
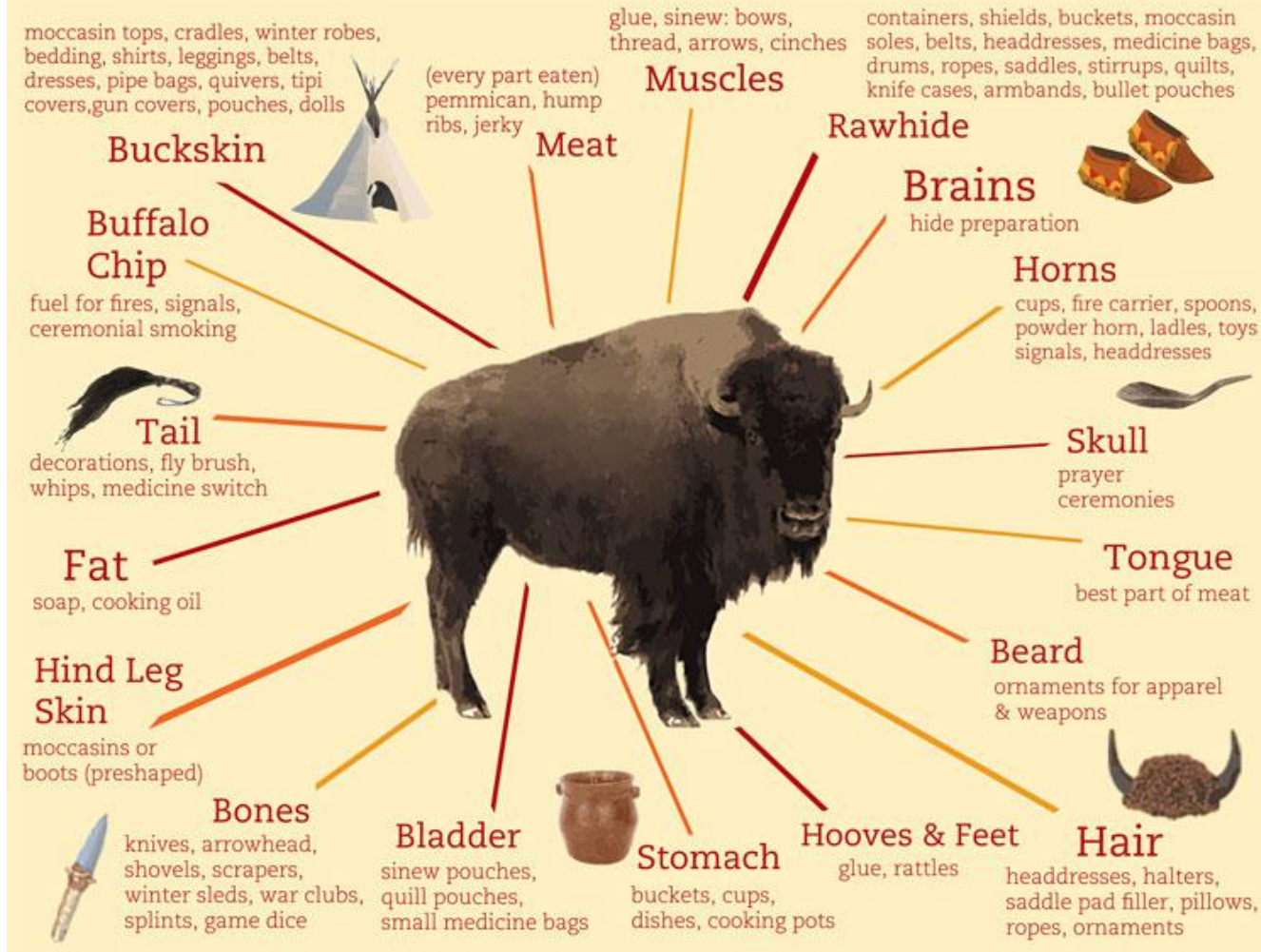


The  means this topic will be a main question on the assessment.

Visual Chart of the Uses Made of the Buffalo



MIGRATION – why did white Americans move west?

You need to know the different reasons why white Americans moved from the east to the west of America.

PUSH FACTORS

- Collapse of wheat prices
- Overpopulation
- Persecution (certain groups such as Mormons being treated badly)
- Unemployment

PULL FACTORS

- Freedom and independence
- Fertile land (Land they could grow crops on)
- More space
- Oregon Trail
- Gold

Native American beliefs

Beliefs about nature

Plains Indians believed that:

- everything in nature had a spirit and that these spirits could help humans or harm them
- humans were a part of nature and should work with the spirits of nature, rather than try to tame and control nature
- they could contact the spirit world through visions and special ritual dances.

