

# The American West c1835-c1895

## History GCSE (9-1) Revision Booklet



- This topic is tested on Paper 2, with the Elizabeth topic
- The exam lasts for 1 hour and 45 minutes
- There are 32 marks for American West (Section A)
- You should spend 50 minutes on this section

**Paper 2 1h45:** American West and Elizabeth (8th June, PM)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

History Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**The American West, c1835-c1895**  
**What do I need to know for this topic?**

Key topic	Details	Red (Need to revise a lot)	Amber (Nearly there)	Green (Nailed it)
<b><u>1. The early settlement of the West, c1835-62</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plains Indians: beliefs and way of life (survival, land and war)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Permanent Indian Frontier (Indian Removal Act 1830) and the Indian Appropriations Act (1851)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migration: Oregon Trail (1836 onwards), California Gold Rush (1849)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migration: Donner Party and Mormons (1846-7)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development and problems of white settlement farming</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasons for conflict and tension between settlers and Indians - the Fort Laramie Treaty (1851)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problems of lawlessness and attempts to tackle this</li> </ul>			
<b><u>2. Development of the Plains, c1862-76</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significance of the Civil War and post-war reconstruction (Homestead Act 1862, Pacific Railroad Act 1862, First Transcontinental Railroad 1869)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homesteaders' solutions to problems: new technology, the Timber Culture Act 1873 and spread of the railroad</li> <li>Continued problems of law and order</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cattle industry (Iliff, McCoy, Goodnight, the significance of Abilene)</li> <li>The impact of changes in ranching on the</li> </ul>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work of a cowboy</li> <li>Rivalry: homesteaders v ranchers</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of railroads, the cattle industry and gold prospecting on the Plains Indians</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of US government policy towards the Plains Indians, including the continued use of reservations and President Grant's 'Peace Policy' 1868</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict with the Plains Indians: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Little Crow's War (1862)</li> <li>➤ Sand Creek Massacre (1864)</li> <li>➤ Red Cloud's War (1868) and the Second Fort Laramie Treaty (1868)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<b><u>3. Conflict and conquest, c1876-95</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in farming; impact of new technology and farming methods</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in the cattle industry: the impact of the winter 1886-7</li> <li>The end of the open range</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued growth of settlement - the Exoduster movement and Kansas (1879), the Oklahoma Land Rush of 1893</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent of solutions to problems of law and order: sheriffs and marshals</li> <li>Billy the Kid, OK Corral (1881) and Wyatt Earp</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range wars, including the Johnson County War (1892)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict with the Plains Indians: the Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876), the Wounded Knee Massacre (1890)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The hunting and extermination of the buffalo</li> <li>Life on reservations</li> <li>Dawes Act 1887 and the closing of the</li> </ul>			

	Indian Frontier			
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**Plains Indians Beliefs and Way of Life c1835-52**

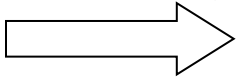
*Social and tribal structure:*

<p><b><u>Bands</u></b> Most people in a band were related to each other. Bands were led by chiefs and had councils of advisors. The survival of the band as a whole was seen as more important than individuals.</p>	<p><b><u>Chiefs</u></b> Chosen because of their skill as warriors / hunters. They were rarely chiefs for life. They decided where the band would go. They did not have to be obeyed.</p>
<p><b><u>Tribes</u></b> Bands in the same tribe supported each other during crises. Tribal meetings were held each year to arrange marriages, trade horses and discuss issues. Some tribes (e.g. the Sioux) were part of larger groups called nations.</p>	<p><b><u>Warrior societies</u></b> The best warriors from each band formed its warrior society. Members of the warrior societies supervised hunting and protected their bands from attack. All short raids and wars were led by the warrior society.</p>

*Chiefs and leadership:*

Plains Indian society did not view leadership in the same way as white American society did:

- *No decision could be made until everyone at the council agreed to it.*
- *The rest of the tribe or band did not have to obey the decision.*
- *Chiefs and elders were often guided by the spirit world through visions.*



*A **consequence** of this would be that the US government thought that if a chief signed a treaty, all his tribe should obey the terms, but this was not how Indian society worked.*

*Band roles:*

A band saw every member as being equally important.

Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunted and fought enemies</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made clothes, fed the family and looked after the tipi</li> </ul>
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone looked after them</li> <li>• Taught the skills of their parents</li> </ul>
Elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respected for their wisdom</li> <li>• Left behind to die if their weakness threatened the band (exposure)</li> </ul>

Survival on the Plains:

The Great Plains was a very tough environment: very dry, with very hot summers and extremely cold winters. Plains Indians relied on horses to hunt, and the buffalo was the most important animal they hunted.



**Buffalo:**

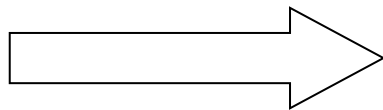
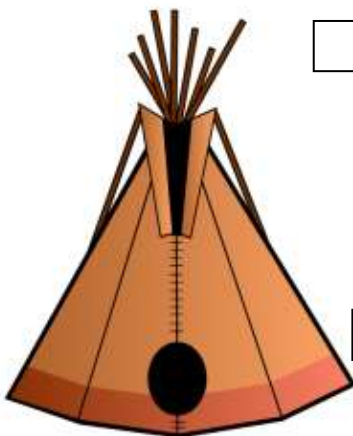
Every part of the buffalo was used for food, clothing and equipment. The heart was left behind - they believed this gave new life to the herd. Women and children prepared the buffalo meat.

**Horses:**

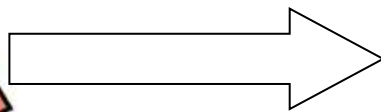
Made it quicker and easier to catch buffalo. Wealth and status were measured by how many horses and Indian or tribe had. Used in war and used to carry belongings.

Nomadic lifestyle:

Most Plains Indians followed the buffalo migrations through the summer and autumn. They had a nomadic (travelling) lifestyle through these months.



Tipis (made of wood and covered in buffalo hide) were ideal for Plains life: their coned shape protected them against strong winds, flaps provided ventilation in the summer heat and they could be taken down and packed away in minutes.



In winter, the bands moved to sheltered valleys where they lived in wooden lodges, insulated with thick layers of soil.

A **consequence** of this was that nomadic tribes found it very difficult to live permanently on reservations because they were used to travelling and hunting freely.

Plains Indians: Beliefs:

<u>Nature</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everything in nature had a spirit (these can harm or help humans)</li> <li>• Humans are a part of nature and should work with the spirits of nature, not control nature</li> <li>• They could contact the spirit world through visions and dances</li> </ul>
<u>Land and property</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribes had sacred areas. For the Lakota Sioux, the Black Hills were sacred because this is where they believed their tribe originally came from.</li> <li>• Generally, no-one owned land. Land was not anyone's property and could not be bought and sold.</li> </ul> <p>WHITE SETTLERS HAD VERY DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TO LAND, WHICH LED TO TENSION AND CONFLICT.</p>
<u>Attitudes to war</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High respect was given to warriors (usually young men) for counting coup: landing a blow on an enemy and getting away without being injured.</li> <li>• Indian war parties would run away if a fight turned against them.</li> </ul> <p>THE US ARMY FOUND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO FIGHT AN ENEMY THAT RAN AWAY RATHER THAN FOUGHT UNTIL THE LAST MAN. THEY HAD TO DEVELOP NEW TECHNIQUES.</p>

US Government Policy:

The US government was keen to expand the USA westwards, but also believed it had to keep the Indians and white Americans separate to avoid conflict.

