

Lesson Plan	Really, Who Were The Buckeye Rovers?
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Name	Cathy Sato with editing by Lethene Parks, created Dec. 2009, revised April, 2011, updated Dec. 2011 & Aug. 2012 ©Cathleen M. Sato, For Non-Profit Educational Use Only
Lesson Title	Really, Who Were The Buckeye Rovers? An Ohio Connection to the Oregon-California Trail
Grade Level	3-8, may be adapted for high school
Purposes	<p>1) To serve as a model for how any state can show students a connection between their state and the Oregon-California Trails. People from every state in the union went across the overland trails to Oregon and California. Many times their leaving, their return, letters, and other information were reported in local newspapers or later recounted in county histories written in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many county histories are on www.books.google.com.</p> <p>2) To teach students how to research. The essence of research is to start from known information, to formulate questions from that information, and to figure out where and how to look for the answers to those questions. The most important questions to answer are "Why did these people do what they did?" and "How did they do it?"</p>
Standards	<p>This lesson plan will meet standards in several subject areas:</p> <p>A. Research skills--forming questions; finding, evaluating and using information; using primary and secondary sources; summarizing and synthesizing information from a variety of sources</p> <p>B. Reading--reading comprehension, making inferences, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, evaluating what is read</p> <p>C. Writing--summarizing in one's own words, writing a research report, making a bibliography</p> <p>D. Presentation skills--oral and written--planning for a particular audience; conveying information in a clear, logical and interesting way; using appropriate visual information; keeping the audience's attention and interest by speaking clearly, using examples, and using humor</p> <p>E. Social Studies--map skills, timelines, landforms, climate, economic decision making, understanding westward expansion in U. S. history</p> <p>F. Math--elapsed time, calendar, timelines</p>

	G. Science --understanding weather and its effects, transfer of energy to do work, simple machines
Goals and Objectives for Student Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the motivations for westward migration in the mid-1800s and of the hazards, difficulties and experiences of the pioneers on the overland trails by answering questions and by researching and reporting on a specific pioneer, using primary and secondary sources. 2. Students will demonstrate their mastery of research skills by producing an oral, written, visual and/or electronic report on an individual pioneer based on primary and secondary resources, by doing original research using a variety of sources, and by correctly citing their sources. 3. Students will demonstrate reading comprehension and application skills by reading a variety of material in print or electronic form, answering comprehension questions, answering inferential questions and summarizing and evaluating information from a variety of written materials.
Teaching Method	Teacher guided inquiry.
Diversity	<p>This lesson is teacher-guided inquiry. For students who are gifted it may be appropriate to let students formulate their own questions (student led inquiry) and research topics or people that diverge from the parameters set by the teacher. For English Language Learners and students with learning differences, teachers, tutors, support staff and volunteers should be available and class time set aside for more guidance in reading, researching and writing, with more visual and oral sources available and more structuring of the report format provided by the teacher. These students may need more explicit guidance to locate sources.</p> <p>For students from a wide variety of backgrounds look for ways to "hook" the student by finding something about the Buckeye Rovers and their experiences that the students can relate to. Be open to the connections that students make for themselves, even if they seem "off topic."</p>
Adaptations	<p>For Gr. 3: Provide the Rover bios from the OCTA website (www.octa-trails.org--scroll down left side of home page, under "Learn" click "People and Places"), shorten the time, and simplify the presentation requirements, except for students who are gifted.</p> <p>For high school do not provide resource materials or guidance except in the case of English Language Learners and students</p>

	<p>with learning differences or students who have made a good faith effort and are very frustrated. Expect a higher and deeper level of analysis and detail in presentations. Allow students to diverge from the topic of the Buckeye Rovers if they wish to research a different group of pioneers, a particular wagon train or a particular individual pioneer or group of pioneers or even other kinds of epic journeys.</p>
<p>Learning Activities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students read and discuss the article "The Buckeye Rovers" written by Arthur B. Harding which originally appeared in the <i>Cincinnati Inquirer</i> and was included in <u>The Pioneer History of Meigs County</u> by S. C. Larkin, Berlin Printing Co., Columbus, OH, c. 1908, pp. 191-194 available at http://books.google.com. Allow 1 class period. 2. Discussion Questions handout. Allow 1-3 class periods. Students should predict what the answers to the questions might be and decide how to verify or refute their predictions. What questions will they need to answer for themselves? Teacher should model this technique of self questioning. 3. View the film <i>In Pursuit of a Dream</i> produced by Boston Productions and the Oregon-California Trails Association. Discuss how the journey portrayed in the film compares to the journey of the Buckeye Rovers. Allow 2-3 class periods. See http://www.octa-trails.org/ http://www.inpursuitofadream.org/ DVD set available from Landmark Media, 1-800-342-4336 [www.landmarkmedia.com] 4. Class mini lesson on multi-tiered timelines. 5. Students select one Buckeye Rover to research. Allow 5 class periods plus at home time for initial research. 6. Students report findings and resources located and tell what they need for further research. Allow 1 class period. 7. Provide additional information to students or direct them to additional resources. Allow 3-5 class periods for further research. 8. Students create an oral (can include songs, poems, etc.), written, visual (including pictures, photos, film clips, realia, artifacts, sculpture, works of art, scientific demonstrations, skits or any other visual representation) and/or electronic presentation about their Buckeye Rover, including sources and how they found the information used to create the report. Presentations should have an oral, a written and a visual component. Students should articulate what they learned about where and how to research. Allow 3-5 class periods plus outside time for creating presentations. The presentation should include a multi-tiered timeline of national events, milestones in western migration and

