

PBS/American Experience: Transcontinental Railroad

Day One- Answer in your spiral:

1. Click on the **interactive map** of the route
 - a. How many companies were contracted to build the RR?
 - b. How were they paid?
 - c. What was the meeting point of the two companies?
2. Click on the **Race to Utah**
 - a. What law did Lincoln sign that started the building?
 - b. How much money and land did the companies get per mile of track laid?
 - c. What year did this start?
 - d. What are the two cities that are the starting cities for each company?
 - e. What are the names of the two companies?
3. Click on **The Race is On**
 - a. What years did the Central Pacific build?
 - b. Which direction did the CP build?
 - c. How did CP tunnel through the mountains?
 - d. How many Chinese workers did the CP employ by December of 1865?
 - e. When does the UP break ground in Omaha, Nebraska?
 - f. What happens on November 29, 1864?
 - g. Why is Julesburg, Colorado destroyed in January, 1865?
 - h. What happens July 10th 1865?
 - i. What happens July 4, 1867?
 - j. When does the UP reach the highest point of elevation in its track building efforts? How is this terrain different than the previous track building efforts?
 - k. What happens in Promontory Summit Utah? Why is this important?
4. Go back to the home page and click on **People and Events**
 - a. Read Workers of the Central Pacific
 - b. Read Workers of the Union Pacific
 - c. Read the selection on Thomas Durant
 - d. Read the selection on Theodore Judah
 - e. Read Tunneling in the Sierra
 - f. Read Nitroglycerin

Day Two: Choose one assignment from below. Use the PBS website for information. You may also use your book or atlas.

1. Geography- 7 out of 10 points

Trace a United States map west of the Mississippi River. Draw and label the following items:

- a. Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads
- b. Oregon Trail and at least one other significant route taken by wagon trains
- c. Great Plains
- d. Native American tribal groups
- e. Transcontinental RR cities of origin
- f. Deposits of coal, gold, and silver

2. Economics- 8 out of 10 points

Read about workers of the Central Pacific, workers of the Union Pacific, and the Chinese workers' strike. Use information from these readings to write three short letters from railroad workers to their families: One from a Chinese worker, one from an Irish worker, and one from a white foreman. Your letters should be $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page and should show the different perspectives and experiences of the three groups.

3. Civics- 9 out of 10 points

Create a newspaper editorial responding to either, "The construction of the transcontinental railroad shows how private companies unfairly profit from federal projects." Or "The construction of the transcontinental railroad shows how private companies help develop our nation's infrastructure." Support your argument with specific facts from the website.

4. History- 10 out of 10 points

Demonstrate, by creating a diagram, flow chart or 3 dimensional model, some mechanical or engineering aspect of the transcontinental railroad that interests you. For example, you might show how a steam-powered locomotive moved or stopped, how steel rails for the railroad were manufactured, or how railroad bridges were constructed.