**1830** Indian Removal Act forces the Indians in eastern states to move west of the Mississippi River. *The US government forced 46000 eastern Indians to give up their lands in return for new lands west of the Mississippi River. Whites then thought this land was worthless - the 'Great American Desert'.*

*A **permanent Indian frontier** divided Indian territory from the eastern states. Forts guarded the frontier to stop whites crossing over to settle the Indians Territory.*

**1834** Indian Trade and Intercourse Act sets out the frontier between the USA and Indian Territory

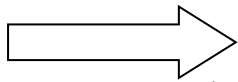
**1848** US victory in the Mexican-American War

*The situation changed when the USA gained new territories in the West. Instead of being on the western edge, Indian Territory was now sandwiched in the middle of the USA.*

**1851** Indian Appropriations Act: money allocated for setting up Indian **reservations** in modern day Oklahoma

Government support for western expansion:

- The government needed US citizens to go and live in its new territories in the West.
- This meant that people needed to be able to travel (on trails) across Indian lands.
- The US Army forced Indians to move away from trails in case Indians attacked travellers migrating from east to west.



A consequence of this was that US policy started to change. The 'permanent' Indian frontier still marked the boundary with Indian lands, but now whites were allowed to cross the frontier.

**The Indian Appropriation Act, 1851**

By the 1850s, white Americans wanted to use parts of the lands in the West that had been given to the Indians. Reservations were the solution. The government paid Indians to give up lands that whites wanted and move to smaller areas. The **Indian Appropriation Act** paid for moving Indians in Indian Territory onto reservations. As well as keeping whites and Indians apart, the government hoped that reservations would help Indians learn to farm and live like white Americans. On reservations, white people could teach Indians about new ways of living. Reservations could become a way of controlled where Indians went and what they did.

**Test yourself!**

Explain the difference between bands and tribes.

Why was the buffalo so important to the Plains Indians?

Explain two ways in which horses were important to the Plains Indians.

Describe the Plains Indians' beliefs about land.

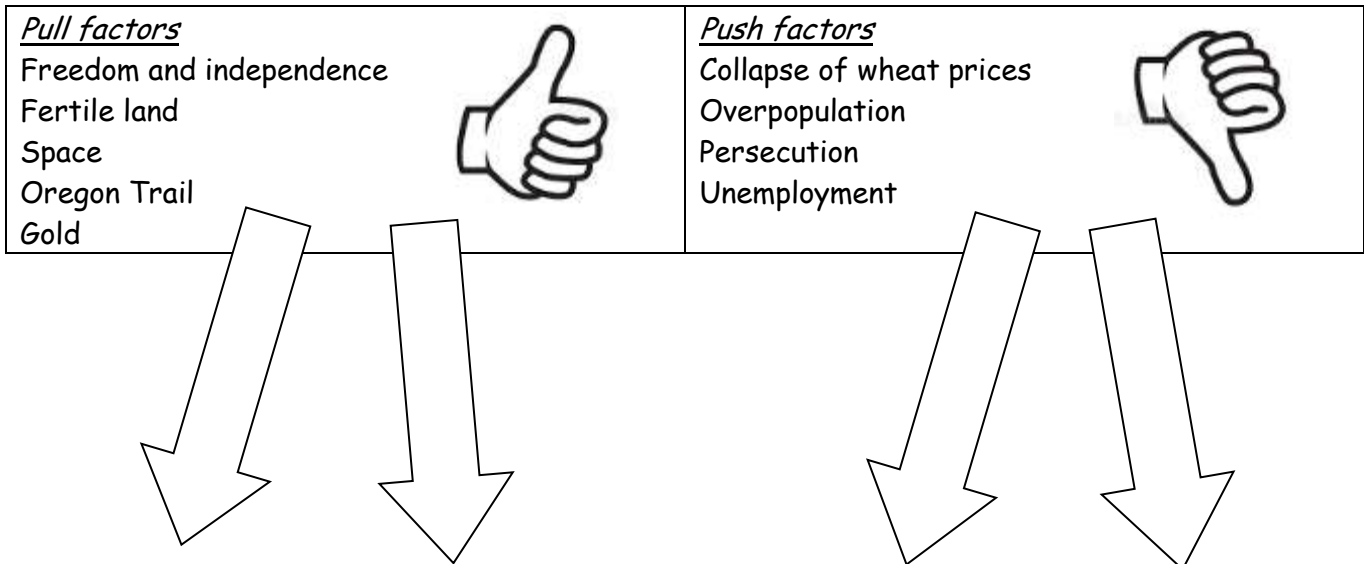
Why was it important for Plains Indians to minimise the numbers of warriors killed in conflicts?

Why did the US government want Plains Indians to move to reservations?

What is the Indian Appropriations Act, 1851?

## Westward migration and early settlement c1835-52

### Why move West?



### ***Manifest Destiny***

The belief that it was God's will that white Americans should settle over all of America. White Americans at the time simply accepted that Manifest Destiny was right and natural.

### ***Financial panic in east USA***

In 1837 there was a financial crisis and a collapse in the price of cotton. Banks ran out of money, people lost their savings, businesses closed and many people lost their jobs. Unemployment reached 25% in some areas.

### ***Gold Rush 1849***

In 1848 gold was discovered in California, leading to a huge increase in migration to the West. 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 mining equipment took over through the 1850s.

### ***Farming crisis in the mid-west***

In 1837, corn prices collapsed, leaving farmers facing ruin. This was not helped by overcrowding in this fertile farming region. These were push factors for farmers to travel west.





### Consequences of the Gold Rush:

*Migration to California: 300,000 people by 1855. California becomes a state.*

*Farming boom in California.*

*Lawlessness in mining camps.*

*Racial tensions due to immigration.*

*Gold from California boosts US economy - helps fund railroads.*

*Tension with Plains Indians due to huge increase in migration along Oregon Trail.*

*Manifest Destiny - White Americans see their 'destiny' coming true.*

*Genocide (deliberate killing of large numbers of people) of Californian Indians by migrants.*

### The Oregon Trail

The Oregon Trail was 3200km long. It began at Independence, Missouri. Wagon trains set off for the 8-9month trip. Migrants needed to complete their journey before winter, or risk getting stuck in the mountains. Hostile Indians, extreme weather and disease made the trip very dangerous. They needed to take enough food for their entire journey - a lot of salt pork! Early migrants used Indians guides, later they relied on pamphlets. Each trail crossed two mountain ranges (The Rocky Mountains or the Sierra Nevada). They were steep, with little to hunt and bad weather.

### The Donner Party, 1846-7

Led by Jacob and George Donner, the Donner Party 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'. 4 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 Mormon Migration 1846-7

The Mormons show how one group of migrants were able to deal with the challenges of migration through detailed organisation, religious motivation and hard work.

- The Mormons were persecuted in the east due to their success, their practice of polygamy and their so-called blasphemy.
- When Joseph Smith died in 1845, Brigham Young became their leader. He decided to lead 1500 Mormons to find land that no-one else wanted - the Great Salt Lake.
- The journey was very organised, because he split everyone into groups, gave everyone a specific role and taught them how to form their wagons into a circle for safety.
- In 1847, Young led the first party along the same route as the Donner Party, but he had carefully researched the route in advance (they relied on a pamphlet). Young's party had enough food for a year, and the group was specially chosen for their skills to pick out the best route, improve the trail and mark out water sources and grass for the animals. This prepared the way for the next wagon trail of 1500 Mormons.
- Between 1847 and 1869 70,000 Mormons followed the 'Mormon Trail'.
- The Mormons were successful in Utah because their faith encouraged them to work hard, Young was in control and the towns were organised so that they had the right mix of skills. The towns ran efficiently because the Mormon church owned all the land water and timber, and they dug irrigation ditches to ensure farm land had enough water.

Problems of farming on the Plains:

Climate	Weather
Lack of timber	Prairie fires
Lack of water	Thick sod (soil)
Insect plagues	

Crops that did well in the East shrivelled up (due to lack of water), or were eaten by insects.

Ploughs that worked in the East broke due to

the thick sod of the Plains.