	<p>the events and milestones of the selected Buckeye Rover's journey, stay in California and later life, and a map of their route.</p> <p>9. Trial presentations. Students share their presentations with their class. Feedback is given in general terms about what the class and the teacher liked about the presentations. Teacher and students give general pointers on how to give good presentations; some good examples are pointed out. Allow 2-3 class periods.</p> <p>10. Allow a further 3 class periods plus outside time for students to polish and improve their presentations based on the feedback and mini lessons from the trial presentations.</p> <p>11. Students give their presentations again. Each student anonymously gives 1-5 stars (5 being the highest rating) to each presentation. Teacher tabulates and privately gives each student an average of the number of stars received. Class discusses what makes a presentation worthy of 4 or 5 stars and how to achieve that level. Allow 3 class periods.</p> <p>12. Outside of class students do a final revision of their presentations. Provide help for students without home help.</p> <p><u>Culminating Activity:</u> Showcase of presentations. Each student gives their presentation to a wider audience--at a school assembly, History Day project fair, public presentation at an evening program, displays at library, city hall, shopping mall, district office, etc. Students may submit their presentations to the OCTA web site or post them on their school or teacher's web site or submit to an appropriate publication or to the local newspaper, historical society, etc. Allow at least half a day or an evening for these presentations. Rather than having all the presentations one after another, put several students each in different rooms and have a schedule that allows the audience two or three time slots to see two or three different presentations. Allow time for audience to ask questions. Film all the presentations for later viewing.</p> <p>Total Time=30 class periods + one half-day or one evening [6 weeks + culminating activity]</p>
Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Buckeye Rovers article from www.books.google.com <u>A Pioneer History of Meigs County</u> by S. C. Larkin, 1908, Berlin Printing Co., Columbus, OH, pp. 191-194 (see attached handout) 2. Discussion Questions & Answer Sheet (see attached handout) 3. For Teachers (Suggestions and resources for implementing the lesson) (see attached information) 4. DVD of <i>In Pursuit of a Dream</i> (study guide attached) 5. Resources: More Information About the Buckeye Rovers (sources-attached) + Buckeye Rover bios from OCTA web site (People & Places) 6. Resources: Where to Look for Background Information on People (see

	<p>attached handout)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Tips for Teachers: Presentation Skills (see attached information) 8. Tips for Teachers: Examples of How to Coach Students (attached) 9. Tips for Teachers: Students Who Need Extra Coaching (attached) 10. Bibliography Format Sheet (see attached handout) 11. Presentation Rubric (attached) 12. Fun Quiz on the Buckeye Rovers + answer key (attached) 13. Showcase Survey Form (attached) 14. Book <u>The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush: An Edition of Two Diaries</u>, edited by H. Lee Scamehorn, Edwin P. Banks, and Jamie Lytle-Webb, Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, 1989 edition-Available through Amazon.com or Ohio State University Library, Columbus Metropolitan Library, State Library of Ohio, Allen Co. Public Library, Ft. Wayne, IN CAUTION: <i>This book consists of two diaries written by members of the Buckeye Rovers, meshed together. The main diarist, John Banks, wrote the diary mainly for his parents and siblings back in Ohio. The other diarist, J. Elza Armstrong, wrote briefly for his own record. Both diarists comment on "camp women" and Banks includes graphic descriptions of violence and death caused by Indian attacks, crimes, and horrible illnesses. Teachers should preview material and perhaps excerpt information for younger students.</i> <p>See also http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/index.html for information on how to conduct and organize historical research (for beginners) and www.ehow.com/how_4843237_multitier-timeline.html for "How to Make a Multi-Tier Timeline" and http://www.hardin.k12.ky.us/nhhs/teachers/tgarrison/US_map_-_rivers_and_lakes3.jpg map of U. S. showing rivers for tracing BR route</p>
<p>Assessment Plan Please attach any student handouts and rubric</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion Questions Answer Sheet--50 points 2. Rubric for presentation - 100 points 3. Quiz-25 points 4. Fellow Students' Star Ratings-5 points (average) 5. Feedback from public showcase audience surveys. Make sure each presentation has the same number of evaluations. If necessary, select the best 3 (or whatever number gives each presentation the same number of evaluations) surveys to average. 20 points <p>Total=200 points</p>

The Pioneer History of Meigs County by Stillman Carter Larkin

"The Buckeye Rovers."—An article in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* by Arthur B. Harding, and copied into this manuscript by S. C. Larkin:

"The Buckeye Rovers crossed the continent to the California gold fields in 1849. There were twenty-two men in the party, from Athens and Meigs counties exclusively. From Athens county: Elza Armstrong, W. S. Stedman, Hugh Dickson, Dennis Drake, Elijah Terrill, Solomon Townsend, James Shepherd, William Logan, W. T. Wilson, Joseph Dickson, M. D., R. P. Barnes, John Banks, George Reeves, Asa Condee, M. D., H. L. Graham. From Meigs county: Seth Paine, L. D. Stevens, J. C. Rathburn, M. D., Joshua Gardner, Charles Giles, John S. Giles. Fifteen Athenians and seven Meigs countians.

The party left Albany April 9th, 1849, and, going to Middleport, Meigs county, embarked on a steamboat and, further on, by boats until reaching Lexington, Mo. Here they organized, choosing Dr. Joseph Dickson captain. Cattle were brought that never had seen a yoke, and a week was spent in breaking them. The party drove one hundred miles to St. Joseph, where, if they had waited to cross the ferry in their turn, they would have been delayed six weeks, so great was the rush westward. Luckily, some of them were old river men, and who constructed a rude craft, that carried them over the river in four days. They proceeded up the Platte river by Fort Kearney and Fort Laramie, and to the north of the Great Salt Lake, eighty miles. Cholera infested the plains at this time, and for more than a thousand miles west of Fort Kearney, if there had been no trail, they could easily have kept their course by the new made graves. They had many thrilling experiences and narrow escapes from the Indians. At the sink of the Humboldt river the Indians stole all of their cattle. Then the company disbanded, and each one had to get to Sacramento the best way he could. Judge Wilson fell in with an Illinois party going to Oregon, and he was the first white man at Downieville, on the Yuba river, where he subsequently took up the largest nugget any of them secured. It was about the size of a goose egg and was valued at \$1285. On September 20th, 1849, the first of the Buckeye Rovers reached Sacramento, then consisting of only one wooden structure and used for a post office. The tent population was about 5000, which increased as by magic, so that in less than one year it was estimated at 80,000 souls. When they reached the golden land, labor was worth \$16 a day, but dropped to \$10 the next season. Provisions of all kinds were brought from the Sacramento valley on mules and sold at enormous prices. Everything sold by the pound, at \$1, except butter, which was \$4.

