on the farm.

Esther remembered her mother holding on to the reins of a runaway mule team, "her black hair tumbling out of its pins and over her shoulders, her face set and white, while one small girl clung with chattering teeth to the sides of the rocking wagon." The men in the settlement spoke admiringly about "Leny's nerve," and Esther thought that daily life presented a challenge even greater than driving a runaway team.



### A PERSONAL VOICE ESTHER CLARK HILL

"I think, as much courage as it took to hang onto the reins that day, it took more to live twenty-four hours at a time, month in and out, on the lonely and lovely prairie, without giving up to the loneliness."

—quoted in *Pioneer Women*

▲ Plains settlers, like this woman depicted in Harvey Dunn's painting *Pioneer Woman*, had to be strong and self-reliant.

As the railroads penetrated the frontier and the days of the free-ranging cowboy ended, hundreds of thousands of families migrated west, lured by vast tracts of cheap, fertile land. In their effort to establish a new life, they endured extreme hardships and loneliness.

## Settlers Move Westward to Farm

It took over 250 years—from the first settlement at Jamestown until 1870—to turn 400 million acres of forests and prairies into flourishing farms. Settling the second 400 million acres took only 30 years, from 1870 to 1900. Federal land policy and the completion of transcontinental railroad lines made this rapid settlement possible.

**RAILROADS OPEN THE WEST** From 1850 to 1871, the federal government made huge land grants to the railroads—170 million acres, worth half a billion

dollars—for laying track in the West. In one grant, both the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific received 10 square miles of public land for every mile of track laid in a state and 20 square miles of land for every mile of track laid in a territory.

In the 1860s, the two companies began a race to lay track. The Central Pacific moved eastward from Sacramento, and the Union Pacific moved westward from Omaha. Civil War veterans, Irish and Chinese immigrants, African Americans, and Mexican Americans did most of the grueling labor. In late 1868, workers for the Union Pacific cut their way through the solid rock of the mountains, laying up to eight miles of track a day. Both companies had reached Utah by the spring of 1869. Fifteen years later, the country boasted five transcontinental railroads. The rails to the East and West Coasts were forever linked.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Causes**

**A** How did the railroads help open the West?

**Vocabulary**

**speculator:** a person who buys or sells something that involves a risk on the chance of making a profit

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Effects**

**B** In what ways did government policies encourage settlement of the West?

The railroad companies sold some of their land to farmers for two to ten dollars an acre. Some companies successfully sent agents to Europe to recruit buyers. By 1880, 44 percent of the settlers in Nebraska and more than 70 percent of those in Minnesota and Wisconsin were immigrants. **A**

**GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR SETTLEMENT** Another powerful attraction of the West was the land itself. In 1862, Congress passed the **Homestead Act**, offering 160 acres of land free to any citizen or intended citizen who was head of the household. From 1862 to 1900, up to 600,000 families took advantage of the government's offer. Several thousand settlers were **exodusters**—African Americans who moved from the post-Reconstruction South to Kansas.

Despite the massive response by homesteaders, or settlers on this free land, private speculators and railroad and state government agents sometimes used the law for their own gain. Cattlemen fenced open lands, while miners and woodcutters claimed national resources. Only about 10 percent of the land was actually settled by the families for whom it was intended. In addition, not all plots of land were of equal value. Although 160 acres could provide a decent living in the fertile soil of Iowa or Minnesota, settlers on drier Western land required larger plots to make farming worthwhile.

Eventually, the government strengthened the Homestead Act and passed more legislation to encourage settlers. In 1889, a major land giveaway in what is now Oklahoma attracted thousands of people. In less than a day, land-hungry settlers claimed 2 million acres in a massive land rush. Some took possession of the land before the government officially declared it open. Because these settlers claimed land sooner than they were supposed to, Oklahoma came to be known as the Sooner State. **B**

Posters like the one shown here drew hundreds of thousands of settlers to the West. Among the settlers were thousands of exodusters—freed slaves who had left the South.



**THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER** As settlers gobbled up Western land, Henry D. Washburn and fellow explorer Nathaniel P. Langford asked Congress to help protect the wilderness from settlement. In 1870, Washburn, who was surveying land in northwestern Wyoming, described the area’s geysers and bubbling springs as: “objects new in experience . . . possessing unlimited grandeur and beauty.”

In 1872, the government created Yellowstone National Park. Seven years later, the Department of the Interior forced railroads to give up their claim to Western landholdings that were equal in area to New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia combined. Even so, by 1880, individuals had bought more than 19 million acres of government-owned land. Ten years later, the Census Bureau declared that the country no longer had a continuous frontier line—the frontier no longer existed. To many, the frontier was what had made America unique. In an 1893 essay entitled “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” the historian Frederick Jackson Turner agreed.