A sod house

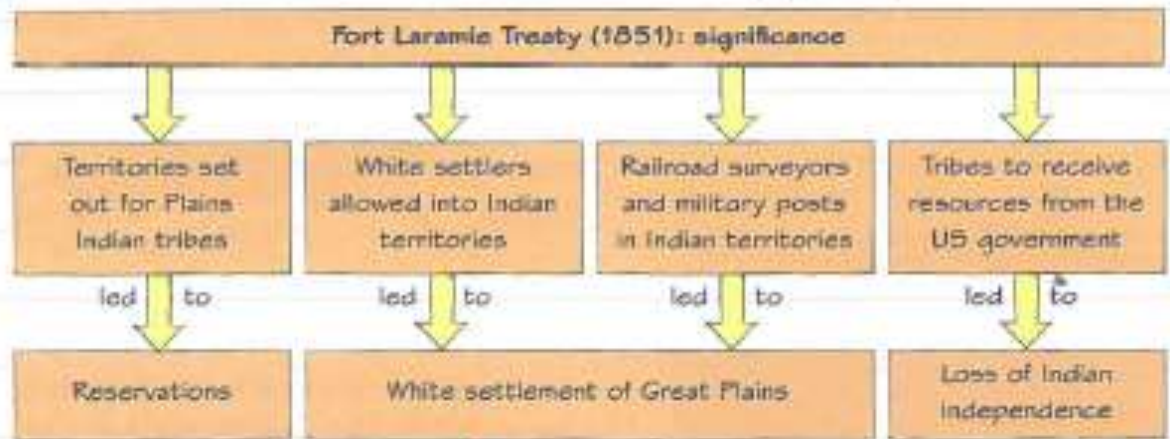
*To deal with the lack of timber (due to the lack of trees), settlers lived in caves and built sod houses made from earth. The thick walls were good insulation and they were fireproof. They were hard to keep clean and were full of insects.*

## Conflict and Tension c1835-52

### The Fort Laramie Treaty (1851)

As more migrants used the Oregon Trail to cross the Indian lands, tensions increased between white settlers and Plains Indians. Migrants demanded Army protection, which led to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851.

### **The significance of the Fort Laramie Treaty (1851)**



The Plains Indians tribes involved in the Treaty agreed to its terms in return for an annuity (yearly payment) of \$50,000. This annuity became a lever for the US government to use against the Indians, and had the consequence of starting to encourage dependence of some Plains Indians on the government for food, resulting in a loss of Indian independence.

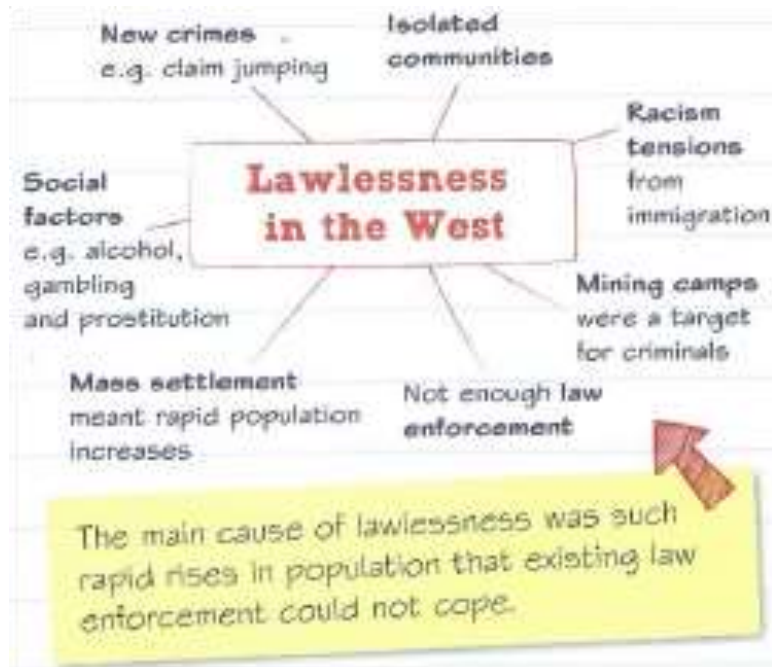
The

problems of

In the Fort Laramie Treaty, the US government prioritised the needs of white settlers over the previous commitments it had made about Indian lands in the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834. White settlement in the West increased because the Treaty allowed for safe passage of white settlers along the Oregon Trail. It also meant there was no longer a permanent Indian frontier between the eastern states of the USA and the Plains Indians. These changes allowed for the future possibility of reservations.

## Lawlessness in early settlement towns

Law enforcement was stretched too thin, to make sure the law was being obeyed.

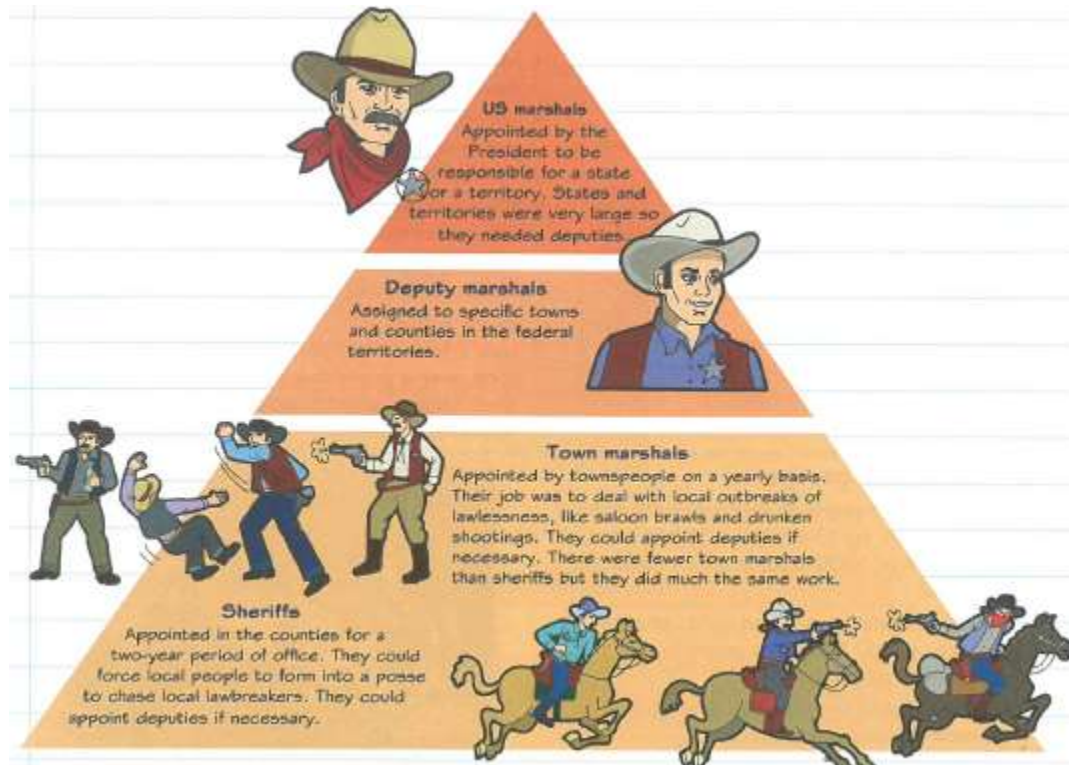


### *Common issues:*

- Mining camps were isolated, and all-male with a lot of alcohol!
- Racism towards Chinese immigrants
- Miners were easily conned
- Claim jumping - a new crime when one man took over a promising claim (land containing gold) from someone else. Miners' courts were set up by miners to settle disputes over claims.

*San Francisco Gangs:* The city's population grew rapidly (from 1000 to 25000 people by 1849) and many were unemployed and disappointed. Racial tensions with Chinese immigrants also increased. By 1851, gangs were out of control. The few local policemen were unable to cope. Local citizens set up a vigilance committee (vigilantes - to take the law into their own hands) and this idea spread to mining camps.

