



## U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Standards Addressed:  
SS3.2, SS4.3, SS8.2, SS8.3, SS8.4, SS9.1

### Mormon Trail

The unit introduces students to the National Historic Mormon Trail which was used for westward migration to Salt Lake, Utah from 1846 through the late 1890s. Students will identify reasons for moving to the Salt Lake region and make comparisons between the past and the present.

#### Objectives

- Students will learn about the Mormon Trail and be able to recognize related vocabulary.
- Students will identify reasons for moving to the Salt Lake region.
- Students will compare social conceptions about travel across time.

#### Preparation

Print copies of the *Mormon Trail Overview*, *Mormon Trail Worksheet*, *Mormon Trail Vocabulary*, *Word Find*, and *Rules of the Road Worksheet* for each student.

#### Directions

##### Lesson One: Introduction to the Mormon Trail

Begin with a class discussion to determine pre-knowledge of the Mormon Trail with the guiding questions.

Next, break the students into small groups to read the *overview*. Assign each group to complete the *Mormon Trail Worksheet*. Signal to groups that the reporter will be randomly selected from each group. Review the *Worksheet* as a class.

Utilize the *Vocabulary Word Find* for individual work or homework as a review of the Mormon Trail knowledge.

**8-12 Expansion** Assign small groups to research a primary document related to the Mormon Trail on the internet. Students will present the document to the class, explaining its significance, and why it was chosen. (Journal, Ledgers, Letters, photos, etc.)

#### Discussion Questions

- Where is Salt Lake located on the map?
- Why did people want to travel to the Salt Lake Valley in 1846?
- What is unique about the Mormon Trail?



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### Review Questions for Mormon Trail Overview

- Why did Brigham Young decide to send the first group ahead of the rest?
- What challenges did the first group face during their winter travel?
- What did Brigham Young order the groups to do along the way to prepare for later travelers?
- Where did the first group of Mormons establish a camp for the winter, and why did they stay there?
- After reaching the Salt Lake area, what did Brigham Young proclaim, and what was its significance?
- How many Mormons followed Brigham Young's trail to the Great Salt Lake area over the next twenty years?
- How did most of the followers travel to the Great Salt Lake Valley?
- What method of transportation did some late converts use, and why?

### Lesson Two: Rules of the Road

Introduce the *Rules of the Road Worksheet* by having students read the rules to the class.

Assign students to small groups to create their own rules of the road for modern times. Randomly select students to act as group reporter to the class. Discuss similarities and/or differences between the rules across groups: *Is there a general theme to the rules? What is the overall purpose of the rules?*

**8-12 Expansion** Identify 1000-mile journeys across the globe which will be assigned to small groups of students. Chose routes which may cross oceans, deserts, or other obstacles. Each group will be responsible for mapping their route and writing rules of travel that pertain to their route. Lead a discussion after the groups presents their work to the class. *Did the differing routes influence the rules? If so, how? If not, why?* (This activity can be incorporated into discussions on modern migration and exodus of developing nations.)



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### Mormon Trail Overview

On June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was being held in a jail cell in Nauvoo, Illinois. That night a mob overran the jail house and killed both Joseph and his brother, Hyrum. The members of his church, Mormons, believed they had to leave Nauvoo and find a safe place to live.

Brigham Young, another church leader, came forward to direct the movement of the Mormons. He promised the town of Nauvoo that 15,000 Mormons would leave Nauvoo by spring. Tensions were high in the area and Brigham and other leaders were worried about the safety of the group. Brigham decided to ask part of the group to leave earlier. This first group left on February 4, 1846, for a destination somewhere in the Rocky Mountains.

Problems at home made leaving difficult for the Mormon families. Many were unable to sell their belongings to other townsmen and were forced to leave the majority of their things. They abandoned houses, farms, and all sorts of personal items. They also had to prepare quickly for the travels ahead.

The first group found winter travel very difficult. Snow, mud, and wind blocked the way and caused many delays. Some days they barely made any advancement at all.

Along the way, Brigham ordered groups to set up temporary camps to rest and prepare for the larger groups coming later. These camps built cabins, dug wells, put up fences and gardens, and built ferries for river crossings. Such advancements were very helpful to later travelers along the trail.

In October of 1846, the first group had only traveled about 265 miles into the area near Omaha, Nebraska. They established a new camp called Winter Quarters, where they waited out the winter months. In the spring, Brigham took a small well-equipped group and traveled on to the area of the Great Salt Lake Valley. It was here that he proclaimed the new Zion, the promised land for the Mormons.

During the next twenty years approximately 70,000 Mormons followed Brigham's trail to the Great Salt Lake area, thus creating the Mormon Trail. Most followers traveled by wagon, but some new converts were unable to afford the cost of a wagon and necessary supplies. These late converts traveled with handcarts provided by the church.

Almost all travelers walked the nearly 1,300 miles to the Salt Lake Valley.



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### Mormon Trail Worksheet

Fill in the blanks with the correct answers.

\_\_\_\_\_, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was killed in 1844 by a mob. Members of the church, Mormons, knew they needed to leave Nauvoo and find a safe place to live. They also wanted a place where they were free to practice their religion.

Another leader of the Mormons came forward to lead the group west. His name was \_\_\_\_\_. A year later, he promised that the Mormons would leave Nauvoo by spring. The first group left in \_\_\_\_\_.