**A PERSONAL VOICE** FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER

“American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character.”

—“The Significance of the Frontier in American History”

Today many historians question Turner’s view. They think he gave too much importance to the frontier in the nation’s development and in shaping a special American character. **C**

## Settlers Meet the Challenges of the Plains

The frontier settlers faced extreme hardships—droughts, floods, fires, blizzards, locust plagues, and occasional raids by outlaws and Native Americans. Yet the number of people living west of the Mississippi River grew from 1 percent of the nation’s population in 1850 to almost 30 percent by the turn of the century.

**DUGOUTS AND SODDIES** Since trees were scarce, most settlers built their homes from the land itself. Many pioneers dug their homes into the sides of ravines or small hills. A stovepipe jutting from the ground was often the only clear sign of such a dugout home.

Those who moved to the broad, flat plains often made freestanding houses by stacking blocks of prairie turf. Like a dugout, a sod home, or **soddy**, was warm in

A pioneer family stands in front of their soddy near Coburg, Nebraska, in 1887. ►



**Background**

The U.S. Census Bureau is the permanent collector of timely, relevant data about the people and economy of the United States.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Summarizing**

**C** What was Turner’s view of the role of the American frontier in 1893?

**Vocabulary**

**locust:** any of numerous grasshoppers that travel in large swarms, often doing great damage to crops

winter and cool in summer. Soddies were small, however, and offered little light or air. They were havens for snakes, insects, and other pests. Although they were fireproof, they leaked continuously when it rained.

**WOMEN'S WORK** Virtually alone on the flat, endless prairie, homesteaders had to be almost superhumanly self-sufficient. Women often worked beside the men in the fields, plowing the land and planting and harvesting the predominant crop, wheat. They sheared the sheep and carded wool to make clothes for their families. They hauled water from wells that they had helped to dig, and made soap and candles from tallow. At harvest time, they canned fruits and vegetables. They were skilled in doctoring—from snakebites to crushed limbs. Women also sponsored schools and churches in an effort to build strong communities.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR FARMERS** Establishing a homestead was challenging. Once accomplished, it was farming the prairie, year in and year out, that became an overwhelming task. In 1837, John Deere had invented a steel plow that could slice through heavy soil. In 1847, Cyrus McCormick began to mass-produce a reaping machine. But a mass market for these devices didn't fully develop until the late 1800s with the migration of farmers onto the plains.

Other new and improved devices made farm work speedier—the spring-tooth harrow to prepare the soil (1869), the grain drill to plant the seed (1841), barbed wire to fence the land (1874), and the corn binder (1878). Then came a reaper that could cut and thresh wheat in one pass. By 1890, there were more than 900 manufacturers of farm equipment. In 1830, producing a bushel of grain took about 183 minutes. By 1900, with the use of these machines, it took only 10 minutes. These inventions made more grain available for a wider market. **D**

**AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION** The federal government supported farmers by financing agricultural education. The **Morrill Act** of 1862 and 1890 gave federal land to the states to help finance agricultural colleges, and the Hatch Act of 1887 established agricultural experiment stations to inform farmers of new developments. Agricultural researchers developed grains for arid soil and techniques for dry farming, which helped the land to retain moisture. These innovations enabled the dry eastern plains to flourish and become “the breadbasket of the nation.”

**MAIN IDEA**

**Summarizing**

**D** How did new inventions change farming in the West?



**Science & Technology**

**INVENTIONS THAT TAMED THE PRAIRIE**

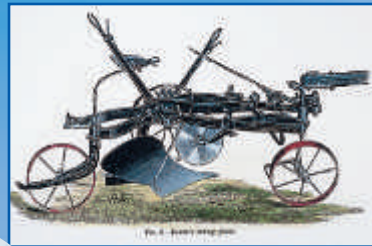
On the Great Plains, treeless expanses, root-filled soil, and unpredictable weather presented challenges to farming.



**BARBED WIRE** Barbed wire prevented animals from trampling crops and wandering off.



**REAPER** By speeding up harvesting, the reaper saved crops from inclement weather.



**STEEL PLOW** The steel plow made planting more efficient in root-filled soil.

**STEEL WINDMILL** In regions of unpredictable rainfall, the steel windmill prevented crop dehydration by bringing up underground water for irrigation.



▲  
**Bonanza farms like this one required the labor of hundreds of farm hands and horses.**

**FARMERS IN DEBT** Elaborate machinery was expensive, and farmers often had to borrow money to buy it. When prices for wheat were higher, farmers could usually repay their loans. When wheat prices fell, however, farmers needed to raise more crops to make ends meet. This situation gave rise to a new type of farming in the late 1870s. Railroad companies and investors created **bonanza farms**, enormous single-crop spreads of 15,000–50,000 acres. The Cass-Cheney-Dalrymple farm near Cassleton, North Dakota, for example, covered 24 square miles. By 1900, the average farmer had nearly 150 acres under cultivation. Some farmers mortgaged their land to buy more property, and as farms grew bigger, so did farmers’ debts. Between 1885 and 1890, much of the plains experienced drought, and the large single-crop operations couldn’t compete with smaller farms, which could be more flexible in the crops they grew. The bonanza farms slowly folded into bankruptcy.

