“America: The Story of Us – Heartland”

Video Guide

1. What was the biggest obstacle in the way of building the transcontinental railroad?
   The Sierra Nevada Mountains

2. Who were the two companies that built the railroad?
   Central Pacific and Union Pacific

3. How does the federal government pay for the railroad?
   They give federal land to the companies. For every mile of track laid, the government

4. Why were Chinese workers chosen to build the railroad?
   They were excellent workers and it was cheaper to bring Chinese workers across the ocean than other workers across the continent.

5. What happened on May 10, 1869?
   The tracks from the East and tracks from the West were connected at Promontory Point, Utah.

6. Where does the railroad trigger a mass migration to?
   The Great Plains

7. How much of America’s land is given away under the Homestead Act?
   10% of the United States

8. List several obstacles or challenges for settlers. (Get at least 5)
   Indian raids, bad weather, strong winds, tornadoes, lack of lumber for building material, boundary disputes with cattle ranchers

9. What happened to half the population of western Nebraska by 1892?
   Half of the population moved back East.

10. What happens to the Great Plains?
    They become the “Bread Basket” of America.

11. What is “green gold”?
    Lumber or trees

12. Why do so many people come from Norway to America?
    They were experienced loggers or lumberjacks

13. How many buffalo were roaming the Great Plains in the 1800’s?
    30 million
14. What new hunter arrives on the Great Plains?
   The white man came with his long distance rifle, many of whom were soldiers from the Civil War.

15. Why is there conflict between white people and Indians over the buffalo?
   Plains Indians depended on and worshipped the buffalo as part of their way of life. White hunters wiped them out for profit.

16. How did the horse change the Indian way of life?
   Indians became expert horsemen and were able to hunt and fight more effectively.

17. For what purpose did the cowboy develop?
   They drove cattle from the ranches of Texas to the “cowtowns” or rail hubs of Kansas.

18. Where did the Texas Longhorn come from?
   They were a product of the wild Spanish cattle and the English cattle who roamed wild.

19. What invention will threaten the cowboy’s way of life?
   Barbed wire

20. What happened to the open range?
   The open range was closed forever.

21. How long did the “hay day” of the cowboy on the open range last?
   20 years

22. Where do most Indians wind up living as settlers moved west?
   Reservations

23. What happened to Lt. Col. George Custer and his men?
   At Little Bighorn, MT, Custer and his 7th cavalry were slaughtered by Sioux and Cheyenne warriors in less than 3 hours.

24. What happened on December 29, 1890?
   The 7th Cavalry massacred 200 Sioux and Cheyenne men, women, and children.

25. How did the railroad change time?
   American railroad companies set up standard time and the US divided into 4 separate time zones.

26. How did Richard Sears change the way Americans shopped?
   He developed the mail order catalog, utilizing mail and railroads to ship goods.