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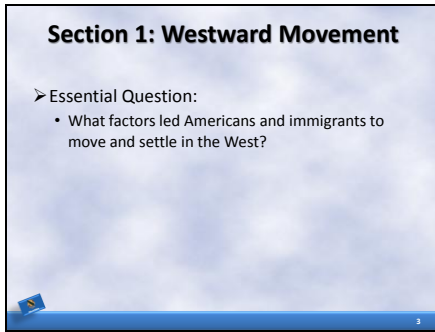
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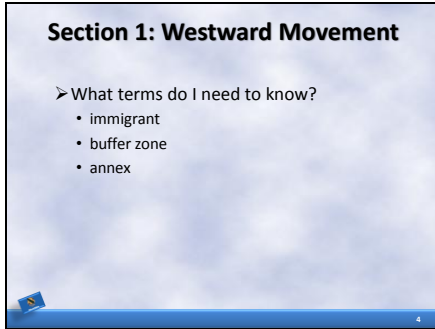
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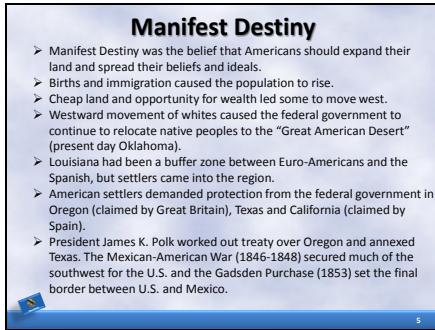
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Slide 4



Slide 5





Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

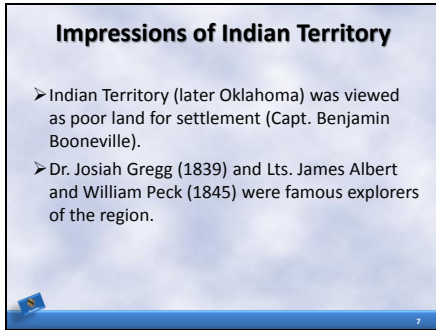
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Chapter 7: Opening the West QuickNotes

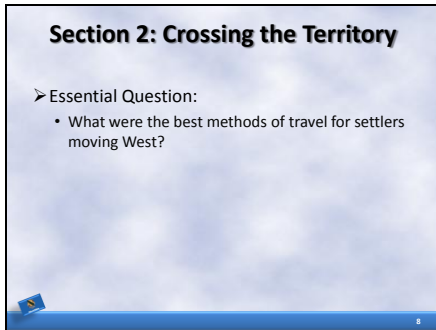
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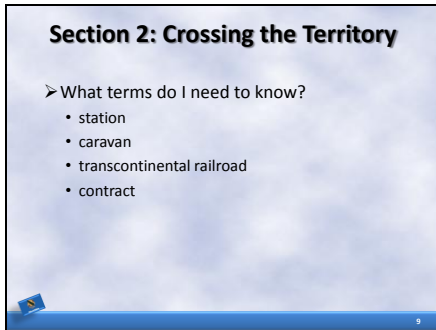
Slide 7



Slide 8



Slide 9





Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

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Chapter 7: Opening the West QuickNotes

Slide 10

Trailblazing

- Many trails began as animal paths.
- Old Indian trails were also used.
- Spanish priests, traders, and trappers followed the old Spanish trail – Natchitoches, Louisiana, up the Red River to Tillman County, and on to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Slide 11

Early Trails

Slide 12

Trailblazing: The Santa Fe Trail

- 1848: Gold was discovered in California and began a gold rush.
- Trails to the west were rugged and dangerous, but took half the time of ship travel (6 months vs. 1 year).
- The Santa Fe trail began in Independence, MO.
- The Cimarron Route went through the Oklahoma Panhandle. It was shorter but drier than the Rocky Mountain Route.
- 1821: William Becknell led the first wagon train on the trail.
- 1825: George Sibley surveyed the trail.
- 1870s: Railroads became the best choice for travelers going west.

Slide 13

Trailblazing: Texas Road

- Osage Trace went from St. Louis, MO to Santa Fe through Oklahoma and Texas.
- It became known as the Texas Road.
- Stations along the road provided relief for stage coaches and other travelers.



Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Oklahoma: Land of Opportunity

Chapter 7: Opening the West QuickNotes

Slide 14

Trailblazing: The California Road

- 1849: Capt. Randolph Marcy led a caravan of gold seekers from Fort Smith, AK across Oklahoma toward Santa Fe, NM (over 800 miles).
- The trail became known as the California Road.
- Travel was 4-15 miles/day, depending on the terrain and weather.
- Rock Mary named for Mary Conway, one of the travelers in the group.

Slide 15

Trailblazing: Other California Trails

- 1849: Capt. L. Evans led a caravan from Fayetteville, AK.
- It traveled the new Cherokee Trail through the Cherokee nation.
- Another trail followed the California Trail to Coal Creek, then turned SW to El Paso, TX.

Slide 16


Traveling the Trails

- The Oregon Trail was more northerly; an estimated 75,000 travelers went west on northern trails in 1850.
- Trails through Indian territory, more southerly, handled about 25,000 in the same year.
- *The Prairie Traveler* by Capt. Marcy recommended routes, supplies, wagons, and animals need for a successful migration.
- Weapons were needed for hunting and protection.
- 1851: Marcy establishes Fort Arbuckle (near Davis) to protect immigrants and keep peace with Indians.

Slide 17

Railroad Survey

- The Transcontinental Railroad spanned the continent from the Atlantic to Pacific Oceans.
- The Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854) divided and organized the territory north of Oklahoma.
- Settlers entered these areas and plans for the railroad were begun.
- Surveys were made to determine the best route, supervised by Secretary of War Jefferson Davis.
- Surveys along the 35th parallel provide much information about life in the area in the 1850s.
- This route was not chosen, in the end, due to the Civil War and the push for a more northerly route.





Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Oklahoma: Land of Opportunity

Chapter 7: Opening the West QuickNotes

Slide 18

Butterfield Overland Mail

- Stagecoaches were used in the 1850s-1870s to haul mail and travelers.
- The telegraph did not stretch across the continent at first.
- The Butterfield Stage was a famous company with a route across Oklahoma, entering at Ft. Smith, AK, and traveling to the Red River via Boggy Depot and Colbert's Ferry.
- Stations located along the way had fresh horses and refreshed travelers.
- Choctaw and Chickasaw nations had deals with the company to maintain roads and stations for a fee.
- The Choctaw had a toll system to cover expenses of the business in their territory.
- The first stage in 1858 with available trains took 4 days to go from St. Louis, MO to Sherman, TX or to San Francisco in 25 days.
- 1860: The Pony Express increased the speed of mail travel.
- The Civil War delayed expansion of the Pony Express and stage coach route development.