Farmers also felt pressure from the rising cost of shipping grain. Railroads charged Western farmers a higher fee than they did farmers in the East. Also, the railroads sometimes charged more for short hauls, for which there was no competing transportation, than for long hauls. The railroads claimed that they were merely doing business, but farmers resented being taken advantage of. “No other system of taxation has borne as heavily on the people as those extortions and inequalities of railroad charges” wrote Henry Demarest Lloyd in an article in the March 1881 edition of *Atlantic Monthly*.

Many farmers found themselves growing as much grain as they could grow, on as much land as they could acquire, which resulted in going further into debt. But they were not defeated by these conditions. Instead, these challenging conditions drew farmers together in a common cause.

**Vocabulary mortgage:** to legally pledge property to a creditor as security for the payment of a loan or debt

**Vocabulary extortion:** illegal use of one’s official position or powers to obtain property or funds

**SECTION 2**

**ASSESSMENT**

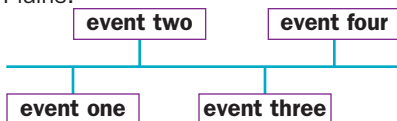
**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Homestead Act
- soddy
- bonanza farm
- exoduster
- Morrill Act

**MAIN IDEA**

**2. TAKING NOTES**

Create a time line of four events that shaped the settling of the Great Plains.



How might history be different if one of these events hadn’t happened?

**CRITICAL THINKING**

**3. EVALUATING**

How successful were government efforts to promote settlement of the Great Plains? Give examples to support your answer. **Think About:**

- the growth in population on the Great Plains
- the role of railroads in the economy
- the Homestead Act

**4. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS**

Review the changes in technology that influenced the life of settlers on the Great Plains in the late 1800s. Explain how you think settlement of the plains would have been different without these inventions.

**5. IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS**

How did the railroads take advantage of farmers?

# Farmers and the Populist Movement

## MAIN IDEA

Farmers united to address their economic problems, giving rise to the Populist movement.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Many of the Populist reform issues, such as income tax and legally protected rights of workers, are now taken for granted.

## Terms & Names

- Oliver Hudson Kelley
- Grange
- Farmers' Alliances
- Populism
- bimetallism
- gold standard
- William McKinley
- William Jennings Bryan

## One American's Story

hmhsocialstudies.com  
**TAKING NOTES**

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes about the Populist Party.

As a young adult in the early 1870s, Mary Elizabeth Lease left home to teach school on the Kansas plains. After marrying farmer Charles Lease, she joined the growing Farmers' Alliance movement and began speaking on issues of concern to farmers. Lease joked that her tongue was "loose at both ends and hung on a swivel," but her golden voice and deep blue eyes hypnotized her listeners.

### A PERSONAL VOICE MARY ELIZABETH LEASE

**"What you farmers need to do is to raise less corn and more Hell! We want the accursed foreclosure system wiped out. . . . We will stand by our homes and stay by our fire-sides by force if necessary, and we will not pay our debts to the loan-shark companies until the Government pays its debts to us."**

—quoted in "The Populist Uprising"

Farmers had endured great hardships in helping to transform the plains from the "Great American Desert" into the "breadbasket of the nation," yet every year they reaped less and less of the bounty they had sowed with their sweat.



▲ **Mary Elizabeth Lease, the daughter of Irish immigrants, was a leader of the Populist Party.**

## Farmers Unite to Address Common Problems

In the late 1800s, many farmers were trapped in a vicious economic cycle. Prices for crops were falling, and farmers often mortgaged their farms so that they could buy more land and produce more crops. Good farming land was becoming scarce, though, and banks were foreclosing on the mortgages of increasing numbers of farmers who couldn't make payments on their loans. Moreover, the railroads were taking advantage of farmers by charging excessive prices for shipping and storage.

## Analyzing Political Cartoons

### THE PLIGHT OF THE FARMERS

Farmers were particularly hard hit in the decades leading to the financial panic of 1893. They regarded big business interests as insurmountable enemies who were bringing them to their knees and leaving them with debts at every turn. This cartoon is a warning of the dangers confronting not only the farmers but the entire nation.

#### SKILLBUILDER Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. How does this cartoon depict the plight of the farmers?
2. Who does the cartoonist suggest is responsible for the farmers' plight?

SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R24.