## Sheriffs and marshals



### *Federal law and order problems:*

- **Geography:** territories were huge areas with scattered settlements. Response to crime was slow.
- The federal government did not spend much money on law enforcement, and law officers were poorly paid. Corruption and bribes were common!
- Sheriffs had no legal training.
- Settlers often disliked federal government and wanted nothing to do with its laws.



## The early settlement of the West c1835-62

### Test yourself!

Explain one way in which government support was important in encouraging migration to the West in the 1830s and 1840s.

Explain one way in which the Gold Rush of 1849 was important for the development of the West.

Write a narrative account of the Donner Party migration, analysing why things went so badly for them.

Give 4 reasons why the Mormon migration was successful.

Explain **two** consequences of the Fort Laramie Treaty (1851).

Identify **two** ways in which local communities in the West tried to tackle lawlessness.

Identify **two** ways in which the federal government tried to bring law and order to the West.

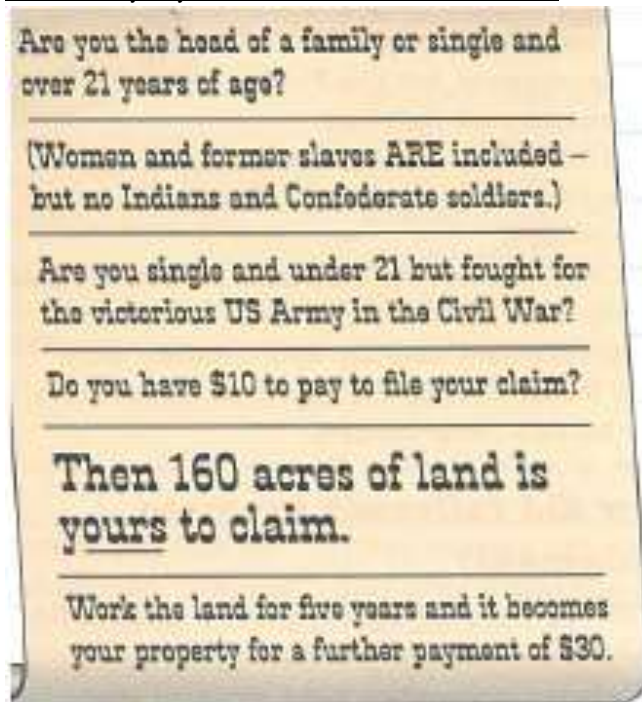
## The development of settlement in the West c1862-76

### The Homestead Act, 1862

After the Civil War, the Southern states split from the USA until 1865, allowing the Homestead Act to be passed into law. It aimed to encourage the settlement of the West by individual family farmers.

The government wanted to encourage the settlement of the West by individual family farmers. It did not want rich landowners buying up all the land in the West.

### How did people become homesteaders?



Under the Homestead Act:

- Land was available cheaply
- most American citizens could file a claim for land
- homesteaders had to be able to prove they had lived on the land and improved it
- homesteaders were not allowed more than one claim

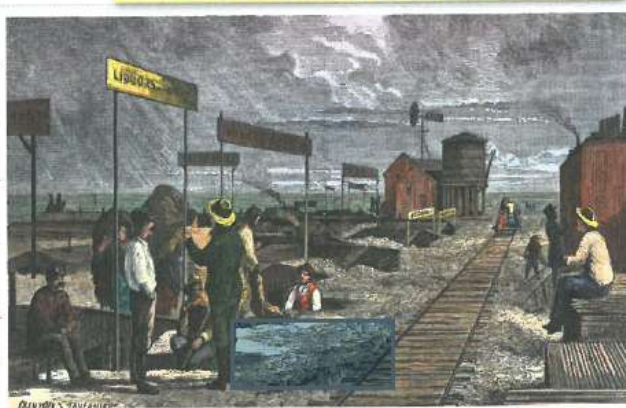
*Homestead Act (1862) consequences:*

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over <b>6 million acres</b> of federal land was homesteaded by 1876</li> <li>• <b>80 million acres</b> was homesteaded by the end of the Act (1930s)</li> <li>• The promise of free land was an important <b>pull factor</b> for <b>immigration</b> to the USA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High <b>dropout: 60%</b> of claims were never 'proved up' often because of problems farming the Plains. The plots were too small for the dry Plains environment.</li> <li>• The <b>railroad companies</b> were given 300 million acres by the government, who</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant in <b>encouraging white settlement</b> of the Plains: especially <b>Nebraska</b>: half all settled land in Nebraska was homesteaded</li> </ul>	<p>sold it to settlers. This was more influential than the Homestead Act in settling the West.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the government's aims, <b>rich landowners</b> found lots of ways to buy up land using the Homestead Act.</li> </ul>
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The First Transcontinental Railroad, 1869

After the Civil War, previous blocks on a transcontinental railroad were removed. The Pacific Railroad Act (1862) provided the incentives for private companies to build the first transcontinental railroad (1869).

<p>Consequences:</p>	<p>Why did the US government need railroads to connect the east and west coasts?</p>	<p>Railroads would let federal law officers reach new settlements that were having problems with law and order.</p>
<p>Railroads would enable troops to be moved around to control Indian uprisings.</p>		<p>Railroads would promote the settlement of the West.</p>
<p>Railroads would allow all Americans to keep in touch, creating national unity.</p>		<p>Railroads would help to transport goods to ports in Oregon and California, which were well positioned to trade with the Far East.</p>
<p>Railroads would help to fulfil white Americans' Manifest Destiny by making it easier to migrate and secure more areas of the country.</p>		<p>Railroads would transport goods to ports in Oregon and California, which were well positioned to trade with the Far East.</p>

The Pacific Railroad Act (1862)

This gave the enormous job of building the first transcontinental railroad to two companies: the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific.

The federal government gave lots of money to support the railroad: \$61 million in loans, 45 million acres of free land for the railroad companies to sell to settlers. The government also agreed treaties with Plains Indians along the route to move them away to new reservations.

*How did the railroads promote settlement?*

By 1880 the railroad companies had settled 200 million acres in the West.

- Railroad companies sold plots of land along their routes and set up towns at railheads
- Railroad 'Bureaus of Immigration' sent agents to Europe to persuade immigrants to 'come West' and buy their land
- The railroad companies used effective marketing to sell the idea of settling the West



### Homesteaders: Finding solutions

1862-76 saw the development of different technological solutions to some of the problems of farming on 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.

More problems for law and order

<u>The impact of the Civil War</u>	<u>The impact of the railroads</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young men from the defeated southern states often resented the victorious US government and its laws.</li><li>• Large numbers of young men had been traumatised by the experience of the war and found it hard to fit in to 'regular' society.</li><li>• The war devastated the South's economy, leaving many without jobs.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The new towns created by the railroads in the West were known as <i>Hell on Wheels</i>.</li><li>• They grew quickly with no local law enforcement.</li><li>• Some were 'cow towns' where cowboys enjoyed drinking, dancing and fighting after being paid.</li><li>• Notorious towns for gambling, heavy drinking and prostitution.</li><li>• Trains replaced stagecoaches for transporting valuables - this made them a target for train robbers.</li></ul>

**How was lawlessness tackled?**

Railroads and electric telegraphs improved communication between law officers, which led to an overall increase in federal government influence. However, new settlements were still mainly left to deal with lawlessness themselves, by electing sheriffs and town marshals.

- Cow towns often passed laws banning firearms.
- Sheriffs and marshals enforced these laws by force of personality (and fists!).
- Gangs of outlaws were sometimes too powerful to control and intimidated whole communities into supporting them.



The Pinkertons were a private detection company. Companies hired them to track down thieves and to provide protection.

## Ranching and the Cattle Industry c1862-76

### Cattle trails and cow towns

The growth in the cattle industry after the Civil War occurred as railroads provided a way to move cattle worth \$5 a head in Texas to the industrial cities of the North, which would pay \$40 a head.

