History (Specification A) 91402A
Schools History Project
Unit 2 Option A: The American West, 1840–1895

Sources Booklet

Sources A to E for use in answering Question 1
Source F for use in answering Question 2
Source G for use in answering Question 3
A view of the Great Plains by white people

Source A  A painting of Indians attacking migrants’ wagons trying to cross the Great Plains.

It was painted by Robert Lindneux in 1932. Lindneux was a famous artist of the American West who made a good living from selling his paintings. From 1899 to 1902 he worked as a trapper and a cowboy.

Source B  From an account by Major Stephen Long who led an expedition onto the Great Plains in 1819–1820.

I am certain this large area is almost completely unfit for cultivation and impossible for farmers to live on. Although large areas of fertile land can be found, the shortage of wood and water will prove an impossible barrier to settling the country. The whole area seems only suited for vast numbers of buffaloes and other wild animals which are able to feed well on it.
A different view of the Great Plains by white people

Source C  An engraving of Crow Indians on their reservation in Montana.


Source D  From an article in a Kansas newspaper, published in July, 1886.

Although Missouri is a great state, it does not compare to Kansas. I once lost three cows on my farm in Kansas and searched for them for weeks. One day I heard the sound of a cow-bell and found them inside a pumpkin! After I got them out I dried the pumpkin and used it as a wagon shed. Is it a good country for corn, you ask? You will never know what corn is until you go to Kansas. The corn stalks are as big as telegraph poles and need four horses to pull them.

Turn over for Source E

Harvey Dunn (1884–1952) was brought up on a homestead in South Dakota. He began painting in 1906 and sold his pictures of life on the Great Plains to newspapers and magazines on the East Coast.

*The Prairie = The Great Plains
Turn over for Source F for use in answering Question 2 and Source G for use in answering Question 3
Source F (for use in answering Question 2)

A painting of an Indian Chief counting coup.
Source G  (for use in answering Question 3)

An engraving of cattle on the Long Drive crossing a river in 1867.

END OF SOURCES