**ECONOMIC DISTRESS** The troubles of the farmers were part of a larger economic problem affecting the entire nation. During the Civil War, the United States had issued almost \$500 million in paper money, called greenbacks. Greenbacks could not be exchanged for silver or gold money. They were worth less than hard money of the same face value. Hard money included both coins and paper money printed in yellow ink that could be exchanged for gold. After the war, the government began to take the greenbacks out of circulation.

Retiring the greenbacks caused some discontent. It increased the value of the money that stayed in circulation. It meant that farmers who had borrowed money had to pay back their loans in dollars that were worth more than the dollars they had borrowed. At the same time they were receiving less money for their crops. Between 1867 and 1887, for example, the price of a bushel of wheat fell from \$2.00 to 68 cents. In effect, farmers lost money at every turn. **A**

Throughout the 1870s, the farmers and other debtors pushed the government to issue more money into circulation. Those tactics failed—although the Bland-Allison Act of 1878 required the government to buy and coin at least \$2 million to \$4 million worth of silver each month. It wasn't enough to support the increase in the money supply that the farmers wanted.

**PROBLEMS WITH THE RAILROADS** Meanwhile, farmers paid outrageously high prices to transport grain. Lack of competition among the railroads meant that it might cost more to ship grain from the Dakotas to Minneapolis by rail than from Chicago to England by boat. Also, railroads made secret agreements with middlemen—grain brokers and merchants—that allowed the railroads to control grain storage prices and to influence the market price of crops.

Many farmers mortgaged their farms for credit with which to buy seed and supplies. Suppliers charged high rates of interest, sometimes charging more for items bought on credit than they did for cash purchases. Farmers got caught in a cycle of credit that meant longer hours and more debt every year. It was time for reform. **B**

**THE FARMERS' ALLIANCES** To push effectively for reforms, however, farmers needed to organize. In 1867, **Oliver Hudson Kelley** started the Patrons of

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Issues

**A** Why did farmers think that an increased money supply would help solve their economic problems?

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

**B** What were some of the causes of farmers' economic problems?

### Vocabulary

**regulate:** to control or direct according to a rule or law

Husbandry, an organization for farmers that became popularly known as the **Grange**. Its original purpose was to provide a social outlet and an educational forum for isolated farm families. By the 1870s, however, Grange members spent most of their time and energy fighting the railroads. The Grange's battle plan included teaching its members how to organize, how to set up farmers' cooperatives, and how to sponsor state legislation to regulate railroads.

The Grange gave rise to other organizations, such as **Farmers' Alliances**. These groups included many others who sympathized with farmers. Alliances sent lecturers from town to town to educate people about topics such as lower interest rates on loans and government control over railroads and banks. Spellbinding speakers such as Mary Elizabeth Lease helped get the message across.

Membership grew to more than 4 million—mostly in the South and the West. The Southern Alliance, including white Southern farmers, was the largest. About 250,000 African Americans belonged to the Colored Farmers' National Alliance. Some alliance members promoted cooperation between black and white alliances, but most members accepted the separation of the organizations.

### HISTORICAL

## SPOTLIGHT

### THE COLORED FARMERS' NATIONAL ALLIANCE

A white Baptist missionary, R. M. Humphrey, organized the Colored Farmers' National Alliance in 1886 in Houston, Texas. Like their counterparts in the white alliances, members of the local colored farmers' alliances promoted cooperative buying and selling. Unlike white organizations, however, the black alliances had to work mostly in secret to avoid racially motivated violence at the hands of angry landowners and suppliers.

## The Rise and Fall of Populism

Leaders of the alliance movement realized that to make far-reaching changes, they would need to build a base of political power. **Populism**—the movement of the people—was born with the founding of the Populist, or People's, Party, in 1892. On July 2, 1892, a Populist Party convention in Omaha, Nebraska, demanded reforms to lift the burden of debt from farmers and other workers and to give the people a greater voice in their government.

**THE POPULIST PARTY PLATFORM** The economic reforms proposed by the Populists included an increase in the money supply, which would produce a rise in prices received for goods and services; a graduated income tax; and a federal loan program. The proposed governmental reforms included the election of U.S. senators by popular vote, single terms for the president and the vice-president, and a secret ballot to end vote fraud. Finally, the Populists called for an eight-hour workday and restrictions on immigration.

The proposed changes were so attractive to struggling farmers and desperate laborers that in 1892 the Populist presidential candidate won almost 10 percent of the total vote. In the West, the People's Party elected five senators, three governors, and about 1,500 state legislators. The Populists' programs eventually became the platform of the Democratic Party and kept alive the concept that the government is responsible for reforming social injustices. **C**

### MAIN IDEA

### Summarizing

**C** What was the Populist Party platform?

**THE PANIC OF 1893** During the 1880s, farmers were overextended with debts and loans. Railroad construction had expanded faster than markets. In February 1893, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad went bankrupt, followed by the Erie, the Northern Pacific, the Union Pacific, and the Santa Fe. The government's gold supply had worn thin, partly due to its obligation to purchase silver. People panicked and traded paper money for gold. The panic also spread to Wall Street, where the prices of stocks fell rapidly. The price of silver then plunged, causing silver mines to close. By the end of the year, over 15,000 businesses and 500 banks had collapsed.





**WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN  
1860–1925**

William Jennings Bryan might be considered a patron saint of lost causes, largely because he let beliefs, not politics, guide his actions. He resigned his position as secretary of state (1913–1915) under Woodrow Wilson, for example, to protest the president’s movement away from neutrality regarding the war in Europe.

Near the end of his life, he went to Tennessee to assist the prosecution in the Scopes “monkey trial,” contesting the teaching of evolution in public schools. He is perhaps best characterized by a quote from his own “Cross of Gold” speech: “The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error.”

Investments declined, and consumer purchases, wages, and prices also fell. Panic deepened into depression as 3 million people lost their jobs. By December 1894, a fifth of the work force was unemployed. Many farm families suffered both hunger and unemployment. **D**

**SILVER OR GOLD** Populists watched as the two major political parties became deeply divided in a struggle between different regions and economic interests. Business owners and bankers of the industrialized Northeast were Republicans; the farmers and laborers of the agrarian South and West were Democrats.

The central issue of the campaign was which metal would be the basis of the nation’s monetary system. On one side were the “silverites,” who favored **bimetallism**, a monetary system in which the government would give citizens either gold or silver in exchange for paper currency or checks. On the other side were President Cleveland and the “gold bugs,” who favored the **gold standard**—backing dollars solely with gold.

The backing of currency was an important campaign issue because people regarded paper money as worthless if it could not be turned in for gold or silver. Because silver was more plentiful than gold, backing currency with both metals, as the silverites advocated, would make more currency (with less value per dollar) available. Supporters of bimetallism hoped that this measure would stimulate the stagnant economy. Retaining the gold standard would provide a more stable, but expensive, currency.

**BRYAN AND THE “CROSS OF GOLD”** Stepping into the debate, the Populist Party called for bimetallism and free coinage of silver. Yet their strategy was undecided: should they join forces with sympathetic candidates in the major parties and risk losing their political identity, or should they nominate their own candidates and risk losing the election?

As the 1896 campaign progressed, the Republican Party stated its firm commitment to the gold standard and nominated Ohioan **William McKinley** for president. After much debate, the Democratic Party came out in favor of a combined gold and silver standard, including unlimited coinage of silver. At the Democratic convention, former Nebraska congressman **William Jennings Bryan**, editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*, delivered an impassioned address to the assembled

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Causes**

**D** What caused the panic of 1893?

| Gold Bugs and Silverites |  |   |
|--------------------------|--|---|
|                          | Gold Bugs  | Silverites  |
| Who They Were            | bankers and businessmen  | farmers and laborers  |
| What They Wanted         | gold standard<br>less money in circulation   | bimetallism<br>more money in circulation  |
| Why                      | Loans would be repaid in stable money.   | Products would be sold at higher prices.  |
| Effects                  | <b>DEFLATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prices fall.</li> <li>• Value of money increases.</li> <li>• Fewer people have money.</li> </ul> | <b>INFLATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prices rise.</li> <li>• Value of money decreases.</li> <li>• More people have money.</li> </ul> |

delegates. An excerpt of what has become known as the “Cross of Gold” speech follows.

**A PERSONAL VOICE** WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

“Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.”

—Democratic convention speech, Chicago, July 8, 1896



▲ William Jennings Bryan’s “Cross of Gold” speech inspired many cartoonists.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Issues**

**E** Why was the metal that backed paper currency such an important issue in the 1896 presidential campaign?

Bryan won the Democratic nomination. When the Populist convention met two weeks later, the delegates were both pleased and frustrated. They liked Bryan and the Democratic platform, but they detested the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, Maine banker Arthur Sewall. Nor did they like giving up their identity as a party. They compromised by endorsing Bryan, nominating their own candidate, Thomas Watson of Georgia, for vice-president, and keeping their party organization intact. **E**

**THE END OF POPULISM** Bryan faced a difficult campaign. His free-silver stand had led gold bug Democrats to nominate their own candidate. It also weakened his support in cities, where consumers feared inflation because it would make goods more expensive. In addition, Bryan’s meager funds could not match the millions backing McKinley. Bryan tried to make up for lack of funds by campaigning in 27 states and sometimes making 20 speeches a day. McKinley, on the other hand, campaigned from his front porch, while thousands of well-known people toured the country speaking on his behalf.

