



Hastings Museum

of Natural and Cultural History

Search Activity

People on the Plains – Pioneers

Grades 3rd through 7th

1. Collars, hames and reins were pieces of equipment which every pioneer needed. What was this equipment used for? _____
2. Many of the first pioneers in Nebraska were farmers. Look at the *Early Farm Tools* exhibit. Write three different tools.

3. Some of the first settlers were cowboys and ranchers. Look at the *Cowboys* exhibit and name three pieces of equipment they used.

4. Many pioneer homes were made of sod. Which other group of people had homes made of sod? _____
5. Why did people choose sod to build their houses with instead of boards or bricks?

6. Look in the *Sod House* exhibit. What are some things in the house that you have in your house today? _____
7. What are some things in the *Sod House* exhibit that you do NOT have in your house today?

8. Before electric refrigerators were invented, people used ice to cool food. Where did they get the ice? _____
9. Name some tools people used to get the ice blocks. _____

10. Visit the *General Store* exhibit and name three things no longer sold in stores today.

11. Pioneers came west in covered wagons on the Oregon and Mormon Trails. These trails are sometimes called the Great Platte River Road because they followed the Platte River. Name two things pioneers left behind along these trails. (Hint: Look in the exhibit case next to the covered wagon) _____
12. Find the Immigrants and Reminders of the Old Country exhibits. Many pioneers were immigrants from other countries. Name three things they brought with them to America.

Answer Key

1. Collars, hames and reins create a harness, which was used on horses. They were important because horses provided transportation, work power and saved time.
2. Many options: Corn planter, grasshopper plow, hay harpoon, hay fork, scythe, grain flail, potato planter, windmill weights, sickles, hay knife.
3. Several possibilities: Winchester rifle, branding irons, saddle, saddle bags, saddle blanket, bridle and bit, lariat, chaps, spurs, quirt, hat, coat.
4. Pawnee Indians or Plains Indians
5. There were few trees around from which to cut boards or lumber, and only a few places had clay deposits suited to making bricks and bricks were expensive.
6. Many choices: tables, table cloth, quilt, flowers, curtains, pet bird, beds, dishes, rolling pin, books, pictures, etc.
7. Churn, kerosene lamp, box of cow chips and straw for stove, black iron stove, wooden water bucket and dipper, flat iron, tin dishes, etc.
8. Exhibit talks about Crystal Lake. May also just answer from frozen lakes or pond.
9. Ice saw, ice plow-scoring knife, ice tongs.
10. Many possibilities:
11. Options: plow, grave nameplate, nails, bullets, ox shoes, mule shoes, buttons, chains, etc.
12. Trunks, suitcases, shawl, menorah, pipe, books, candlestick, wooden chest, shillelagh, concertina, spinning wheel, clock, tea set, table, kraut cutter, coffee mill, forks, butter dish, helmet, clothes brush, suit of clothes, table cloth, coverlet, etc.