

# STAAR Practice Paired Reading - put your answers in Google Classroom.

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

## Full Day

by Naomi Shihab Nye

The pilot on the plane says:  
In one minute and fifty seconds  
we're going as far  
as the covered wagon went  
5 in a full day.

We look down  
on clouds,  
mountains of froth and foam.  
We eat a neat  
10 and subdivided lunch.

How was it for the people in  
the covered wagon?  
They bumped and jostled.  
Their wheels broke.  
15 Their biscuits were tough.  
They got hot and cold and old.  
Their shirts tore on the branches  
they passed.

But they saw the pebbles  
20 and the long grass  
and the sweet shine of evening  
settling on the fields.  
They knew the ruts and the rocks.  
They threw their furniture out  
25 to make the wagons lighter.  
They carried their treasures  
in a crooked box.

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# Traveling West

- 1 People today often pack up and move to another part of the country. Modern technology allows them to keep in contact with friends and family; automobiles and planes allow for visits. In the 1800s, however, such a move meant leaving behind family and friends, possibly never to see them again. It also meant selling many possessions and venturing into unfamiliar and sometimes uncharted territory.
- 2 Moving day for pioneer families was preceded by months of preparation. Families could carry only those possessions that would fit in a prairie schooner, or covered wagon. Toys, furniture, books, extra linens and clothing—even family heirlooms—were sold to raise money for the trip. The wagon was packed with only those things that were needed to start a new life: farming and hunting tools, seeds, utensils, food, essential clothing, and linens. Chicken cages were often strapped to the back of the wagon, and farm animals walked behind.
- 3 The trek west was hot and dusty in summer, wet in spring, and cold in fall. People traveling across the continent didn't have the luxury of smooth paved roads. Instead, they had rutted dirt paths, which jolted the wagon wheels, creating a bumpy ride. Strong winds blew grit, and frequent thunderstorms soaked the travelers. Most pioneers tried to cross the plains as quickly as they could in order to reach a safe place before the first snowfall of the season. Winter brought dangers—freezing conditions and few sources of food—that no one wanted to experience.
- 4 Young children and mothers usually rode in the wagons. When they peeked out from behind the canvas covers, they would often see an endless stretch of prairie grass. Older children walked alongside the wagons. Pioneer children making the trek westward had daily tasks to keep them busy. Some worked as teamsters, driving the slow, heavy-footed teams of oxen.



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- 5 As an adult, Robert Sweeten wrote about his experience as a six-year-old teamster. "I walked most of the way across the plains, with but an occasional ride. One time I was driving two yoke of oxen so my stepfather could ride a while and rest. I stepped on a prickly pear,<sup>1</sup> and being barefooted, the needles ran into my feet. Mother had to pull them out."
- 6 During the journey some children gathered firewood and buffalo chips, or droppings, which would be used as fuel for campfires. "We would take a sack and fill it as we progressed. . . . They were very thick in a certain place close to the road. . . . I thought I was in luck. I was picking up as fast as I could when I heard the rattle of a snake. He was almost at my feet," recalled Rachel Emma Woolley, who was a twelve-year-old chip collector in 1848.
- 7 Chores did not end when a family stopped to set up camp. Adults prepared the area and tended to the animals' needs. Children fetched water in buckets—sometimes from several miles away—chopped wood, washed clothes, watched younger siblings, cooked, and hunted.
- 8 However, life on the westward trail was not all hard physical labor. When the day's chores were done, mothers would sometimes teach school subjects to their children.
- 9 William M. Colvig's mother expected him to study as well as work. "Mother had reduced the library to just a few books . . . a hymn book, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Frost's Pictorial History of the United States*, *Webster's Elementary Spelling Book*, and *McGuffey's First and Second Reader*. During the six months or more we were on the plains, Mother had me recite to her, so that by the end of the trip I was reading in the *Second Reader*."
- 10 After doing chores and studying, pioneer children enjoyed playing games, including tag, hopscotch, and hide-and-seek. Since most children had to leave toys behind when they began the trek west, they had to be resourceful in creating their new playthings. They made dolls from cornhusks, and checkers from slices of corncobs; they carved tops for spinning from wood and made marbles from hardened clay.
- 11 The rewards of the journey west included land and new opportunities. The pioneer children who endured the westward trek often grew up to become skilled, persistent, inventive, and hardworking adults.