McKinley got approximately 7 million votes and Bryan about 6.5 million. As expected, McKinley carried the East, while Bryan carried the South and the farm vote of the Middle West. The voters of the industrial Middle West, with their fear of inflation, brought McKinley into office.

With McKinley’s election, Populism collapsed, burying the hopes of the farmers. The movement left two powerful legacies, however: a message that the down-trodden could organize and have political impact, and an agenda of reforms, many of which would be enacted in the 20th century.

**SECTION 3**

**ASSESSMENT**

**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Oliver Hudson Kelley
- Farmers’ Alliances
- bimetallism
- William McKinley
- Grange
- Populism
- gold standard
- William Jennings Bryan

**MAIN IDEA**

**2. TAKING NOTES**

Identify the causes of the rise of the Populist Party and the effects the party had.



Which effect has the most impact today? Explain.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

**3. EVALUATING**

What do you think were the most significant factors in bringing an end to the Populist Party? **Think about:**

- monetary policy
- third-party status
- source of popular support
- popular participation policy

**4. MAKING INFERENCES**

How did the Grange and the Farmers’ Alliances pave the way for the Populist Party?

# Literature of the West

**1850–1900** After gold was discovered in California, Americans came to view the West as a region of unlimited possibility. Those who could not venture there in person enjoyed reading about the West in colorful tales by writers such as Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) and Bret Harte. Dime novels, cheaply bound adventure stories that sold for a dime, were also enormously popular in the second half of the 19th century.

Since much of the West was Spanish-dominated for centuries, Western literature includes legends and songs of Hispanic heroes and villains. It also includes the haunting words of Native Americans whose lands were taken and cultures threatened as white pioneers moved west.



▲ Mark Twain

## THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

The American humorist Samuel Clemens—better known as Mark Twain—was a would-be gold and silver miner who penned tales of frontier life. “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” is set in a California mining camp. Most of the tale is told by Simon Wheeler, an old-timer given to exaggeration.

“Well, Smiley kep’ the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him downtown sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come acrost him with his box, and says:

“‘What might it be that you’ve got in the box?’

“And Smiley says, sorter indifferent-like, ‘It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, maybe, but it ain’t—it’s only just a frog.’

“And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, ‘H’m—so ’tis. Well, what’s *he* good for?’

“‘Well,’ Smiley says, easy and careless, ‘he’s good enough for *one* thing, I should judge—he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County.’

“The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, ‘Well,’ he says, ‘I don’t see no p’int about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.’

“‘Maybe you don’t,’ Smiley says. ‘Maybe you understand frogs and maybe you don’t understand ’em; maybe you’ve had experience, and maybe you ain’t only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I’ve got my opinion, and I’ll resk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County.’”

—Mark Twain, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”  
(1865)

## THE BALLAD OF GREGORIO CORTEZ

In the border ballads, or *corridos*, of the American Southwest, few figures are as famous as the Mexican vaquero, Gregorio Cortez. This excerpt from a ballad about Cortez deals with a confrontation between Cortez and a group of Texas lawmen. Although he is hotly pursued, Cortez has an amazingly long run before being captured.

... And in the county of Kiansis  
They cornered him after all;  
Though they were more than  
three hundred  
He leaped out of their corral.

Then the Major Sheriff said,  
As if he was going to cry,  
“Cortez, hand over your weapons;  
We want to take you alive.”

Then said Gregorio Cortez,  
And his voice was like a bell,  
“You will never get my  
weapons  
Till you put me in a cell.”

Then said Gregorio Cortez,  
With his pistol in his hand,  
“Ah, so many mounted Rangers  
Just to take one Mexican!”

—Anonymous, “The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez,” translated by Américo Paredes



Vaquero (modeled 1980/cast 1990), Luis Jiménez, National Museum of American Art/Art Resource, New York.

## CHIEF SATANTA'S SPEECH AT THE MEDICINE LODGE CREEK COUNCIL

Known as the Orator of the Plains, Chief Satanta represented the Kiowa people in the 1867 Medicine Lodge Creek negotiations with the U.S. government. The speech from which this excerpt is taken was delivered by Satanta in Spanish but was translated into English and widely published in leading newspapers of the day.

All the land south of the Arkansas belongs to the Kiowas and Comanches, and I don't want to give away any of it. I love the land and the buffalo and will not part with it. I want you to understand well what I say. Write it on paper. Let the Great Father [U.S. president] see it, and let me hear what he has to say. I want you to understand also, that the Kiowas and Comanches don't want to fight, and have not been fighting since we made the treaty. I hear a great deal of good talk from the gentlemen whom the Great Father


### ▲ Chief Satanta

sends us, but they never do what they say. I don't want any of the medicine lodges [schools and churches] within the country. I want the children raised as I was. When I make peace, it is a long and lasting one—there is no end to it. . . . A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers on its banks. These soldiers cut down my timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry. I have spoken.