Once they paid \$8 for a pound of soda to make slapjacks. Letters from the East cost 40 cents postage, and were usually a year in reaching their destination. A man at the diggings was employed as mail carrier. He took a list of the names of the miners and went to San Francisco, the nearest post office, 200 miles distant. On reaching the office, he had to hunt the letters that were wanted from a large pile on the floor. They paid the mail carrier \$2 for each letter carried or received. In the winter of '49 Condee and Wilson formed a partnership with two Illinois men, Burroughs and Barnes by name, for the purpose of prospecting on the Yuba river. There were no towns and no laws, but among

themselves. They agreed that each miner was to have thirty feet on the river as his claim. After staking out four claims near Downieville, Barnes and Burroughs went farther up the mountains prospecting, leaving the others to guard the claims. The miners began to swarm in, and it was useless to try to hold the claims. "The upper two we thought were good," said Judge Wilson, "but the lower two we sold to a party of Georgians for \$1000, and shortly afterwards I saw them take out between \$40,000 and \$50,000 worth of gold dust. My share in the upper claim I sold in a few weeks later for \$2300." It was a common occurrence for a miner to be worth \$1000 one day and be as much in debt the next day from losses in gambling. There was not much stealing in the mining region, for among the miners, if a person was caught stealing anything to the amount of \$1 or more the penalty was a severe whipping or death.

The first of the Rovers that died was Dr. Joseph Dickson, who was accidentally shot by dropping his revolver while prospecting on the American river. Mr. Stedman spent eleven years in California.

Judge Wilson served four years in the Civil War, and he says "the hardships endured were trifling in comparison with the overland trip to California in 1849." A few of the men who went out with this expedition returned home with financial gains, but the majority were not so fortunate."

Discussion Questions Answer Sheet

Give your best guess as to the answer to each question. Really think, look things up, ask other people.

1. Why was the group called "The Buckeye Rovers"? (1 points)

2. This article is from a history of Meigs County, Ohio. Why are people from Athens County, Ohio mentioned? (1 points)

3. List the 22 members of the Buckeye Rovers. (22 points)

1. _____ 12. _____

2. _____ 13. _____

3. _____ 14. _____

4. _____ 15. _____

5. _____ 16. _____

6. _____ 17. _____

7. _____ 18. _____

8. _____ 19. _____

9. _____ 20. _____

10. _____ 21. _____

11. _____ 22. _____

What does M. D. mean? _____ (1 point)

4. Why do you think these particular people chose to travel together? (Hint: If you were going to go on a long and dangerous journey, who would YOU go with?) (2 points)

5. Trace the travel route of the Buckeye Rovers on a map. Explain why you think they took this route. What other routes could they have taken? Back up your answers with research about westward travel routes in 1849 from Ohio to California. Attach your map and your explanation to the back of this answer sheet. (5 points for map, 4 points for explanation) [http://www.hardin.k12.ky.us/nhhs/teachers/tgarrison/US_map_-_rivers_and_lakes3.jpg]

6. Why do you think the Buckeye Rovers went west? (2 points)

7. Did all the Rovers reach California? (2 points)

8. Did all the Rovers stay in California? If not, what did they do, and why? (7 points)

9. Who do you think was the source of the information given in the article? Tell why you think that person was the source. (1 point)

Do you know when and where the article was written? How could you find out? (1 point)

10. Select one member of the Buckeye Rovers to research. Write their name below:

(1 point)

Total _____ out of 50 points= _____%

Discussion Questions Answer Sheet-KEY

Give your best guess as to the answer to each question. Really think, look things up, ask other people.

1. Why was the group called "The Buckeye Rovers"? (1 point)

"Buckeye" is the nickname for Ohioans because the buckeye tree (horse chestnut), which grows all over Ohio, is the state tree and its nut looks like the eye of a buck (male) deer. ["Buckeyes" is also the name of The Ohio State University football team, which is followed with great enthusiasm throughout Ohio.] To rove means to travel or wander, so the group gave themselves the name "Buckeye Rovers" because they were Ohioans traveling far from home.

2. This article is from a history of Meigs County, Ohio. Why are people from Athens County, Ohio mentioned? (1 point)

People from both Athens and Meigs County joined the Buckeye Rovers and the two counties are neighbors. The Buckeye Rovers came from an area just on the border of the two counties. Many lived in both counties during their lifetimes, either before or after the journey to California.

3. List the 22 members of the Buckeye Rovers. (22 points)

1. Elza Armstrong
2. W. S. Stedman
3. Hugh Dickson
4. Dennis Drake
5. Elijah Terrill,
6. Solomon Townsend
7. James Shepherd
8. William Logan
9. W. T. Wilson
10. Joseph Dickson, M.D.
11. R. P. Barnes
12. John Banks
13. George Reeves
14. Asa Condee, M. D.
15. H. L. Graham
16. Seth Paine
17. L. D. Stevens
18. J. C. Rathburn, M.D.
19. Joshua Gardner
20. Charles Giles
21. John S. Giles
22. James Gardner * The article said there were 22 men but left out the name of James Gardner, which is found in other sources.
23. Alonzo Smith ** found in other sources

What does M. D. mean? **Medical Doctor** (1 point)

4. Why do you think these particular people chose to travel together? (Hint: If you were going to go on a long and dangerous journey, who would YOU go with?) (2 points)

They were friends, neighbors and relatives. Each man also had special skills that could help the group. Some were familiar with handling animals. One was a blacksmith. Others were good with handling guns and hunting. One was a medical doctor (the others listed as M.D. attended medical school after returning from California). Some had leadership ability.

