

Knowledge Organiser – American West

Part 1 – Early Settlement of the West 1835 – 1862.

Key Events:

1830 – Indian Removal Act. 46,000 Indians are forced to leave the Eastern states by the US government to re-locate to the Great Plains.

1834 – Indian Trade Act. Sets out the Permanent Frontier which divided Indian territory from the eastern States, running from the Appalachian Mountains.

1836 – Oregon Trail opened.

1846 – Donner Party. Migration of 300 people to California that failed. Trapped by the early snow in the Rocky Mountains it led to cannibalism.

1846 – 7 – The Mormon Migration. Migration led by Brigham Young from the eastern states to Salt Lake City, Utah.

1848 – America wins the war against Mexico. Gave the Americans new territory to the south and west of Indian Territory; included California.

1849 – Gold Rush. Discovery of gold in California in 1848 led to a huge migration to the West in search of wealth. 300,000 moved by 1855.

1851 – Indian Appropriations Act. Government created reservations so whites could take Indian lands and farm. Indians paid to move to smaller areas n reservations where they could be ‘civilised’ and farm the land.

1851 – First Fort Laramie Treaty. Agreement between Indians and the white government that Indians would not attack those travelling on the Oregon Trail in exchange for land.

Key people:

Red Cloud -
Sitting Bull
Crazy Horse

Band	A group of people, mostly families who formed part of a larger tribe – Oglala Sioux.
Buffalo	Plains animal central to the Indians survival.
Chief	Leader of band/tribe but not elected. Became chief due to wisdom, healing power or skills as a warrior.
Counting Coup	Touching an enemy in battle and getting away without being injured – a sign of bravery.
Great Plains	Large grasslands to the west of the Mississippi River. Tough environment with hot summers, cold winters and no vegetation.
Manifest Destiny	Idea it was God’s will that white Americans should settle over all of America.
Miners Courts	Miners who set up their own court to settle disputes over claims as US federal law had not reached the west coast.
Oregon Trail	A 30000km long trail used by those who wanted to reach California from Missouri. Crossed the Great Plains.
Prospectors	People looking for gold.
Reservation	An area of land to live on given to the Indians by the Federal Government. Designed to contain the Indians.
Scalping	Taking the scalp of a person a warrior has beaten and to stop them coming back in the afterlife.
Sheriff	Individuals responsible for keeping the law in the counties.
Sioux	The biggest tribe on the Plains, made up of smaller tribes and bands e.g. Oglala and Dakota.
Tipi	Home of the Plains Indians. Made of buffalo hide it could be packed away quickly.
Tribal Council	A group of elders who made the decisions for the tribe/band.
US Marshal	Appointed by the President to be responsible for a state. They used lots of deputies and town marshals.
Vigilante	Ordinary citizens who punished suspected lawbreakers instead of using official system.
Warrior Society	A group of warriors from a band who hunted and protected the band.

Knowledge Organiser – The American West c1835-c1895 Topic 2; Development of the Plains

1. Key dates

1862	The Homestead Act - 160 acres for farming the land
1862	Little Crow's War.
1864	Sand Creek Massacre.
1865	The end of the Civil War.
1866-68	Red Cloud's War.
1868	President Grant made a Peace Policy to try and end conflict.
1868	The second Fort Laramie Treaty was signed,
1869	Transcontinental Railroad completed – connecting East-West.
1870s	Growth of sheep farming reduced cattle grazing land.
1873	The Timber Culture Act allowed the homesteaders 160 acres free land if they planted trees on a quarter of their new land.
1875	Over 6 million acres of land had become homesteads.
1875	The sulky plough was invented to help plough the prairie grass,

2. Key people/groups

Reno gang	Group of civil war deserters who terrorised towns,
Goodnight & Loving	Rich cattle ranchers who made a cattle trail,
John Iliff	Cattle baron – sold beef to Indian reservations,
President Grant	Took away Indians' rights, no peace gained.
Red Cloud	Respected Sioux war chief.
Colonel Chivington	Led 700 cavalry to massacre 130 Plains Indians .
Little Crow	Dakota Sioux chief killed 600 settlers.
Joseph McCoy	Cattle baron who distributed meat via Abilene.