—Chief Satanta, speech at the Medicine Lodge Creek Council (1867)

### THINKING CRITICALLY

- 1. Comparing and Contrasting** Compare and contrast the views these selections give of the American frontier in the second half of the 19th century. Use details from the selections to help explain your answer.

 **SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R8.**

- 2.  hmhsocialstudies.com INTERNET ACTIVITY**



From the gauchos of the Argentine pampas to the workers on Australian sheep stations, many nations have had their own versions of the cowboys of the American West. Use the links for American Literature to research one such nation. Prepare a bulletin-board display that shows the similarities and differences between Western cowboys and their counterparts in that country.

**TERMS & NAMES**

For each term or name below, write a sentence explaining its connection to changes on the Great Plains.

- |                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Homestead Act | 6. George A. Custer       |
| 2. Sitting Bull  | 7. William Jennings Bryan |
| 3. assimilation  | 8. William McKinley       |
| 4. Morrill Act   | 9. Populism               |
| 5. exoduster     | 10. Grange                |

**MAIN IDEAS**

Use your notes and the information in the chapter to answer the following questions.

**Cultures Clash on the Prairie** (pages 202–211)

1. Identify three differences between the culture of the Native Americans and the culture of the white settlers on the Great Plains.
2. How effective was the Dawes Act in promoting the assimilation of Native Americans into white culture?
3. Why did the cattle industry become a big business in the late 1800s?
4. How did cowboy culture reflect the ethnic diversity of the United States?

**Settling on the Great Plains** (pages 214–218)

5. What measures did the government take to support settlement of the frontier?
6. How did settlers overcome the challenges of living on the Great Plains?

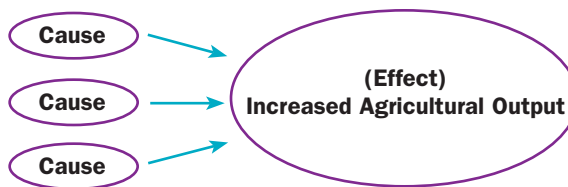
**Farmers and the Populist Movement**

(pages 219–223)

7. What economic problems confronted American farmers in the 1890s?
8. According to farmers and other supporters of free silver, how would bimetallism help the economy?

**CRITICAL THINKING**

1. **USING YOUR NOTES** Create a cause/effect diagram identifying the reasons that agricultural output from the Great Plains increased during the late 1800s.