5. Trace the travel route of the Buckeye Rovers on a map. Explain why you think they took this route. What other routes could they have taken? Back up your answers with research about westward travel routes in 1849 from Ohio to California. Attach your map and your explanation to the back of this answer sheet. (5 points for map, 4 points for explanation) They started from Albany, Athens Co., OH, going to the Ohio River, then going down the Ohio River, the typical and fastest route of travel in those days. At the first stop they met the Meigs Co. men and joined forces. They traveled by river steamer on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers via Cincinnati, heading toward St. Louis, Missouri and the Missouri River. Their steamer could go no farther than Lexington, Missouri because of low water, so they disembarked there, bought their cattle and wagons and went overland to St. Joseph, Missouri, the most famous "jumping off" place. The river crossing at St. Joseph was too crowded, so they went north to Amazonia/Savannah Landing, built rafts, and crossed the Missouri River there. Then they went west to the Big Blue River, then north to the Platte River. They passed Ft. Kearny in Nebraska and followed the North Platte River. They briefly followed the South Platte River to near present-day Brule, Nebraska, crossed back to the North Platte near present day Lewellen and followed it to Ft. Laramie, then went along the Sweetwater River to the summit of the Rockies at South Pass. The train split with the Meigs Co. men wanting to go at a faster pace. They continued west to the Big Sandy River, took Sublette's Cutoff into Idaho, near present day Montpelier, Idaho, headed north toward Ft. Hall, then went west near Soda Springs onto Hudspeth's Cutoff to the Raft River. They went to the headwaters of the Humboldt River in eastern Nevada. They followed the Humboldt River to its Sink, a large marsh where the river disappeared into the ground. They then crossed a sixty-mile desert to the Truckee and reached the beginning of the gold mining region. They followed what was considered the fastest, most direct route to the gold fields, based on guidebooks of the day and the experience of those who had gone before them. They took what they hoped was the fastest and most direct route because at the time many feared all the gold in California would be gone by the time they got there.

6. Why do you think the Buckeye Rovers went west? (2 points)

They wanted to get gold in California. Other sources show that Joshua Gardner of Meigs Co., OH went to the gold fields to recoup the money he used or was fined for helping runaway slaves to freedom over a period of 20 years, helped by his fellow Rovers John and Charles Giles. Other Rovers were young and wanted money to buy farms or start businesses or to help their families.

7. Did all the Rovers reach California? (2 points)

The article does not mention anyone dying on the trail. In fact all the Rovers did make it to California. Dr. Joseph Dickson died soon after reaching California when he dropped his pistol and accidentally shot himself, as mentioned in the article, which says he was the first of the Rovers to die. The only other Rover who died in California was Dr. Dickson's brother, Hugh Dickson, who was killed in an Indian attack a year after his brother died.

8. Did all the Rovers stay in California? If not, what did they do, and why? (7 points)

All the Rovers except the Dickson brothers, who died in California within a year of arriving there, returned to Ohio. The article says that Mr. Stedman spent 11 years in California. He returned to Ohio and went back with another group of gold seekers and remained for 11 years. He later returned to Ohio and ran a hotel in Athens, OH. William Logan returned to Ohio and was said to have gone back to California, though he may have ended up in Iowa. In truth, the only other Rover known to have returned to and stayed in California was Asa Condee.

Most of the Rovers returned to Ohio by the summer of 1852 or earlier. Most of the Meigs Co. men found gold the first year and went back to Ohio and lived out their lives there. The Athens Co. men returned in 3 stages, staying in the gold fields until they had made at least a modest amount of money. All returned to Ohio. Some lived out the rest of their lives in Ohio, others went back to California or to other parts of the West, and some bought farms in Iowa or went to Wisconsin. See bios of the Buckeye Rovers on the OCTA web site. (www.octa-trails.org People and Places). The Rovers returned to Ohio by ship from California via the Isthmus of Panama.

9. Who do you think was the source of the information given in the article? Tell why you think that person was the source. (1 point)

Judge Wilson is extensively quoted at the end of the article, so it seems likely he was the source of most of the information in it. Judge Wilson came back from the gold fields, fought in the Civil War and returned as a Lt. Colonel. He later became a probate judge, sheriff of Athens county and later mayor of the city of Athens, OH. He was also a marble manufacturer. He was a prominent citizen and frequently interviewed about his experiences.

Do you know when and where the article was written? How could you find out? (1 point)

The article was written by Arthur B. Harding and published in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* newspaper. It was written after Buckeye Rover Wilson became a judge in Athens Co., OH, since he is referred to as Judge Wilson in the article. According to The Centennial Atlas of Athens County, Ohio, 1905 (www.perrycountyohio.us/AthensAtlas015.htm) Judge William S. Wilson was a probate judge from 1881 to 1890. Students could check the county history in which the article was reprinted, contact the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, or ask a librarian to help them look up the date of the original article in a historic newspaper database.

10. Select one member of the Buckeye Rovers to research. Write their name below:

A reasonable amount of information can be found on every man mentioned in the article and there are brief biographies of each on the OCTA web site. Very little can be found on James Gardner and Alonzo Smith. Asa Condee and John Banks are known to have living descendants. No direct descendants: Elza Armstrong, Dr. Joseph Dickson, Dr. James C. Rathburn. (1 point)

Total _____ out of 50 points= _____%

"In Pursuit of a Dream" Study Guide

Two dozen teenagers and three teachers go back in time, dress as the pioneers did, and travel by wagon train on the Oregon Trail from Wyoming to Oregon. Along the way they meet a variety of other people, from topographical engineers mapping the West to gold seekers headed to California, and Indians wanting to trade. The interactions of the students in the film mirror the kinds of interactions experienced by the thousands of people who crossed the country in the mid 1800s on these same trails and helped create the nation as we know it today.

The kinds of hardships and problems encountered by the kids are the same as those encountered by the pioneers. Similar feelings were experienced by both groups—appreciation for the beauty of the landscape they were passing through, happiness and laughter as they danced and sang around the campfire, the sense of accomplishment they felt when they worked together to overcome a difficulty or solve a problem, joy and relief when they finally arrived in Oregon.

The teenagers learned about the history of the movement westward across the continent, they learned about the consequences of the decisions they made and the value of the bonds they formed with their fellow travelers, and they learned about the importance of preserving the history of the trails for future generations to learn from.

Vocabulary

Some terms that have specific meanings in the context of the Oregon-California trail experience:

- Emigrants
- Oxen
- Covered wagon
- Manifest destiny
- Jumping off
- Wagon train
- Swale
- Landmark
- Hand-carts
- Parting of the ways
- Cutoff
- Preservation
- Trail marking

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think some of the motivations were for people to make the long journey to Oregon, Utah, or California?
2. What were some of the decisions people might have to make along the way? What might be the consequences of making a poor decision?
3. Why did the pioneers walk most of the time rather than ride in the wagons? Who might ride in the wagons?