3. Key Terms / Concepts

Red Turkey Wheat	New strong crop brought over by the Russian Mennonite immigrants & grew well on the Great Plains.
Long drive	Cowboys drove herds of cattle from Texas to Kansas
Vaqueros	Mexican name for cowboys who raised cattle
Texas fever	The name of an illness which made cattle die.
Cattle ranch	The name for a farm where cattle was raised by cowboys.
Rustling	When someone steals livestock, especially cattle.
Open Range	A large area of unfenced land where cattle roam free
Abilene	Joseph McCoy made Abilene key in the cattle transport industry.
Barbed wire	Joseph Glidden invented this in 1874 to protect farms.
Dog soldiers	Plains Indians warriors
Reservations	Fenced off land for Plains Indians from the government which the Plains Indians couldn't leave..
Bozeman Trial	Trial created after gold was found in Indian territory which went against the Fort Laramie Treaty
Cow town	The name given to places which sell beef on mass.
Sears Roebuck & Company	A catalogue which was transported via the rail which provided isolated homesteaders with supplies.
Windmill	The steel bladed windmill was invented by Halladay in 1870 to help homesteaders.

Knowledge Organiser – The American West c1835-c1895 Topic 3; Conflicts and conquest c1876-1895

1. Key dates

1876	Battle of Little Bighorn
1879	Daniel Hardy Webster Campbell develops dry farming in Dakota.
1879	Exoduster Movement - 40, 000 ex-slaves move West to Plains.
1881	Last big cattle drive to Dodge City takes place
1883	The Northern Pacific Railroad is completed
1886-7	Very harsh winter causes the 'Great Die Up' in the cattle industry
1887	The Dawes Act divides tribal land into family and individual plots
1889	50,000 homesteaders join the first land rush in central Indian Territory
1893	Oklahoma Land Rush
1890	Massacre at Wounded Knee - Chief Big Foot & followers killed
1890	Closure of the Indian Frontier by the government.
1892	Johnson County War

2. Key people/groups

Billy the Kid	Notorious outlaw who escaped jail.
Wyatt Earp	Lawman who fought outlaws at the OK Corral.
Benjamin Singleton	Former slave who told Black people to move to Kansas as part of the 'Exoduster' movement.
Henry Adams	Like Singleton, he encouraged black migration.
Pat Garrett	The lawmen (sheriff) who shot Billy the Kid.
Wovoka	A Paiute Indian who started the Ghost Dance.
Buffalo Bill	Buffalo hunter who helped exterminate all the buffalos - causing the Plains Indians to die out.

3. Key Terms / Concepts

OK Corral	A corral is an enclosure for horses. The OK Corral is where a famous gun fight took place.
Land Rush	Where the government gives land away, and people race to claim a piece of the land.
Exodus	Biblical story of the migration of people looking for equality, is applied to Black emigration to Kansas, 1879
Great Die Up	Name for the harsh winter of 1886-7 with temperatures below - 55'c. At least 15% of open range herds died. Led to the end of the Open Range.
Overstocked	When too many animals are living off the same area.
Drought	Very little or no water, for example series of severe droughts in the 1890s.
Mechanisation	Making a farming process quicker and more effective using technology such as steel windmills & seed drills.
Refrigerated railroad cars	Introduced in 1875, this revolutionised the cattle industry- meat could be transported to distant markets.
Manifest racism	This is a play on 'manifest destiny' which was deeply racist – belief in inferiority of non-white Americans.
Sharecropping	When a land owner lets a tenant use some land in return for a share in the crop they grow..
Assimilate	To become like something else- for the Plains Indians to become like white Americans.
Ghost Dance	The Native American sacred dance/ritual in reservations to bring dead Plain Indians back to life.
Millenarian beliefs	The belief of oppressed people that a supernatural event will put right all the wrongs done to them.