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<sup>1</sup>A prickly pear is a type of cactus.

Use "Full Day" (p. 18) to answer questions ~~19-23~~<sup>1-5</sup>. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

1. Which line from the poem suggests that people in covered wagons experienced the conditions of the land?

- A we're going as far
- B mountains of froth and foam.
- C Their biscuits were tough.
- D They knew the ruts and the rocks.

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2. The poet organizes the poem as she does in order to —

- F explain why people travel in planes
- G detail the changes in travel throughout history
- H show how travel today differs from travel in the past
- J highlight the reasons people traveled in covered wagons

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3. Why does the poet include stanzas 3 and 4?

- A To suggest that travel by wagon had both advantages and disadvantages
- B To explain why pioneers wanted to cross the prairie by wagon
- C To describe what a covered wagon could carry
- D To prove that traveling by wagon was more fun than air travel

4. The poet suggests that pioneers had to —

- F rely on strangers for help
- G carry only a few necessities
- H grow their own food
- J travel mostly at night

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5. The poet includes the pilot's statement in stanza 1 in order to —

- A tell the passengers where they are going
- B describe how pioneers traveled
- C explain the disadvantages of covered wagons
- D give passengers an idea of how fast modern air travel is

Use "Traveling West" (pp. 19–20) to answer questions ~~24–29~~<sup>6–11</sup>. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

6. In paragraph 6, the word progressed comes from a Latin root word that means to —
- F work hard
  - G go forward
  - H grow strong
  - J face danger

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7. Which sentence best summarizes paragraphs 4 through 7?
- A Older children walked beside the wagons and gathered wood as the wagons rolled along.
  - B Younger children rode in the wagons with their mothers.
  - C Pioneer children were often given duties to help their families.
  - D Children encountered many dangers while traveling across the prairie.

8. The main purpose of paragraphs 8 through 10 is to —
- F highlight the need for rest after chores were completed
  - G suggest that children did less work than adults
  - H show that daily life on the trail included more than travel and hard labor
  - J give examples of the types of books available to pioneer children

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9. According to the selection, how is moving today different from how it was in the days of the pioneers?
- A Moving today requires less effort.
  - B Moving today involves more preparation.
  - C The pioneers kept in closer contact with family members who stayed behind.
  - D The pioneers moved greater distances.

10. Which sentence best expresses the main idea of the selection?

- F Pioneer families who traveled west worked hard and were resourceful.
- G Pioneer families who journeyed west traveled slowly by covered wagon.
- H Pioneer families who traveled west showed creativity while completing chores.
- J Pioneer families who journeyed west showed great patience and kindness toward others.

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11. Read the dictionary entry below.

**raise** \ˈraɪz\ v  
1. to move something higher  
2. to rear a child 3. to collect  
4. to improve

Which definition matches the meaning of raise in paragraph 2?

- A Definition 1
- B Definition 2
- C Definition 3
- D Definition 4



Use "Full Day" and "Traveling West" to answer questions <sup>12-15</sup>~~30-33~~. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

12. Which statement could be supported by both the poem and the selection?
- F Those who moved across the prairie could not easily contact family.
  - G Pioneers organized their personal belongings for their trip.
  - H Crossing the prairie in a covered wagon was often expensive.
  - J Traveling across the prairie in a covered wagon was a time-consuming experience.

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13. Information in both the poem and the selection suggests that pioneers crossing the prairie —
- A were surprised by obstacles they encountered
  - B were determined to complete their trip
  - C carried farming equipment to their new destination
  - D depended on children for help

14. Both the poet and the author of the selection portray the prairie as —

- F flat
- G fertile
- H harsh
- J beautiful

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15. One difference between the poem and the selection is that the selection suggests that —

- A traveling across the prairie taught children valuable lessons
- B moving westward encouraged close family bonds
- C a covered wagon kept people's belongings safe
- D closeness to nature was considered a gift

Put your answers in Google Classroom when you finish.