4. What were some of the hazards and hardships the emigrants encountered along the trail? How were these the same as those encountered by the teenagers in the film? How were they different?
5. What were some of the difficulties people might encounter in learning to know and work with each other to successfully make the long journey west?
6. How did the emigrants know what they would need to take with them to successfully make such a long journey?
7. What are some of the skills people would need to successfully make the long journey west across the country? What were some of the personal characteristics they would need? Did the kids in the film need these same skills and personal characteristics?
8. Who were some of the people the kids in the film met on their journey? What did they learn from these meetings? Do you think the emigrants met these same kinds of people on their journeys?
9. What significance did Independence Rock have for the emigrants?
10. How do you think children's and women's experiences on the trail were different from those of men? How were they alike?
11. How do you think the experiences of the kids in the film compared with those of kids traveling the trail in the mid 1800s? What was the same or similar? What was different?
12. What happened when the pioneers reached Oregon or Utah or California? Were they able to fulfill their dreams?
13. Why do you think it is important to preserve the historic trails today? What can young people do to help preserve historic trails?

For More Information

Oregon-California Trails Association <http://octa-trails.org> The main OCTA web site, with information, learning activities, lesson plans, resources, and links to other web sites to help teachers, students and others learn about western emigrant trails. Also has information about the organization and its chapters, membership, and contact information.

In Pursuit of a Dream <http://www.inpursuitofadream.org> Information about the making of the film, the cast and crew, daily diary entries by cast members, links to the film's Face Book and YouTube sites, and more.

Virtual Trail <http://octatrails.micromaps.com> Maps of the Oregon and California Trails. Major trail sites are identified. Click on a site to see a picture and find information about the site, driving directions, diary quotes, and things to see and do at the site.

Reading, Writing and Riding Along the Oregon-California Trails, by William E. Hill. Independence, Missouri: Oregon-California Trails Association, c. 1993 An educational activity book with good information and a wide variety of learning activities. Suitable for upper elementary and middle school students; activities can be readily adapted for younger or older learners.

Presentation Rubric

Based on the showcase presentation

_____ (25 points) Oral Presentation: Presentation has a logical sequence of events or ideas and maintains a clear focus; demonstrates understanding of the topic; includes relevant facts, details, examples, quotations, statistics, stories and anecdotes to clarify and explain information; uses appropriate visual materials; and draws from several sources and identifies sources used. Speaker speaks clearly and loudly enough for the audience to hear, uses correct grammar and appropriate language and looks at the audience.

_____ (5 points) Listening to Others' Presentations: Listener demonstrates active listening (asking focused questions, responding to cues, making visual contact, not making noise or distracting in any way from presentation).

_____ (30 points) Written Material: Includes facts and examples and presents important details in a logical order. Organizes information with a clear introduction, body and conclusion using cause & effect, compare & contrast, and including facts, details and examples to illustrate important ideas. Grade appropriate writing conventions (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, correct grammar, spacing, paragraphs, connecting phrases, correct verb tenses, subject-verb agreement) are used. Neat handwriting or typing.

_____ (30 points) Visual Material: Map, timeline, graphs, charts, photos, drawings, film clips, etc. Logically arranged, attractively displayed, relevant and appropriate to the topic, illustrates and further explains written material.

_____ (10 points) Bibliography citing sources of information and sources for visual materials such as maps, photos, graphs, film clips, etc. See attached sheet for citation format.

Total _____ out of 100 points= _____ %

Bibliography Format

Meaning of Bibliography: *A list of resource materials that are used or consulted in the preparation of a work or that are referred to in the work.*

Book

Author (Last Name, First Name). Name of Book. City of Publication: Publisher's Name, Copyright Date.

Example: Greenfield, Eloise. Rosa Parks. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1973.

Encyclopedia (print)

"Article Title". Name of Encyclopedia. Copyright Date.

Example: "Ants". World Book Encyclopedia. 1990.

World Wide Web

Author. "Title". Group Title. Institution. Date created or revised. Viewed (Date you saw it). <URL>

Example: "Bones". Newton's Apple. National Science Teacher's Association. 10 March 2000. Viewed 11 Feb. 2011. <<http://ericir.syr.edu/Projects/Newton/14/bones12.htm>>

Images or Video Clips

Title of image, Title of source, Date Created, digital image. Holder of image. Downloaded (date downloaded). <URL>

Example: Alexander Township, Athens Atlas, 1905, digital image. Perry County Historical Society. Downloaded 10 May 2010.
<<http://www.perrycountyohio.us/AthensAtlas/>>

Films

Name of film, producer. Release date. Where available.

In Pursuit of a Dream, Oregon-California Trails Association in cooperation with Boston Productions, Inc. 2011. Landmark Media Inc., 3450 Slade Run Drive, Falls Church, VA 22042, 1-800-342-4336, www.landmarkmedia.com.

Showcase Survey

Please rate the following aspects of the presentations you viewed. Rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest score.

Name of Presentation #1 _____

_____ Oral Presentation _____ Written Presentation _____ Visuals _____ Research

Comments:

Name of Presentation #2 _____

_____ Oral Presentation _____ Written Presentation _____ Visuals _____ Research

Comments:

Name of Presentation #3 _____

_____ Oral Presentation _____ Written Presentation _____ Visuals _____ Research

Comments:

Total= _____ out of 20 points= _____%

Fun Quiz on The Buckeye Rovers Match the fact with the Rover and the source or sources.

Rovers

Solomon Townsend
 Reuben Barnes
 Joshua Gardner
 James Gardner
 Charles Giles
 John S. Giles
 Seth Paine
 Dr. James C. Rathburn
 Alonzo Smith
 Lorenzo D. Stevens
 William S. Wilson
 Elza Armstrong
 John Banks
 Asa Condee
 Hugh Dickson/Dixon
 Dr. Joseph D. Dickson/Dixon
 Dennis Drake
 Elijah Ferrel
 Harvey L. Graham
 William Logan
 George W. Reeves
 James Shepherd/Shepard
 William S. Stedman

Facts

Stayed in CA for 11 years and came back to be a hotel keeper in Athens, OH.
 Was a colonel in the Civil War, a judge, a sherriff and a mayor.
 Gravestone tells he went overland to CA in 1849.
 Was a shoemaker and farmer, taught school, loved books, and kept a diary of the trip to CA.
 Was a hotel keeper in Wisconsin.
 Lived in Gallipolis, OH.
 Had no direct descendants. Comes from the same pioneer Ohio family as a very famous astronaut.
 Went back to CA after returning to Athens Co., OH. Maybe died a farmer in Iowa.

