

The Union Pacific Railroad in Carbon County, Wyoming

Learning Objective: To understand the development, growth, and impact of the Union Pacific Railroad in the American West, especially Carbon County, Wyoming.

Topics: US History, Western History, Industrialization.

Age Group/Grades: Ten – Thirteen years old, 5th – 8th Grades.

Learning Objectives:

- Literacy: Students will read on the creation and expansion of the Union Pacific Railroad across Wyoming, focusing on Carbon County.
- Critical Analysis: Students will use the printable sheets analyze the photographs (primary sources) to better understand the people and places of Carbon County, Wyoming.
- Active Learning Activities:
 - Activity 1: Students will study and analyze historic photographs from the Union Pacific construction and use using our template.
 - Activity 2: Students will complete the printable word search.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will analyze the creation and development of the Union Pacific Railroad, from the federal to the local level.
- Students will identify how the growth of the railroad expanded the American West's population and facilitated growth of the area in the late nineteenth century.
- Students will examine and analyze primary sources (photographs) to better understand the places and people of the American West/Carbon County, Wyoming.
- Students will evaluate who the railroad workers were and the conditions they worked under, as well as how the rural environment impacted their work.

Topics to be Studied:

- The role of the federal government in the creation of the railroad.
- How the post-Civil War era allowed the growth and development of the railroad.
- How industrialization in America was helped by the growth of the railroad.

Online Resources:

- Read: “Industry, Politics and Power: The Union Pacific in Wyoming”. Gregory Nickerson, Published November 8, 2014. Access here: <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/industry-politics-and-power-union-pacific-wyoming>
- Read and View our Virtual Exhibit, “Let’s Go West! The Union Pacific in Carbon County” found here: <https://www.carboncountymuseum.org/the-union-pacific-railroad>
- Watch: Wyoming PBS Documentary, “End of Track” found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUDv87_LjCs&list=PLi7t-ipQDn6egPmZNI873oQ2ogkpD9MJt&index=40
- For more on Benton, See this short article: <https://kingfm.com/the-legend-of-benton-wyomings-wildest-town/>

Activities:

- Word Search: Using the word search provided, students locate words related to the Union Pacific in Carbon County.
- Create a journal using the prompts and papers provided.

Union Pacific in Carbon County Word Search

D I E S E L T R R D P N L B A
C A R G O P B F A E R O A G O
D N A L R E V O I R S B O V L
W J B G H R X X L F A R C N O
N R A I L W A Y R K C A R T G
G O A H A M O J O Z Q C M O O
S H T C I F I C A P S A F E Y
N T O N F M D G D N E C C J Y
I L M S E R M V I T W K D T E
L U O K T B E L S O B H L L E
W Q L C R H W I R W U V E Y G
A Y J Z N A W K G N X E N M P
R I O S R I E A I H T E C W Z
Q W C E N R L O T S T N C E N
K P E W S E N G I N E D G U Y

Word Search:

Act	Benton	Carbon	Cargo	Coal
Diesel	Engine	Fred	Freight	Ghost
Lincoln	Logo	Omaha	Overland	Pacific
Railroad	Railway	Rawlins	Steam	Steele
Town	Track	Union		

Union Pacific: Creating A Story

Using the resources (PBS documentary, our virtual exhibit, etc.) listed above, create a journal of either a railroad worker, a newspaper journalist, a business owner, or even future president Ulysses S. Grant who visited Benton. Use the prompts below to guide you to create your journal.

Journal of _____

Place: Benton, Carbon County, Wyoming

Occupation: _____

Who I am and where am I originally from?

What is my job in Benton?

What do I see while the railroad is being built here? Describe it!

What is my typical day like here?