Beliefs about land and property

- Plains Indians tribes had sacred areas. For the Lakota Sioux, the Black Hills, Paha Sapa, were sacred because this was where the Lakota believed their tribe originally came from.
- Indian families sometimes had their own garden plots, but generally no one owned land. For Plains Indians, land was not any one's property, and not something that one person could buy and keep just for him or herself.

Attitudes to war

- Plains Indian society was full of conflict, but Indians had developed ways to avoid too much killing because young men were essential to each tribe's survival.
- The highest respect and prestige was given to warriors, usually young men, for counting coup: landing a blow on an enemy and getting away without being injured.
- Indian war parties would also run away if a fight turned against them.

The Donner Party were a group who tried to move from the east to the west

The Donner Party

The Donner Party, led by Jacob and George Donner, left Missouri for California in May 1846 with 60 wagons and 300 people.

- This wagon train was well equipped but had more women, elderly people and children than normal.
- At Fort Bridger, a smaller group of about 80 people tried to take a 'short cut' (they were using a leaflet for guidance).
- Four wagons broke, 300 cattle died and one man killed another.
- They arrived late in the Sierra Nevada and were trapped by heavy snow.
- A group, sent for help, took 32 days to reach Johnson's Ranch.
- To survive, both groups ate their dead. Rescue parties found them in January 1847.

The Mormons were another group who moved from the east to the west. They moved successfully.

Journey to the Great Salt Lake

When Smith died, Brigham Young became leader. In 1846, the Mormons' persecution in Illinois forced him and 1500 others to find land that no one else wanted – near the Great Salt Lake. To make the journey, he:

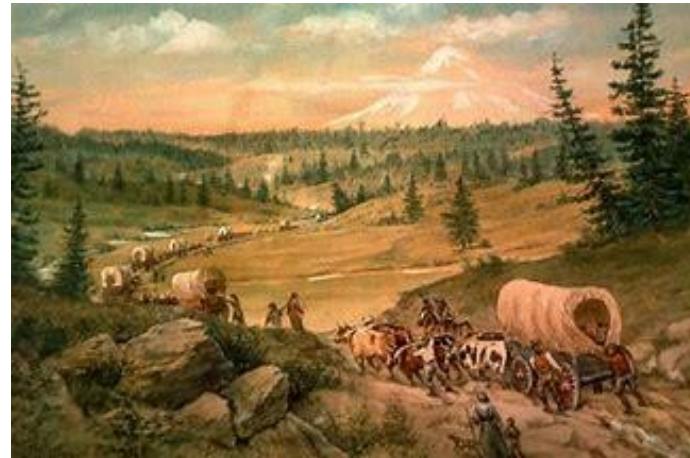
- split everyone into groups, each with a leader
- gave everyone a specific role
- taught them how to form their wagons into a circle for safety
- insisted on discipline and regular rest. His was the first of many Mormon wagon trains to make the 2250 km journey.

Californian Gold Rush YouTube clip -<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iydRkC0gMZI>

Who were the Gold Rush migrants?

From 1849, hundreds of thousands travelled to California, hoping to find gold.

- Between 1836 and 1846 the total number of migrants using the Trail was 5000. From 1849, tens of thousands used the Trail in the hope of finding gold in the West.
- Thousands more came by ship, from all over the world, to San Francisco. A famine in China led to 20 000 Chinese people migrating to California in 1852.
- Most migrants did not find gold.
- Professional miners with the equipment and expertise to mine underground (where most of the gold was) took over through the 1850s.



Key Words

Nomadic – describes people who travel around
Oregon Trail – the route many migrants took from the east to the west of America