<b>Quarantine</b> laws block Texan cattle from Missouri (1855) and Kansas (1859). 1855	<b>Civil War</b> - Texans fight for Confederacy. Cattle herds run wild: 5 million cows by 1865. 1861-1865	<b>Beef in high demand</b> in northern towns and cities. Drives to Sedalia blocked because of <b>Texas</b> <b>fever</b> . 1861-1865	<b>Railroad reaches</b> <b>Abilene, Kansas</b> . Joseph McCoy sets up first cow town. 35 000 cows driven to Abilene. 1867	<b>'Beef bonanza'</b> - investors pile in to cattle industry from around the world. Rise of the <b>cattle</b> <b>barons</b> . 1870s
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Farmers in Missouri and Kansas, where cows had no immunity to Texas fever, blocked the long drives to Sedalia and St Louis. Texas cattle were kept out of **quarantine zones**: the settled areas of Missouri and Kansas.

Texan cattlemen were desperate to find a way to get their cattle north and east to make big profits.

The long drives from Texas to the east had been happening since the 1830s. The big development was the railroad extending west.

	<b>Key points</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Abilene, the first cow town	As the railroad moved further West, it created new railheads outside quarantine zones. <b>Joseph McCoy</b> was the first to see the potential of Abilene, but it took work to make it a success, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ building stockyards and hotels in Abilene</li> <li>➤ building a new railroad spur for loading cattle onto railroad trucks</li> </ul>	Encouraged cattle drives across the Plains. Supported the development of the cattle industry.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ extending the Chisholm Trail up to Abilene, agreeing passage through Indian territory</li> <li>➤ promoting the new route in Texas - McCoy spent \$5000 on marketing</li> </ul>	
The Goodnight-Loving Trail	<p><b>Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving realised</b> there was another market for Texan cattle: new settlements in the West.</p> <p>The first trail, in 1866 was to Fort Sumner where the government had failed to get enough supplies for Navajo Indian reservations. 800 cattle sold \$12000, which was 4 times the price of cattle in Texas.</p> <p>In 1868, Goodnight's trail extended up to Colorado (booming mining towns) and Wyoming, to the Union Pacific Railroad.</p> <p>Goodnight's success meant other cattlemen started to drive cattle to Wyoming, and Wyoming's cattle ranches began to grow.</p>	<p>Recognised new markets in the West.</p> <p>Helped Wyoming cattle industry grow.</p>
John Iliff and Plains ranching	<p><b>Iliff</b> saw opportunities to sell meat to booming mining towns in Colorado.</p> <p>Denver, Colorado, was not on the railroad until 1870 and it was difficult to get supplies there - either over the Rockies or across the Plains.</p> <p>Iliff saw the opportunity to raise cattle on the Plains and began ranching near Denver in 1866.</p>	<p>First to raise cattle on the Plains.</p> <p>The start of ranching on the <b>open range</b> of the Great Plains.</p>



	<p>By 1870 he had a herd of 26000 cattle on the Plains, on a ranch stretching over 16000 acres.</p> <p>Iliff became Denver's first millionaires by selling his beef to miners, Indian reservations and railroad worker gangs.</p>	
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Changing roles for the cowboy

They were mostly young single men. They were black American, Indian, Spanish and Mexican as well as white American.

Cowboys were tough and hard-working. They worked long hours in all weathers. Life could be very lonely.

Cowboys on trails	Cowboys on ranches
Work was seasonal, from spring round-up to the long drive in the autumn.	Work was year-round and full-time, but fewer were needed.
Work included rounding up, branding and driving cattle hundreds of miles. They also looked out for sick and injured cattle. They started fast, then slowed to about 20 km a day for grazing.	Work included rounding up, branding and driving to market, but over much smaller distances. They also checked ranch boundaries, mended fences and looked out for sick and injured cattle.
Dangers included stampeding cattle, wild animals, crossing rivers and quicksand, rustlers, hostile Indians and extreme weather.	Dangers were fewer than on trails, but rustlers, wild animals and Indian attacks were still threats.
They slept in the open air and cooked on campfires.	They slept in bunkhouses and used cookhouses.
In their free time, cowboys might visit saloons and brothels in cow towns.	Drinking, gambling, guns and knives were banned. Many struggled to adapt to this lifestyle.

Ranchers v Homesteaders

Rivalry between the homesteaders and ranchers increased. Ranchers needed a lot of land for their cattle, and homesteaders wanted to claim this land for themselves.

Ranching relied on public land - **open-range** ranching needed a lot of land to keep large herds of cattle (they needed enough to eat!). Federal law said that everyone could keep livestock on public land for free, which is what the ranchers did. They divided up the open range into ranches. The

problems came when homesteaders began filing claims to turn 160-acre plots of public land into homesteads.



**Blocking the homesteaders:**

Ranchers used different tactics to block homesteaders from taking up claims to 'their' public land. Three of these were:

1. Filing homestead claims themselves to all of the parts of land they wanted
2. Buying and fencing just enough land to block off access to other plots

3. Taking homesteaders to court - they knew the homesteaders were too poor to pay court fees

Farmers and ranchers argued over fencing.

Farmers' view: "Ranchers should fence their land to stop cattle roaming onto crops"

Ranchers' view: "Our cattle has a right to roam. Fencing is the farmers' responsibility and they should not harm our cattle"

Arguments over fencing ended up in state court cases. Tension was common, which sometimes turned into open conflict.

## Changes in the way of life of the Plains Indians c1862-76

### Impact on the Plains Indians

The expansion of the railroad, the growing cattle industry and gold prospecting all increased the pressure on the Plains Indians' traditional way of life. The resources they depended on, which were already depleted, were shrinking as white America expanded from the east, west and south.

<b>Development:</b>	<b>Impact on the Plains Indians:</b>
Railroads	Increased settlement. Disrupted buffalo herds. Led to buffalo extermination. Railroads were funded by land grants that the railroad companies sold to settlers. Railroads encouraged settlement of the Plains. Indians moved off rail road land to reservations.
Cattle industry	Cattle and buffalo competed for the same grass, so buffalo herds were put under pressure as cattle numbers increased (the number of cattle in the West increased from 13,000 in 1860 to 4.5million in 1880.) Cattle trails often crossed Indian lands. In Indian Territory, the tribes allowed this in return for a fee, but in the southwest the Comanche did not allow it and attacked cowboys, leading to tensions and US Army retaliation attacks.
Gold prospecting	<b>1849 California Gold Rush</b> - led to white trespass on Indian land on the Oregon Trail. This led to the Fort Laramie Treaty (1851) and the Indian Appropriations Act (1851). <b>1859 Rocky Mountains Gold Rush</b> - led to whites trespassing on Cheyenne and Arapaho land. This led to the Fort Wise Treaty (1861) and Sand Creek Massacre (1864). <b>1863 Montana Gold Rush</b> - led to whites trespassing on Sioux lands on the Bozeman Trail. This led to Red Cloud's War (1866-68) and the Fort Laramie Treaty (1868)

### Impacts of government policy

As more white Americans moved onto the Plains, the US government continued to move Indians onto reservations. The 1868 'Peace Policy' tried to manage the problems that this created.

#### ***Why did the Indians move to reservations?***

*Usually because the tribe's council agreed that it was necessary for survival. There was less land to hunt on and fewer animals. The US government promised protection of their lands and regular*

*supplies of food. Tribes were desperate for food and would sign treaties to get this. The US Army used force!*

***What was the impact of reservations?***

- *They undermined traditional Indian ways of life.*
- *Reservations were made smaller, so that Indians could not survive by hunting. This meant that Indians became dependent on food supplies from the government.*
- *The Bureau of Indian Affairs agents that ran the reservations were frequently corrupt and cheated the tribes out of their annuities (supplies).*
- *When conflicts arose because of these pressures, the government used them as an excuse to take more land from the tribes.*

***President Grant's Peace Policy (1868)***

*President Grant recognised that bad reservation management was leading to conflict. He:*


- *Appointed new reservation agents, who had strong religious views (the idea being that these men would not cheat the Indians and would teach them to be Christians).*
- *Made an Indian, Ely Parker, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.*
- *Obtained a budget of \$2million to improve conditions on reservations and create new reservations for all Indians.*

**Indians who resisted moving to reservations under the 'Peace Policy' were to be treated as 'hostile' and force could be used against them**



## The Indian Wars

Tensions between the Plains Indians and white Americans escalated into the 'Indian Wars'. The Fort Laramie Treaty (1868) was a temporary defeat in white America's conquering of the West.