Got rich in the gold fields. Was worth \$60,000 when he died.
 Was the father of 22 children.
 Died on his way back west, heading for Pike's Peak.
 Went to CA for gold to make up for all the money he lost helping runaway slaves in Ohio.
 Moved to Iowa and lived near his brother and two other Rovers.
 His three sons were important people in the development of southern California. Two died within a few hours of each other of heart attacks.
 Killed by Indians. Buried next to his brother.
 Was a blacksmith. Died in Ashtabula, OH.

Made \$1000 lending money to gamblers. Died in Nicaragua.
 Was a shoemaker. Buried in Temple Cemetery, same cemetery as another of the Rovers.
 Was the son of a Revolutionary War veteran and 62 years old when he went to the gold fields.
 Buried in CA near Sutter's Mill, where the first gold in CA was found. Captain of the Buckeye Rovers' wagon train.
 Killed by Indians in the Black Hills.

After returning from CA he bought a farm in Iowa and married a woman named Louisa Caroline.
 Might have been born in England and ended up in Nelsonville, OH.

Sources

First Man: The Life of Neil A.

Armstrong
History of Western Ohio and Auglaize Co.

The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nrmelton/lacond.htm>

FindAGrave.com
www.xroyvision.com.au/drake/researchs/35.htm

1870 Census Wayne Co., IA
 U.S. Census 1870-1900 Wayne Co., IA
Woodland Daily Democrat, Oct. 6, 1930, p. 2, Woodland, CA

Modesto News-Herald, Modesto, CA, Oct. 6, 1930, p. 2
<http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/wilson9.html#0KS0VQ425>

World Connect
<http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com>
www.familysearch.org
 U.S. Census, Athens Co., OH 1850-1870

The Pioneer History of Meigs Co. by S. C. Larkin
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohmeigs/news_by_year/1881.html

The Athens Messenger, Aug. 23, 1953 p. 5

U.S. Census 1870 & 1880 Gallia Co., OH

U.S. Census 1860-1900 WI
www.ohiogravestones.org

Athens Messenger, Feb. 8, 1953 p. 8

FUN QUIZ ON THE BUCKEYE ROVERS

ANSWER KEY

Solomon Townsend--son of Rev. War veteran, age 62 when he went to CA--*Athens Messenger*, Feb. 8, 1953, p. 8

Reuben Barnes--shoemaker, buried in Temple Cemetery--FindAGrave.com (shoemaker is his occupation in 1870 Athens Co., OH census)

Joshua Gardner--went to CA for gold to make up for money he lost helping runaway slaves--[The Pioneer History of Meigs Co.](#)

James Gardner--made \$1000 lending money to gamblers, died in Nicaragua--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#)

Charles Giles--Died on his way back west, heading for Pike's Peak--World Connect

John S. Giles--was the father of 22 children--
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohmeigs/news_by_year/1881.html

Seth Paine--got rich in the gold fields, was worth \$60,000 when he died--*The Athens Messenger*, Aug. 23, 1953, p. 5

Dr. James C. Rathburn--lived in Gallipolis, OH--U.S. Census 1870 & 1880 Gallia Co., OH

Alonzo Smith--was a hotel keeper in WI--U.S. Census 1860-1900 WI

Lorenzo D. Stevens--gravestone tells he went overland to CA in 1849--
www.ohiogravestones.org

William S. Wilson--was a colonel in the Civil War, a judge, a sheriff, and a mayor--
<http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/wilson9.html#OKS0VQ425>

Elza Armstrong--had no direct descendants, comes from the same pioneer Ohio family as a very famous astronaut--[First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong](#) and [History of Western Ohio and Auglaize County](#)

John Banks--was a shoemaker and farmer, taught school, loved books, and kept a diary of the trip to CA--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#)

Asa Condee--his three sons were important people in the development of southern California--two died within a few hours of each other of heart attacks--
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~npmelton/lacond.htm>; *Woodland Daily Democrat*, Oct. 6, 1930, p. 2, Woodland, CA; *Modesto News-Herald*, Oct. 6, 1930, p. 2

Hugh Dickson/Dixon--killed by Indians, buried next to his brother--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#), [FindAGrave.com](#)

Dr. Joseph D. Dickson/Dixon--buried in California near Sutter's Mill, where the first gold in California was found; captain of the Buckeye Rovers' wagon train--[FindAGrave.com](#), [The Pioneer History of Meigs County](#)

Dennis Drake--was a blacksmith, died in Ashtabula, OH--www.xroyvision.com.au/drake/researchs/35.htm

Elijah Ferrel--moved to Iowa and lived near his brother and two other Rovers--1870 Census, Wayne Co., IA

Harvey L. Graham--killed by Indians in the Black Hills--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#)

William Logan--went back to CA after returning to Athens Co., OH; maybe died a farmer in Iowa--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#), U. S. Census 1870-1900 Wayne Co., IA

George W. Reeves--after returning from CA he bought a farm in Iowa and married a woman named Louisa Caroline--www.familysearch.org, [The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#)

James Shepherd/Shepard--might have been born in England and ended up in Nelsonville, OH--U.S. Census, Athens Co., OH 1850-1870

William S. Stedman--stayed in CA for 11 years and came back to be a hotel keeper in Athens, OH--[The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush](#), [The Pioneer History of Meigs County](#)

For Teachers

The purpose of this assignment is to spur students to use what they know and to discover for themselves how to research and how to present information. The teacher should be available to help and coach students throughout this process.

This same idea can work for groups of westward emigrants or gold seekers from any state or locality. State or county history books and contemporary newspapers often have accounts of local groups who "went west." Helping students make a personal connection to history through learning about people from their area or even their own family makes it much more likely that they will gain a deeper understanding of historical and social concepts and understand how history affects us today. Language arts, math, art, and science can be folded into these projects.

