

Quick Check

The Transcontinental Railroad

Name _____ Date _____

Instructions: Read each question carefully and choose the best answer.

1. In the planning of the railroad, why was nothing planned east of Nebraska?
 - Ⓐ People could drive their cars as far as Nebraska.
 - Ⓑ There was already railroad track laid as far west as Omaha, Nebraska.
 - Ⓒ People in the East did not need to travel far and could get around without railroads.
 - Ⓓ Problems with the land in the East could not be overcome, so no railroads could be built.
2. Why did the Central Pacific Railroad initially not want to hire Chinese workers?
 - Ⓐ The bosses could not speak Chinese and could not communicate with the workers.
 - Ⓑ The bosses only wanted young men working on the railroads.
 - Ⓒ The bosses only wanted Americans to build the railroad.
 - Ⓓ The bosses believed they were weak and small.
3. Which of the following words means *the unfair treatment of a person or group of people based on gender, race, age, religion, or other differences*?
 - Ⓐ interrogation
 - Ⓑ infamous
 - Ⓒ discrimination
 - Ⓓ reluctant
4. Why were people willing to travel for six months to reach California from New York prior to the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad?
 - Ⓐ New York was overpopulated, and there was no more housing.
 - Ⓑ Many people wanted to go to California to help build the Transcontinental Railroad.
 - Ⓒ People wanted the adventure of traveling through uncharted territories.
 - Ⓓ California offered good farmland and the possibility of finding gold.

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5. Why did Congress decide to have two companies build the Transcontinental Railroad?
 - Ⓐ Congress could not decide which company would do a better job.
 - Ⓑ The companies would be in competition and therefore would work quickly.
 - Ⓒ The owners of the companies were friends and requested that they work together.
 - Ⓓ Congress wanted to be fair and allow any company that wanted to be involved to participate.
6. Why did so few people want to work for the Central Pacific Railroad?
 - Ⓐ The bosses were too strict and hard on them.
 - Ⓑ They preferred to stay in the cities rather than be out in the country.
 - Ⓒ The pay was insufficient.
 - Ⓓ The work was slow and extremely difficult.
7. The citizens from Ireland, Germany, and the Netherlands who worked on the railroad were _____.
 - Ⓐ immigrants
 - Ⓑ foremen
 - Ⓒ slaves
 - Ⓓ passengers
8. What is the author's purpose in writing *The Transcontinental Railroad*?
 - Ⓐ to inform the reader about the building of the railroad only from the point of view of the Chinese workers
 - Ⓑ to entertain the reader with stories of people striking it rich in California
 - Ⓒ to inform the reader about the importance of the railroad in uniting America from east to west
 - Ⓓ to persuade the reader to plan a trip on the railroad in order to appreciate all the hard work that went into its construction

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9. In what year was the Transcontinental Railroad complete?
- Ⓐ 1862
 - Ⓑ 1869
 - Ⓒ 1865
 - Ⓓ 1962
10. What was the cause of Chinese workers making up the majority of the Central Pacific workforce?
- Ⓐ The Chinese workers were captured as slaves and made to work on the railroad.
 - Ⓑ Chinese workers could be paid less than the American workers.
 - Ⓒ There were no other people living out west at the time.
 - Ⓓ Many aspects of Chinese culture kept the workers healthier than American workers.
11. **Extended Response:** Many people wanted a transcontinental railroad for years before it was built. What stood in the way of initiating the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad?

12. **Extended Response:** Why was the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad particularly difficult and dangerous for the workers?

Quick Check Answer Sheet

The Transcontinental Railroad

Main Comprehension Skill: Main Idea and Details

1. **(B)** *Make Inferences / Draw Conclusions*
2. **(D)** *Main Idea and Details*
3. **(C)** *Vocabulary*
4. **(D)** *Main Ideas and Details*
5. **(B)** *Make Inferences / Draw Conclusions*
6. **(D)** *Cause and Effect*
7. **(A)** *Vocabulary*
8. **(C)** *Author's Purpose*
9. **(B)** *Main Ideas and Details*
10. **(D)** *Cause and Effect*
11. Answers will vary but students should include the following information: *building a railroad of that size was too expensive for any one person or company to pay for; the technology at the time did not seem advanced enough for such a big job; the Northern and Southern states were fighting in the Civil War and argued about whether the railroad should cross the northern or southern half of the country.*
12. Answers will vary but should include a description of the process of laying railroad tracks and how labor-intensive this process was for the workers. Students should also note that the railroad was built through unsettled terrain and through the mountains, creating dangerous situations for the workers with inclement weather and raids from Native Americans.