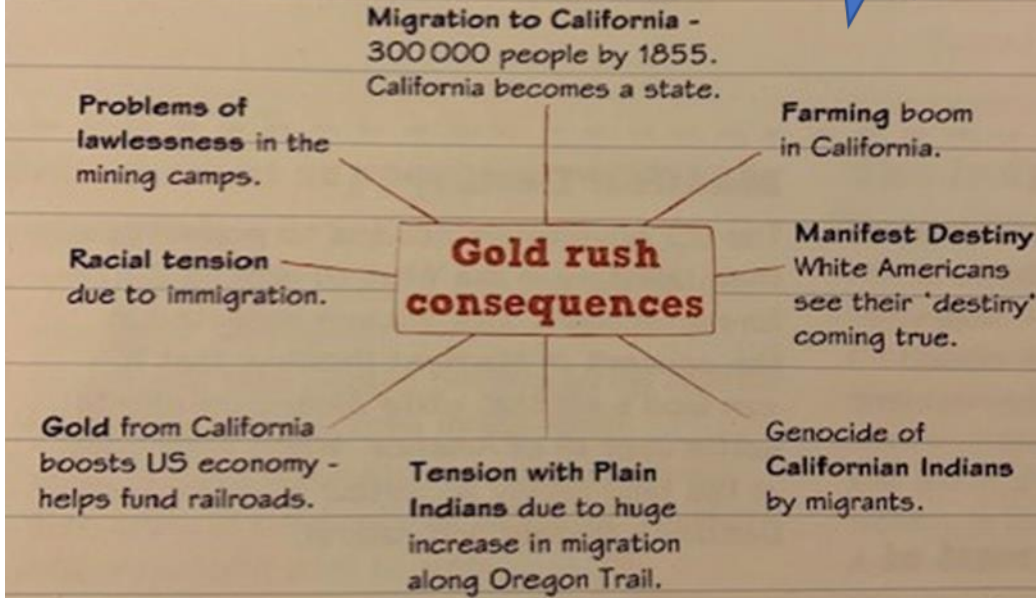
Manifest Destiny – The belief that Americans had that it was their right and destiny to move west across America and set up towns and villages.

Plains Indians – the groups of Native Americans who lived on the Plains, including groups such as the Sioux.

Native – People who are originally from that area

Braves and Squaws – Native American words for men and women.

Consequences of the Gold Rush



Lots of Americans who moved west became homesteaders. A homesteader was someone who bought 160 acres of land for a small amount of money and farmed it.

Could YOU be a homesteader?

Are you the head of a family or single and over 21 years of age?

(Women and former slaves ARE included – but no Indians and Confederate soldiers.)

Are you single and under 21 but fought for the victorious US Army in the Civil War?

Do you have \$10 to pay to file your claim?

Then 160 acres of land is yours to claim.

Work the land for five years and it becomes your property for a further payment of \$30.

When thousands of people moved to California for the Gold Rush in 1849, it caused a lot of problems with law and order.



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Think about the problems the homesteaders faced.

Which could have been the biggest problem?

How did they deal with the problems?

Which solution do you think was the best?

Homesteaders: finding solutions

The period 1862–76 saw the development of different technological solutions to some of the problems of farming the Plains, as well as different farming methods. However, many of these solutions did not become widespread in the Plains until the 1880s and 1890s.

| Problems | Explanation | Solutions |
|---|--|---|
| Lack of timber (not many trees on the Plains) | There was nothing to build houses with. | People built sod houses made from blocks of earth. |
| | There was nothing to make fences to contain cattle and protect crops from animals. | In 1874, Joseph Glidden invented barbed wire, which was quick and cheap to erect. |
| | There was nothing to use for cooking and heating. | Women collected dried buffalo and cattle dung, which was used for fuel. |
| Lack of water | There was low rainfall and few rivers and lakes. | Drills were developed to find underground water, then wind pumps built to bring it to the surface. |
| Hard, arid land (crops wouldn't grow) | Ploughs often broke going through deep-rooted grass. | Mass-produced and stronger machinery from eastern factories helped cultivate land more easily. |
| | Low rainfall prevented growth of crops like maize and wheat, which farmers were used to growing back east. | New techniques like dry farming (which conserved rainwater) were used. Migrants from Russia used Turkey Red wheat, which thrived on the Plains. |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Natural disasters (prairie fires and pests destroyed crops) | Pests, such as grasshoppers, could destroy a whole season's crop. Fire spread quickly and burned everything. | There were no solutions. Homesteaders could be bankrupted by such disasters. |
| Land holdings were too small | The 160 acres allocated in the Homestead Act could not support the average family. | The Timber Culture Act 1873 let homesteaders have another 160 acres if they promised to plant trees on half of it. The Desert Land Act 1877 let settlers buy 640 acres of desert land cheaply. |
| Disease and lack of medical care (people were often ill) | Sod houses were hard to keep clean and had no sanitation. | Women cared for the sick, using their own remedies. As communities grew, doctors arrived. |
| Lack of education | Most homesteads were too far from towns with schools. | Women taught the young. As communities grew, single female teachers arrived and schools developed. |
| Isolation | Life was lonely and tough on the Plains. | Railroads improved travel and brought much-needed supplies to homesteaders. Communities worked together to build schools and churches. Women homesteaders formed valuable social networks. |