Students and their parents are used to finding out and doing "what it takes to get an A." Their focus is often on the goal of "getting an A" and sometimes the learning process is subverted. This lesson is not about "getting an A." This lesson is teacher-guided inquiry. The teacher has set the topic and task, but left it up to students to figure out how to accomplish the task. Their struggle to find and use resources to get information (research) will provide them with tools they can refine and use in a variety of situations to leverage their own learning. However, they will not master and own these skills if well-meaning teachers, parents, and librarians "steal their struggle" by spoon-feeding them information. Encourage students to read the instructions on web sites and to research "how to research." Have students write down questions on topics that come to mind as they are researching that they might want to research later when they move to the next step—student-led inquiry.

Teachers, parents, and librarians do need to give students hints, suggest possible sources of information, show them research techniques, and instruct them in using skills such as using an index, as part of guiding and coaching students as they research. However, teachers should not pre-package information, give students a list of sources, or tell them how and where to research. Wait for the student to ask questions, ask them questions to help them figure out for themselves some possible avenues to explore to find information. Let them experience a little bit of frustration and keep a running chart of ways they discover to get information and resources that they find. Everyone in the class should share these. If students start getting stuck, the teacher may then introduce some of the resources listed in the "Resources" section of this lesson.

Resources: A Film and a Further Learning Activity

In Pursuit of a Dream, by Boston Productions

Film produced by the Oregon-California Trails Association that introduces information about overland trails through the experiences of a group of 21st-century students and teachers traveling the Oregon Trail in covered wagons and living and traveling as the 19th-century pioneers did.

Discuss with the class how the film compares to the journey of the Buckeye Rovers. Use resources from the OCTA and *In Pursuit of a Dream* web sites, including film footage available for students to use, to help students in their research and in creating their presentations. Have students evaluate the usefulness of these resources and include that information in their final presentations. Send feedback to the OCTA and *In Pursuit of a Dream* web sites: www.octa-trails.org.

Resources: More Information About the Buckeye Rovers

The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush, re. and enl. Edition, by H. Lee Scamehorn; edited by Edwin P. Banks and Jamie Lytle-Webb. Ohio University Press, 1989.

Contemporary diaries and journals provide some of the best information about the overland experience. Two members of the Buckeye Rovers, John Banks and Elza Armstrong, kept diaries on their trip to California. This book weaves the two diaries together to tell story of the Buckeye Rovers' 1849 overland journey from Athens County, Ohio to the California gold fields. They endured numerous hardships and the threat of attacks from hostile Indians. When they reached California, they discovered that the rich deposits of gold were rare and that the work of extracting it was difficult. Most of the company returned to Ohio in late 1851 or early 1852 with modest fortunes.

Athens, Ohio: The Village Years, by Robert L. Daniel. Ohio University Press, 1997. Pages 113-114 contains an item on "Buckeye Rovers in California;" the book also includes brief information on Elza Armstrong.

"Forty-Niners Were Valorous Americans Before the Civil War," by Oliver Hartley, in *Athens Messenger* (newspaper), February 24, 1929, Sunday Magazine, page 15.

Tells the fate of some of the Buckeye Rovers. Available at <http://www.ancestry.com>. This site is available free through many public libraries, or available to individuals by subscription.

California Wagon Trail Lists, Volume I, by Louis J. Rasmussen. San Francisco Historic Records, 1994. The Buckeye Rovers are listed on p. 55.

Rasmussen spent many years combing state and local records, contemporary newspapers, and various other sources to compile this massive hodgepodge of information on people who went to California in the gold rush years of the mid 1800s.

Daily Life on the Nineteenth Century American Frontier, by Mary Ellen Jones. Greenwood Press, 1998. The Buckeye Rovers are mentioned on pages 92, 117, 118, 121, 122, 125 and 130.

Examines the daily lives of ordinary people who journeyed into the Trans-Mississippi West in search of land, fortune or a fresh start. Their daily life was rarely easy. Both on the journey and when they reached their destination they had to adapt to the land and to the Native Americans who already occupied the area. They had to modify every aspect of their lives—housing, food, transportation, education, establishment of social structures, and more.

Spreading the Word: A History of Information in the California Gold Rush, by Richard T. Stillman. University of Nebraska Press, 2006. Includes information about the Buckeye Rovers.

Examines the ways in which those who traveled west during the California gold rush obtained, assessed, and used information. In the beginning, most knew little about the area they would have to cross to get to California or about how to mine gold. Information was produced quickly, but much of it was unreliable and contradictory, and it changed frequently. As gold seekers reached California, recording their experiences in diaries, journals, and letters home to family and friends, they provided information to the next wave of gold seekers.

Resources: Where to Look for Background and Information on People

Contact your local historical and genealogical societies for resources and volunteers to help students with research techniques and resources. Public libraries will also have many useful resources.

Check these web sites:

Google Books: <http://books.google.com>.

Many county and regional history books, as well as family histories, are available. Once you find a book, you can search for nearby libraries that have it in their collections.

Ancestry.com: www.ancestry.com

Huge site, with many useful databases. This is a pay site, but may be available at no cost at your local public library.

HeritageQuestOnline

Not available to individuals, but is available at many public libraries; in some cases, you can access the site from your home computer through your local public library.

Newspaper Archive: www.newspaperarchive.com

This and other newspaper archive sites may be available at your public library; some may be accessible from your home computer with a library card number.

USGenWeb: <http://www.usgenweb.org>

Every county in the country has a GenWeb site that includes records for genealogy and local history purposes. Go to the GenWeb site, click on the state, then on the county. Content of the county sites varies.

Family Search: www.familysearch.org

Free web site of the LDS (Mormon) church. Vast amounts of material for genealogical research and records from localities all over the world. Online catalog lists records, books, and other materials, such as microfilmed birth, death, marriage, church, land, and probate records, that may be ordered and accessed at your local LDS Family History Center for a modest cost.

RootsWeb: <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com>

Go to "Advanced Search" and enter as much information as you know about the person you are researching. The information here is posted by amateur genealogists. Look for entries that have notes and sources. Sometimes extensive histories of the person, their family, and the area where they lived are given in the notes.

Please remind students that all information on the web or in books and magazines may not be correct. Discuss how to evaluate sources.