<b>Little Crow's War, 1862</b>	Little Crow, a chief of the Santee Sioux Indians, lived on their reservation in Minnesota. In 1861, crops failed and food promised by the government didn't arrive - the Indians faced starvation. In August 1862, Little Crow and others attacked the agency that ran the reservation. They stole food to share, then burned the agency buildings. They also killed several US soldiers. By October most Santee had surrendered or been captured. They were then moved to a smaller reservation, Crow Creek. Its barren landscape caused many deaths that winter.
<b>The Sand Creek Massacre, 1864</b>	The Cheyenne on the Sand Creek reservation were starving after crop failures. Led by their chief, Black Kettle, they attacked wagon trains and stole food but didn't harm travellers. After three years of attacks, Black Kettle negotiated with government officials and the army. On 29 <sup>th</sup> November 1864, Colonel Chivington led a dawn raid on their camp. More than 150 Indians were massacred even though they waved white flags. Some, including Black Kettle, escaped and told other tribes what had happened. A US Senate Committee and Enquiry condemned Chivington. Both white men and Indians were horrified.
<b>Red Cloud's War, 1866-68</b>	Miner John Bozeman established the Bozeman Trail, connecting the Oregon Trail to gold in Montana. Bozeman's trail broke the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 because it crossed the hunting grounds of the Sioux. Red Cloud (a chief of the Lakota Sioux) led attacks on the trail travellers. In 1866, the government talked with him but he stormed out when he learned that two more forts were planned along the trail. In December 1866, Captain William Fetterman and 80 soldiers rode into a trap and were massacred by the Sioux, who blocked the route so no traveller could see it. The US army then negotiated a second Fort Laramie Treaty. 

### The Fort Laramie Treaty, 1868

- US government agrees to abandon 2 forts and the Bozeman Trail
- Red Cloud agrees to move his tribe to a reservation stretching from the Black Hills of Dakota to the Missouri River

- Both sides are in favour of the treaty. However, the Indians, now split into reservations on separate sites, find it hard to act together

*Red Cloud was successful because he joined with other Sioux tribes led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, plus some Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes. He managed to keep fighting through winter (not their custom).*

## Development of the Plains c1862-76

### Test yourself

Explain **one** way in which the American Civil War was important in the settlement of the West.

As part of the reconstruction that followed the Civil War, railroads were developed across America. Identify **three** impact that railroads had on the development of the Plains.

Explain how the Timber Culture Act (1873) aimed to reduce the problems of farming on the Plains.

What does the importance of the Pinkertons suggest about lawlessness in the West?

Name **one** positive impact that the railroads had for law and order in the West.

McCoy, Iliff and Goodnight were cattle barons (rich, powerful men who controlled the cattle industry). Explain why cattle barons were important in the growth of the cattle industry.

List reasons why the role of cowboys changed between 1862 and 1876.

Explain why **one** consequence of the Homestead Act was conflict between ranchers and homesteaders.

Explain the impacts of gold prospecting for the Plains Indians.

Explain why life on a reservation led to negative consequences for Indians' traditional ways of life.

Explain why problems in the reservation system were important in causing the Indian Wars.

## Conflicts and Conquest c1876-92

### Changes in Farming

Between 1876 and 1895, new technologies and methods began to have a significant impact on farming the Plains. By the 1890s, the problems facing farmers in the West had become more manageable.

<b>New farming method:</b>	<b>How did this improve farming?</b>
Dry farming	Conserves water in the soil by ploughing the soil immediately after rainfall. This was the main method responsible for turning the Plains into America's main wheat-producing region.
Wind pumps	These solved the problem of finding enough water to farm the Plains: now farmers could access water many hundreds of metres underground. A 'self-regulating' windmill turned automatically when the wind changed direction. By the 1880s, powerful wind pumps had been developed that did not need constant repairing and oiling. These became widespread across the West.
Barbed wire	First introduced in 1874, barbed wire became the ideal solution to the problem of there being no wood for fences. When it was first introduced it was quite cheap and it broke easily. By the 1880s a coating had been applied to the wire to make it stronger, and new techniques made it much cheaper. The cattle industry also used barbed wire to fence off land.

### Changes in the Cattle Industry

Through the 1870s, so much money went into cattle ranching that the open range became overstocked. This situation had serious consequences for the cattle industry in the 1880s.

Consequences of overstocking the open range:

**Too many cattle** (more cattle were bred as cattlemen made more money)

**Overgrazing** (too little grass, in the 1883 drought) **Prices dropped**

**Less profit** (some cattlemen went bankrupt)

**Winter of 1886-67** (freezing temperatures and deep snow meant that at least 15% of cattle died. More cattlemen went bankrupt)

### The end of the open range

After the winter of 1886, those cattle ranchers who were still in business moved to smaller ranches with fenced-in pastures. This was because smaller herds are easier to manage and could be brought in to shelter in bad weather. They are also easier to guard against cattle rustlers/ smaller numbers of cattle reduced the supply of beef, which helped raise prices for beef again. Higher quality beef could also be sold at higher prices. This meant the cattle industry could start to recover.

### Consequences for cowboys

Many cowboys also lost their lives in the harsh winter of 1886-87. The end of the open range also meant changes for cowboys. They now had less adventurous lives. They also lived in bunkhouses, which were often uncomfortable. There were schedules to keep to and rules to follow, which often included a ban on carrying firearms. The smaller ranchers employed less cowboys.

### Continued settlement and growth

In 1879, a migration of black Americans from the southern states to Kansas took place - the Exoduster movement. In 1889, the US government began to open up Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) to white settlers in a series of 'land rushes'.

### The Exoduster movement, 1879

After slavery was abolished during the Civil War, black Americans in the southern states were supposed to become socially, politically and economically equal to whites. However, many white

southerners prevented this. They kept their former slaves economically dependent on them and intimidated them with violence.

In 1879 a rumour spread that the Federal government had given the whole state of Kansas to ex-slaves. This was not true but it triggered the movement of 40,000 black Americans from the south states to Kansas and other western states.

### **Key facts:**

- Due to continued oppression in the southern states
- Benjamin Singleton promoted Kansas and helped the migrants
- Due to Kansas's reputation in the fight against slavery
- Encouraged by the Homestead Act (1862) and the promise of free land

### **Consequences:**

- Farming: other settlers had already taken most of the land and the Exodusters had no money for setting up farming
- Responses to Exodusters: Southern whites were strongly against migration, whites in Kansas did not think Exodusters should be helped
- By 1880 mass migration ended (due to too many problems)
- By 1880 43,000 black Americans settled in Kansas
- Exodusters typically stayed poorer than white migrants and had fewer rights

## **The Oklahoma Land Rush, 1893**

### **What had the land been used for before?**

Not many years before the Land Rush in 1893, the same land had once been considered worthless desert. Early explorers of Oklahoma believed that the territory was too arid (dry) and treeless for white settlement.