The first group found traveling in the winter very \_\_\_\_\_. Some days they barely made any advancement at all. Snow, mud, and wind made traveling hard.

Along the way, the Mormons made more permanent camps. These camps built cabins, dug wells, put up fences and gardens, and built \_\_\_\_\_ for river crossings.

In October of 1846, the first group had only traveled about 265 miles into the area near Omaha, Nebraska. They established a new camp called \_\_\_\_\_, where they waited out the winter months. In the spring Brigham took a small well-equipped group and traveled on to the area of the Great Salt Lake. It was here that he proclaimed the new Zion, the promised land for the Mormons.

During the next twenty years approximately \_\_\_\_\_ Mormons followed Brigham's trail to the Great Salt Lake area, thus creating the \_\_\_\_\_ Trail. Most followers traveled by wagon, but some new converts were unable to afford the supplies. These late converts pushed their belongings on \_\_\_\_\_ provided by the church.

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## Mormon Trail Vocabulary

<b>Brigham Young</b>	• religious leader who encouraged Mormons to move to the Salt Lake area
<b>ferry</b>	• a raft used to transport things across water
<b>hand cart</b>	• a small, wheeled vehicle pushed by hand
<b>Joseph Smith</b>	• founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
<b>mob</b>	• a large crowd of unruly people
<b>Mormon</b>	• a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
<b>persecution</b>	• to oppress or harass with ill-treatment because of race, religion or beliefs
<b>pioneers</b>	• someone who moves to unknown territory to settle
<b>promised land</b>	• land believed to have been given by God
<b>prophet</b>	• a person who speaks by or as if by divine inspiration
<b>Salt Lake City</b>	• area where the Mormons settled



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## Mormon Tail Word Find

Find the hidden words within the grid of letters.

N O I T U C E S R E P F J D U  
J J T Z Z F H I K T S L O E F  
S A L T L A K E C I T Y S V K  
J T J V T M D Q B X C K E G C  
I R U P U R N S V L S U P F Q  
G N U O Y M A H G I R B H S J  
M F Y Q S F L C B C F L S R M  
S O A L M K D L D K N T M E F  
D P R O P H E T J N A T I E E  
Z A B M M L S A T R A C T N R  
P R O S O W I Z E V P H H O R  
J Q T J H N M L X W O C I I Y  
Z C B D Y N O F N H E J U P M  
V E N F H H R U V E V L L T D  
S I I D C Q P Z V D Y H E B M

BRIGHAM YOUNG	HAND CART	MORMON	PROMISED LAND
CHOLERA	JOSEPH SMITH	PERSECUTION	PROPHET
FERRY	MOB	PIONEERS	SALT LAKE CITY



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### Rules of the Road Worksheet

Lists of rules governed the behavior of Mormons along the trail. Below is a list of rules governing the Pioneer Party (the first Mormon wagon train). Read the list. Then imagine you and your class are going to make a journey of 1,000 miles. What rules would you create? Write your list on the spaces provided.

#### Pioneer Party's Rules

- ✓ A bugle will blow each day at 5 a.m. and every man is expected to arise and pray, then attend to his team, get breakfast, and be prepared to travel at 7 a.m.
- ✓ Each man is to walk at the side of his team with his gun loaded and within reach.
- ✓ The camp will halt about noon to rest the animals. People must have their dinner pre-cooked so as not to delay camp by fixing meals.
- ✓ At night the wagons are to be drawn into a circle and the animals placed inside the circle when possible.
- ✓ The bugle will blow at 8:30 p.m. when every man must return to his wagon and pray, except the night guard. Fires must be out and people in bed by 9 p.m.
- ✓ The cam will travel in close order and no man is to get farther than 20 rods (330 feet) away without permission from his captain of 10.
- ✓ Every man is to help take care of his brother's cattle. No man will be indulged in idleness.
- ✓ Every man is to have his rifle and pistol in perfect working order. A piece of leather should be kept over the firing mechanism to protect it from moisture.

#### Your Rules

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_



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### Mormon Trail Worksheet Answer Key

Fill in the blanks with the correct answers.

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Another leader of the Mormons came forward to lead the group west. His name was Brigham Young. A year later, he promised that the Mormons would leave Nauvoo by spring. The first group left in February 1846.

The first group found traveling in the winter very difficult (challenging, etc.). Some days they barely made any advancement at all. Snow, mud, and wind made traveling hard.

Along the way, the Mormons made more permanent camps. These camps built cabins, dug wells, put up fences and gardens, and built ferries for river crossings.

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## Word Find Solution

~~NOITUCESREPFJDU~~  
~~JJTZZFHIKTSLOEF~~  
~~SALTLAKECITYSVK~~  
~~JTJVTMDQBXCKEGC~~  
~~IRUPURNNSVLSUPFQ~~  
~~GNUOYMAHGRBHSJ~~  
~~MFYQSFLCBCFLSRM~~  
~~SOALMKDLDKNTMEF~~  
~~DPRSPHETJNATIEE~~  
~~ZABMMLSATRACTNR~~  
~~PROSOWIZEVPHHOR~~  
~~JQTJHNMLXWOCIIY~~  
~~ZCBDYNCFNHEJUPM~~  
~~VENFHHRUVEVLLTD~~  
~~SIIDCQPZVDYHEBM~~



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