Tips for Teachers: Presentation Skills

For this assignment, as students are working on their projects for sharing what they have learned about their chosen member of the Buckeye Rovers, have them do trial presentations. Rather than critique individual projects, ask the class to say what they really liked about each presentation. Present some general pointers to the class as they refine their projects—how to cite sources, how to proofread, how to

present visual information in an attractive and interesting way, oral presentation skills. Give or show good examples.

When students give their next presentation, have each class member anonymously give 1-5 stars to the presentation, 5 being the highest. After all the presentations discuss what specifically makes a presentation worthy of 4 or 5 stars. Tabulate and average the number of stars and give the number of stars privately to each presenter. Have everyone, even those with 5 stars, give a final polish to their presentation. Encourage students to coach each other, review for each other and make suggestions to each other.

When each student feels that they have done their personal best, find a way to showcase their final product—displays at school, sending presentations to web sites to share with others, putting on the school or class web site, making a book, submitting to history contests, giving a performance—anything you can think of to showcase the work students have done. Public libraries, and sometimes even local shopping malls, will welcome displays for the general public to view.

Be sure that part of the presentation is describing how the research was done and how the presentation was polished. Give a reasonable time period for the initial research leading up to the trial presentation, another time period for further polishing leading up to the second presentation, and another time period for final polishing leading up to final presentation. The final product is not as important as the process of creating it, which is where the learning occurs.

Tips for Teachers: Examples of How to Coach Students

Ideally each student would read the passage several times and answer the questions individually and silently. Some students may prefer to collaborate with a small group. Still other students need and want teacher guided, whole group oral discussion. Give students a choice of which methods to use and which groups to participate in. Some may want to do all three. Encourage students to be self managing and praise behavior that is proactive.

When students are answering the discussion questions, have them read the article once silently. Then read aloud with the class, with students taking turns to read. Ask the students if there are any words, phrases, or references they don't understand. Discuss and ask them to speculate as to the meaning. Have some students look up things in the dictionary and read to the class. Discuss and put notes on large chart paper.

Discuss making inferences, which means figuring out information that is not directly stated, using what is in the reading passage and your own knowledge. For example, in answer to the question "Why was the group called the Buckeye Rovers?" Ohio students will know that the state nickname for natives is "Buckeyes." To rove means to travel around. So those traveling from Ohio would logically be called Buckeye Rovers. Discuss why groups give themselves names and why they choose particular names. Have students write down their speculations, to be checked later.

Question 4 asks why these particular individuals traveled together. The passage does not tell this information, but students can discuss possible reasons and note them down to be checked later. Students should write down why they have made certain speculations and inferences, citing whether information came from the passage or from their own knowledge.

The students are asked to list the members of the Buckeye Rovers. Discuss how the list should look and how it can be used to help with the assignment. Discuss leaving space after each name to put information about that person. Now have students go back through the reading individually, reading silently, and putting any details they learn from the passage next to the name of each person. Students should always

do tasks individually and silently first, so that they do not simply rely on getting answers from classmates or group discussion. Perhaps give some small reward for each correct answer that the student figures out for himself or herself. Then go over the names as a class and discuss what has been learned from the reading passage about each member of the Buckeye Rovers. Again, make inferences, and write down speculations to be checked later.

As students begin to check different references on the Buckeye Rovers, they will discover spelling variations in the names and differences in the descriptions of the journey. Some names may not appear on all lists. Details of the route taken by the Rovers may be different. Why? Students can speculate and then do further research to try to discover answers and resolve differences.

Questions 5-9 and the listed learning activities require students to begin to do their own research. Discuss some ways students might find information. Give them plenty of class time, access to computers, time in the school library, and textbooks to look at to begin their research. Have them pinpoint exactly what they need to find out. Have them write down some possible answers based on logical speculation and begin checking those. For example, did a certain person go to California and stay, or go and return; in either case did they find gold and get rich or not; if they found gold, what did they do with the money. If they returned to Ohio, what did they do after they came back and why; did they get married, have children, live long or not, own a business, etc. Did they move away from Athens or Meigs counties after returning from California. If they stayed in California, where did they live; did they move around or stay in one place; what did they do later in life. Do not feed these questions to students; rather, try to have the students generate these and other questions through their own thinking. Keep asking "What do you think...?" "Why do you think...?" Once students have generated some questions for themselves, they can begin to research to confirm or refute their speculations and answer their questions.

Good research and learning good research skills takes time. Teachers may feel they cannot spend so much time on one topic or lesson. However, this kind of lesson lends itself to integrating many skills and concepts from all subject areas. Draw on other areas of study. For example, one third grade class that watched *In Pursuit of a Dream* had just read a *Time For Kids* article about preserving historic monuments; they could relate this to scenes in the film about Independence Rock on the Oregon-California Trail and to OCTA's desire to "preserve" the trail. This class had also been learning about how to give feedback to each other in a positive and courteous way. They could use those skills when responding to each others' presentations.

Keep emphasizing to students and parents that the goal of the project is to learn skills that can be applied in many areas of school and life, to have the excitement and pride of being the author of your own learning success by stretching yourself and using everything you already know, and to learn how to find and use all kinds of resources to help yourself. These are life skills of the highest importance that we use very day and that make us successful in work, study and, relationships. The final product will be much more meaningful if it is the product of this struggle and learning process. Give students the gift of time to learn these important skills.

Tips for Teachers: Students Who Need Extra Coaching

For students who have learning difficulties, come from a different culture, or are English language learners, extra coaching may be needed. Use picture dictionaries and picture collections (see OCTA web site learning links, interactive map and learning resources) to explain unfamiliar terms and concepts. For students not familiar with American history and geography, go over maps and timelines to help provide a framework. Ask all students to compare the journey of the Buckeye Rovers with events and journeys in their own experience or their family's history. Ask students from other countries to teach you, a small group, or the class something about the history and geography of their country. Does their history include

any history of mass migrations, epic journeys, etc.?' Be open when students find their own connections. A third grade class in a Muslim school who watched *In Pursuit of a Dream* particularly liked the scenes in the film of dancing at Independence Rock. They found aspects of that dancing similar to dances from their families' countries in the Middle East. Since this kind of dancing was done when people were happy and celebrating, they wanted to know why the people in the film were dancing in this way. Discussion about what it meant to reach Independence Rock by the 4th of July helped them understand why the people in the film were happy and celebrating by dancing.