### **Why was the land taken?**

By 1885, a diverse mixture of Native American tribes had been pushed onto reservations in eastern Oklahoma and promised that the land would be theirs "as long as the grass grows and the water runs." Yet even this seemingly marginal land did not long escape the attention of land-hungry Americans. By the late nineteenth century, farmers had developed new methods that suddenly made the formerly reviled Plains hugely valuable. Pressure steadily increased to open the Indian lands to settlement, and in 1889, President Benjamin Harrison succumbed and threw open large areas of unoccupied Indian lands to white settlement. The giant Cherokee Strip rush was only the largest of a series of massive "land runs" that began in the 1890s, with thousands of immigrants stampeding into Oklahoma Territory and establishing towns like Norman and Oklahoma City almost overnight.

### **The Land Rush**

On one day in 1893, the largest land run in history began with more than 100,000 people pouring into the Cherokee Strip of Oklahoma to claim valuable land that had once belonged to Native Americans. With a single shot from a pistol the mad dash began, and land-hungry pioneers on horseback and in carriages raced forward to stake their claims to the best acres.

### Who claimed the land?

In 1893, America was in the grip of the worst economic depression it had ever experienced. This was one of the factors that swelled the number of expectant land-seekers that day. Many would be disappointed. There were only 42,000 parcels of land available - far too few to satisfy the hopes of all those who raced for land that day. Additionally, many of the "Boomers" - those who had waited for the cannon's boom before rushing into the land claim - found that a number of the choice plots had already been claimed by "Sooners" who had snuck into the land claim area before the race began. The impact of the land rush was immediate, transforming the land almost overnight.

### **Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp**

Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp are both good examples of how the tensions in the West between people who struggled to make a living affected lawlessness and attempts to enforce law and order.



**Billy the Kid** grew up in poverty and was soon in trouble for stealing. In 1878 he became involved in a range war (Lincoln County War) between cattle baron John Chisum and smaller ranchers. Billy swore revenge when friends were killed. Billy's gang caused chaos across New Mexico - local law officers were also caught up in the range war. Only when a new governor appointed a new sheriff, Pat Garrett, could the law be enforced. After escaping jail, Billy was tracked down and shot dead by Pat Garrett in 1881.

**Conflict over resources:** He was in a war between ranchers

**Intimidation and corruption:** Local law enforcement was weak and caught up in the range war too

**Geography:** Billy's gang could escape the law and hide in remote areas

**Poverty:** Life for most people was hard. Being an outlaw was glamorous and exciting

**Wyatt Earp** first got into law enforcement after he was arrested for fighting in Wichita and then helped the deputy marshal deal with a rowdy bunch of cowboys.

By 1879, he had moved to the mining town of Tombstone. Rich businessmen were fighting for control of the area with ranchers and cowboys led by the Clantons and McLaurys. In 1880, the businessmen hired Earp as deputy sheriff to end the fight in their favour. After months of clashes with the Clantons and McLaurys, Earp and his brothers killed two McLaurys and one Clanton at the OK Corral, on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1886. Cowboys then killed Morgan Earp. Wyatt Earp immediately killed two men who he said were responsible. Public opinion in the town turned against the Earps, who were considered murderers with no respect for the law. They left Tombstone.

**Conflict over resources:** They were involved in a war between businessmen and ranchers

**Intimidation and corruption:** The Earps were accused of criminal acts and of murder - instead of reducing lawlessness in Tombstone, they increased it

**Law and order:** The gunfight at the OK Corral was criticised as lawlessness. Tombstone residents thought Wyatt should have arrested the suspect

**Unreliable lawmen:** Earp was arrested 9 times. Law officers often had criminal pasts





## **The Johnson County War, 1892**

Range wars were major conflicts for the control of land and resources in the West. The Johnson County War of 1892 is the best known. It was a conflict of cattle barons against homesteaders and small ranchers.

### **CAUSES**

Wyoming had been settled by cattle ranchers in the 1870s. The cattle barons became very powerful and joined together in the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. By the 1880s 3 threats had developed to the cattle barons' interests.

The main threats were: beef prices were falling; drought; harsh winters and disputes with homesteaders and small ranchers over land ownership. The most annoying threat was from rustling, which they blamed the homesteaders and small ranchers for.

### **EVENTS**

In 1889, Jim Averill and Ella Watson were lynched outside their cabin. No one was prosecuted, although the cattle barons were known to be responsible. Other killings and murder attempts followed, leaving another 3 small ranchers dead. In 1892, the cattle barons planned a full-scale invasion of Johnson County, led by Major Frank Wolcott. The governor of Wyoming even supplied a case of guns. A death-list of 70 names was drawn up and 24 gunfighters were recruited. They got a \$50 bonus for every 'rustler' they killed. The invaders began by cutting telegraph wires to cut off Johnson County from the outside world. The plan went wrong when Nate Champion single-handedly held off the invaders all day when they tried to attack the KC ranch. The attackers were spotted and the alarm was raised.

Next day, as the invaders approached Buffalo, they heard that the local people were armed and ready. They then retreated to TA Ranch, where they were besieged by nearly 300 men, until the US cavalry arrived to save them. They were taken into protective custody.

### **RESULTS**

The defeated cattle barons were brought to trial but never convicted for their actions. However, they were widely condemned. They never had the same power in Wyoming again and the homesteaders and small ranchers were able to continue their lives in peace.

## **The Battle of the Little Bighorn, 1876**

In 1876 the US army was ordered to attack all Sioux who had not returned to their reservation.

### **The plan**

The plan of the campaign was prepared by General Philip Sheridan. It involved 3 columns coordinating their movements, and trapping the Indians between them. The major weaknesses with this plan were that there was no effective liaison between the Generals Terry, Gibbon and Crook. Also, no-one seriously tried to find out how many Indians they might be facing (they wrongly assumed there would only be 800).

### **The plan starts to go wrong**

On 17<sup>th</sup> June the plan began to go wrong. While General Crook's column were having a break, Crazy Horse led a full-frontal attack with about 1500 warriors. Crook lost 28 men, had 68 injured and had fired 25000 rounds of ammunition by the end of the day. Crazy Horse, who had also suffered heavy losses, then took his forces to join Sitting Bull on the Little Bighorn. Four days later, Gibbon and Terry joined forces. Terry divided his forces – the infantry were to march along the Yellowstone towards the Little Bighorn. Custer was ordered to follow the Indian trail and approach the Little Bighorn from the south. He refused to take 180 extra men from the Second Cavalry and Gatling guns with him. Custer rode south but then deliberately disobeyed orders. Instead of circling the Wolf Mountains he rode straight across them. By riding through the night he arrived at the Little Bighorn a day early. The Indians were camped and not expecting an attack. But his men and their horses were exhausted.

### **The Battle of the Little Bighorn**

One the afternoon of 25<sup>th</sup> June Custer reached the camp of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse on the Little Bighorn. Despite the warnings of his scouts he decided to attack. He wanted a glorious victory. Custer split his forces (a tactic he had used successfully before). He sent Major Reno with 125 men to attack the southern end of the camp, and Captain Benteen took 125 men to the south, Captain McDougall took charge of B company and the pack train, and Custer himself took 260 men further north to cross the river to attack. Major Reno's attack was stopped by the Sioux and he retreated across the river, where he took up a defensive position. Reno was then joined by Benteen and his men. They were surrounded and suffered many casualties. They received an order from Custer to support him, but they did not do so, later saying they could not as they were under attack from so many Indians.

### **Custer's Last Stand**

There were no survivors from Custer's force, so what exactly happened to him and his men is unclear. The evidence pieced together from archaeological excavations and oral accounts of Indians indicates that Custer failed to cross the river. He turned back and made for higher ground, but was overwhelmed by Crazy Horse's attack. Without the support of Reno and Benteen his force was totally outnumbered. The only survivor was Curley, an Indian scout, who disguised himself as a Sioux warrior.

- **The Indians had several advantages:**
- 2000 men against 200
- Some were better armed than the cavalrymen
- They had Winchester repeating rifles (supplied by traders) which were better than the cavalrymen's Springfield single-shot rifles.
- Tactics – half their force defended their camp, whilst Crazy Horse let the rest to surround Custer and his men. For the Indians to fight a pitched battle was entirely new, reflecting the leadership qualities of Crazy Horse

### **Consequences of the Battle of the Little Bighorn**

The massacre of *General Custer* and his men shocked and appalled most white Americans.