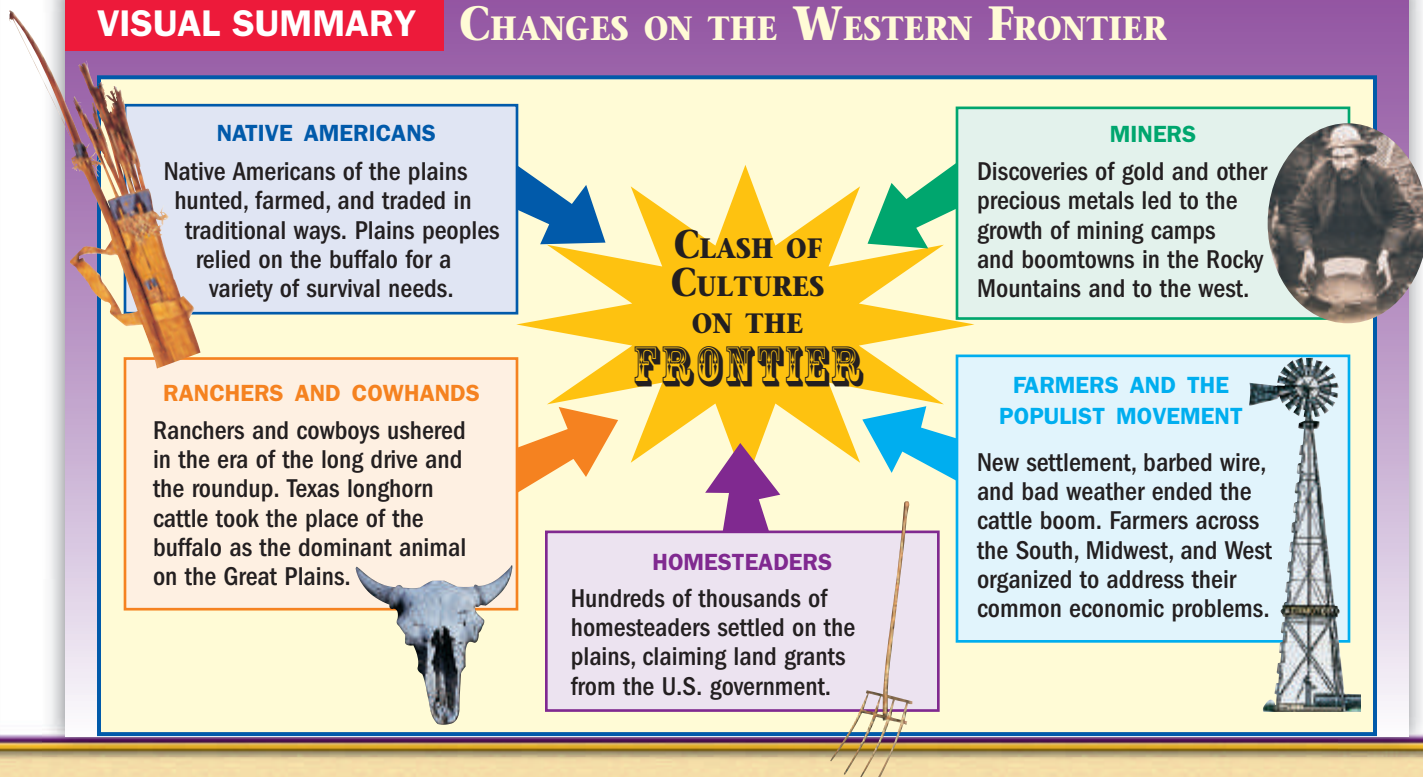


2. **ANALYZING MOTIVES** In 1877, Nez Perce Chief Joseph said, “My people have always been the friends of white men. Why are you in such a hurry?” Why do you think white people hurried to settle the West, with so little regard for Native Americans? Give evidence from the chapter to support your position.

3. **INTERPRETING CHARTS** Look at the chart of Gold Bugs and Silverites on page 222. What would be the result of the policies favored by the gold bugs? by the silverites?

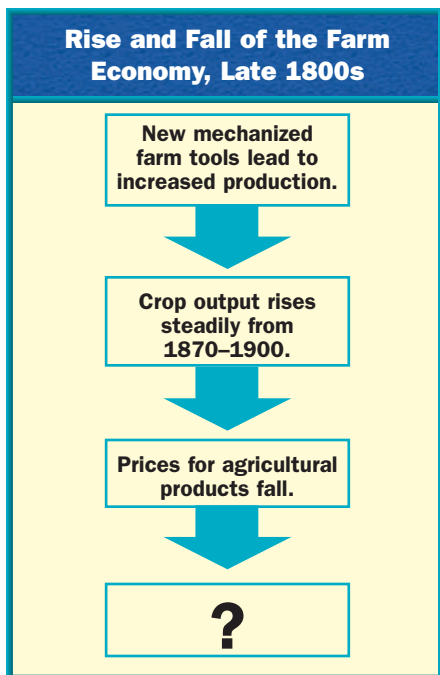
**VISUAL SUMMARY**

**CHANGES ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER**



## STANDARDIZED TEST PRACTICE

Use the flowchart and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer question 1.



1. Which effect accurately completes the flowchart?
- A Farmers have less money to repay loans, and many lose their farms.
  - B Small farmers live off the land, so are not affected by the economy.
  - C Wealthy farmers hoard gold, rather than depend on paper money.
  - D The government subsidizes farmers to help them pay their bills.

Use the quotation and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer question 2.

“[We] have been taught to hunt and live on the game. You tell us that we must learn to farm, live in one house, and take on your ways. Suppose the people living beyond the great sea should come and tell you that you must stop farming, and kill your cattle, and take your houses and lands, what would you do? Would you not fight them?”

—Gall, a Hunkpapa Sioux, quoted in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

2. What was Gall’s view of future relations between the Plains Indians and the settlers?
- F peaceful coexistence
  - G further conflict
  - H mutual respect
  - J equality before the law
3. How did the invention of barbed wire change the look of the Western frontier?
- A It endangered wildlife.
  - B It ended the cattle frontier.
  - C It increased cattle stocks.
  - D It enriched the cow towns.

[hmhsocialstudies.com](http://hmhsocialstudies.com) **TEST PRACTICE**

For additional test practice, go online for:

- Diagnostic tests
- Tutorials

### INTERACT WITH HISTORY

Think about the issues you explored at the beginning of the chapter. Suppose you are a frontier settler. Write a letter to the family members you left behind describing your journey west and how you are living now. Use information from the chapter to provide some vivid impressions of life on the frontier.

### FOCUS ON WRITING

You are a historian studying the development of the American West. Write an essay explaining how Americans settled the West in the late 1800s and how the region changed as a result. Use specific examples to support your main idea.

### COLLABORATIVE LEARNING



Work in pairs to research federal policy toward Native Americans between 1830 and 1890. Then work together to create a time line identifying key events that shaped the policy and the relationships between whites and Native Americans during the time period. Begin your time line with the passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830 and end it with the Battle of Wounded Knee in 1890.