

## PIONEER LIFE

**Pioneers** are the first people who settle in an area. People traveled west to explore new parts of the U.S. during the 1800s. Some stopped in the Great Plains. Others went on to California or Oregon.



### 1862—Homestead Act:

- People did not want to live in the Great Plains. There were not many trees. It did not rain very much.
- Abraham Lincoln passed the Homestead Act. He hoped more people would settle in the Great Plains.

- The price of land was very low.
- Settlers could own a house.



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### Traveling

- Most pioneers went in groups called **trains**. At night they formed a circle to protect against wild animals and Indians.
- There were many hard things about traveling by wagon.
  - Broken wagons and wheels
  - Sickness
  - Rain, wind, snow
  - Slow travel: 10-15 miles per day on a good day

### Life on the Great Plains:

- There were lots of hard things about living on the Plains.
  - People lived very far apart. It was lonely.
  - There was not a lot of rain. It was hard to grow crops.
  - There were windstorms.
  - There were snowstorms.
  - There were many Native Americans. They were not happy to have settlers coming to live there.

## Pioneer Life



- The home for a pioneer was often a log cabin. These were wooden buildings. They had outdoor bathrooms called **outhouses**. People made their own soap from lye and grease. They also canned food and put food in a **root cellar** to keep it from spoiling. There were not many doctors. People had to use plants for medicine. They made quilts to use as blankets.
- Here are some of the jobs or stores you would find in a pioneer village.
  - General Store: *a place to get clothing, tools, candles*



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## Frontier Heroes

- “Buffalo” Bill Cody: He killed many buffalo and got his nickname.
- Annie Oakley: She was a great sharpshooter. She traveled with Bill Cody’s Wild West Show.
- Davy Crockett: He fought at the Battle of the Alamo.



## Try This!

Draw an X through things that would not have been found in pioneer days.

candy      computers      horses      wagons  
batteries      log cabins      root cellar      refrigerators

## True or False?

A group of wagons traveling together is called a wagon ream.      T / F

Buffalo Bill Cody started a Wild West Show.      T / F

Circuit preachers traveled around selling pots and pans.      T / F

The Homestead Act was meant to get people to live in California.      T / F

Fill in the

\_\_\_\_\_

Because far \_\_\_\_\_ to live  
on the front \_\_\_\_\_

People made soap from lye and \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ is a name for the first people to settle in an area.



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