Beforehand public opinion favoured trying to reach an agreement with the Indians. Afterwards, white people wanted to destroy the Indians, or at least their way of life.

### **Battle of the Little Bighorn: Success or Failure?**

In the short term the battle was a huge failure for the US Army. However, because of the way in which they were defeated, some historians argue that it was actually a long-term success because the defeat led to:

- 2 forts being built and 2500 army reinforcements sent west
- the pursuit of the Cheyenne and Sioux until most were in their reservations
- the capture of Crazy Horse, who was later killed trying to escape
- Sitting Bull moving his tribes to Canada; however, food shortages forced his return and surrender in 1881
- the Sioux being forced to sell the Black Hills and other land, give up their weapons and horses, and live under military rule

### **The Wounded Knee Massacre, 1890**

By 1890, Indians on reservations were facing cuts in their rations, crop failures due to drought and despair at the loss of their lands and way of life. One response was the **Ghost Dance**.

#### Ghost Dance

In 1890, Sioux reservations were cut and a drought meant their crops failed. An Indian had a vision that if they all kept dancing, the *Great Spirit* would bring back the dead and a great flood would carry white people away. More and more Indians began to dance, which worried the Indian agents and white settlers. The army moved to stop them. Sitting Bull was killed when Sioux police tried to arrest him in case he led a new rebellion against the US control of his people. His followers fled south to join the band of Big Foot, who had also fled when the army moved in.

### The Wounded Knee Massacre, 29<sup>th</sup> December 1890

Snow and pneumonia slowed Big Foot's band down and the army caught them. They were taken to Wounded Knee Creek where the army began to disarm them. The Indians started dancing and shooting broke out. After 10 minutes, 250 Indians (men, women and children) and 25 soldiers were dead. It was the end of Indian resistance.

Impact of the Wounded Knee Massacre (1890):

- The last clash between the Sioux and the US Army
- The end to Sioux bands resisting Army control
- Wounded Knee became a key symbol of oppression in the later fight for Indian civil rights
- The end of the Indian frontier nowhere in the USA now belonged to any other people or nation
- The end of the Ghost Dance: it had upset and worried white Americans, who saw it as a build up to trouble
- The Massacre confirmed white views about the need to exterminate 'hostile' Indians. White people thought it was justified.

The end of the Plains Indians' way of life?

Factors leading to the end of the Plains Indians' control over their way of life:

- Railroads in the West
- The extermination of the buffalo
- The government's reservation policy
- The discovery of gold in the West
- Homesteads on the Plains

### **Buffalo: Hunting and extermination**

In 1871 a process was discovered for quickly and cheaply turning buffalo hide into leather. Buffalo hunting became very profitable. In 1840 there were 13 million buffalo on the Great Plains, By 1885 just 200 survived. Their destruction meant the destruction of the Plains Indians' way of life.

How buffalo were exterminated:

- Their habitat was crossed by railroads. Railroad companies used hunters to kill them to feed to construction workers.
- Their hides were made into quality leather goods. White hunters earned good money supplying them.
- They were killed by tourists. Special excursion trains brought people to the Plains to hunt them for support.
- The grassland they fed on was destroyed or eaten by other animals when settlers built houses, towns, trails and railroads. They also caught diseases spread by the settlers' cattle and horses.
- Some people suspected that the government encouraged the destruction of buffalo to control the Indians. Neither the government nor the army did anything to stop the destruction. In fact, they seemed to encourage it.

### Life on the reservations

Reservations cut down Indian lands into scraps of territory. Different methods were used to destroy the Indian identities, with the aim that Indians would stop resisting the spread of 'civilisation' and join in the white American way of life instead.

- Reservation land: the least wanted by white Americans. It was not fertile and would make survival difficult.
- Indian agents were appointed by the government to look after the reservations, but they were often corrupt. Money or rations intended for the Indians often disappeared.
- Rations were poor and crops often failed. Medical care was very poor and diseases were common killers.
- Some Indians joined the Indian Agency Police to control reservations, In return, they had better food, clothing and shelter than the others.

<p><b>How was the Indian way of life broken down by reservations?</b></p>	<p><b>Indian children were taught white American values</b> - they were sent to schools where they were punished for using their own language and respecting their culture. They no longer fitted in with their families, but they were not accepted by the whites either.</p>
<p><b>Indian beliefs were banned</b> - putting an end to feasts, dances and ceremonies reduced the power of the medicine men. Christian missionaries were sent to 'civilise'</p>	<p><b>Indians were not allowed to hunt</b> - this affected their whole tribal structure and removed men's traditional role. It also affected their clothing and lifestyle.</p>

the Indians.	
<b>Indians were de-skilled</b> - they were excellent horsemen, hunters and warriors. However, they had no horses on reservations, so they could not hunt buffalo or fight. Some Indians refused to learn 'white' skills like ploughing, sowing and reaping.	<b>Tribal chiefs lost their power</b> - the government slowly removed the ability of chiefs to influence and guide their bands and tribes. They no longer signed treaties and no longer looked after reservations.

### Changing government attitudes

The reservation system had been designed to help Indians assimilate into white America, as well as to prevent them from getting in the way of the white takeover of the West. However, by the 1880s, the reservation system was seen as encouraging Indians to depend on government handouts.

#### Government attitudes to the Plains Indians (this swung between assimilation - becoming part of US society - and protection)

- Pressure from whites wanting Indian land - for minerals, for farming.
- Indians should be protected from whites: protected land, treaties and government support.
- Pressure from whites who thought Indians were being given too much help.
- Indians should assimilate into white America: become Christian farmers who settle in one place.

#### The Dawes Act, 1887

- Each Indian family was allotted a 60-acre share of reservation land: a homestead plot.
- 80 acres were allotted to single Indians; 40 acres to orphans under 18.
- Indians who took their allotment and left the reservation could then become American citizens.
- Indians could not sell their land allotments for 25 years.
- All the reservation land left over after the allotments could be sold to whites.

#### Aims of the Dawes Act:

- Encourage individualism instead of tribal identity.
- Encourage individual Indians to assimilate and become US citizens.
- Reduce the influence of chiefs and the tribal council.
- Reduce the cost of running the reservation system for the US government.

- Free up more land for white settlers.
- Encourage Indian families to farm for themselves, not rely on the tribe.

The significance of the Dawes Act:

- The Act failed to improve living conditions for Indians.
- By 1890, Indians had lost half the lands they had in 1887 to whites.
- Indians who took up allotments were not able to farm successfully: the land was too poor and they didn't have enough land for the dry conditions.
- Most Indians sold their land as soon as they could, and ended up landless.
- White Americans cheated many Indians into selling their land.

### The closure of the Indian Frontier:

In 1890, the US census office, part of the US government, declared that there was no longer a frontier line between white settlements and 'wilderness' (Indian lands). The USA had complete control of the West.

## Conflicts and Conquest c1876-92

### Test yourself!

Explain **one** way in which the spread of the railroads helped the development of farming in the West.

Which factors led to smaller ranches surviving the winter of 1886-87 better than the larger ranches?

The Mormon migration and the Exoduster migration were similar as both were escaping persecution. What were the **differences** between the Mormon migration and the Exoduster migration?

Do you think that the cases of Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp show that lawlessness was increasing in the West? Explain your answer.

In the Johnson County War, why was it significant that they 'invaders' were arrested? And why was it significant that they were freed?

Explain how the Ghost Dance contributed to the Wounded Knee Massacre.

Give 5 examples of ways in which the white Americans destroyed the buffalo.

Explain two reasons why reservations led to Indian tribes losing their independence and having to rely more and more on the federal government for food and clothing.

Explain why many white Americans thought Indians should assimilate into their way of life.

