



EDX.ASU11 Explaining Success and Failure in Settlement of the Great Plains

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · Calculators not allowed · about 65 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 15, 16 and 17. You are advised to spend about 65 minutes on this pack.

- 1** Give the year in which the Homestead Act was passed by the US Congress.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

- 2** Name the leader who guided the main Mormon migration to the Salt Lake Valley after 1846.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

- 3** State two features of the Mormon community organisation that helped make Salt Lake settlements successful.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

- 4** Give the name commonly used for the long overland route taken by many migrants heading to the West across the Plains.

(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)

- 5** Name the fencing innovation that allowed small farms to enclose land and contributed to the end of the open range cattle economy.

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

6 State one environmental challenge that homesteaders on the Plains faced.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 Give the phrase used for the large open grazing system used by cattle ranchers on the Plains in the decades after the Civil War.

(Total for Question 7 is 1 mark)

8 Give the years of the two extremely harsh winters that devastated cattle herds and helped end the open range system.

(Total for Question 8 is 1 mark)

9 State one technological improvement that helped settlers break the tough prairie sod and cultivate crops.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

10 Name a crop that settlers introduced or expanded on the Plains that was suited to drier conditions.

(Total for Question 10 is 1 mark)

11 State two reasons why the Homestead Act encouraged settlement of the Plains.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

12 State two ways in which barbed wire affected cattle ranching on the Plains.

(Total for Question 12 is 2 marks)

13 State two methods Mormons used to manage water for irrigation in the Salt Lake settlements.

(Total for Question 13 is 4 marks)

14 State two reasons why some homesteads failed despite the offer of free land under the Homestead Act.

(Total for Question 14 is 4 marks)

15 Explain two consequences of the collapse of the open range after the winters of 1886-87 and the spread of barbed wire.

(Total for Question 15 is 8 marks)

16 Write a narrative account analysing how and why efforts to settle different parts of the Great Plains proved more successful in some cases than others between c1835 and c1895.

You may use the following in your answer:

- Mormon irrigation and cooperative settlement at Salt Lake City
- the Homestead Act of 1862 and the experience of homesteaders

You should also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 16 is 8 marks)

17 Explain two of the following:

- (a) the importance of irrigation and cooperative organisation for the success of Mormon settlements in the Salt Lake Valley
- (b) the importance of the Homestead Act of 1862 for encouraging settlement of the Great Plains
- (c) the importance of environmental factors, such as drought and harsh winters, in causing the failure of some Plains settlements

You must answer on TWO parts.

(Total for Question 17 is 16 marks)

Mark scheme · EDX.ASU11 Explaining Success and Failure in Settlement of the Great Plains

Question 1

- **B1** 1862
- **Answer:** 1862

Question 2

- **B1** Brigham Young
- **Answer:** Brigham Young

Question 3

- **B1** cooperative labour for building irrigation canals and farms
- **B1** central leadership that organised land allocation and migration
- **Answer:** Cooperative labour to build and maintain irrigation, and central leadership organising land and migration.

Question 4

- **B1** the Oregon Trail
- **Answer:** The Oregon Trail

Question 5

- **B1** barbed wire
- **Answer:** Barbed wire

Question 6

- **B1** droughts that reduced crop yields
- **B1** supporting detail, e.g. poor harvests and livestock losses during dry years
- **Answer:** Droughts that reduced crop yields, causing poor harvests and livestock losses.

Question 7

- **B1** the open range
- **Answer:** The open range

Question 8

- **B1** 1886-87
- **Answer:** 1886-87

Question 9

- **B1** the steel plough (sodbuster)
- **B1** supporting detail, e.g. it was stronger than wooden or iron-tipped ploughs and could cut through dense prairie roots
- **Answer:** The steel plough, which could cut through tough prairie sod more effectively than earlier ploughs.

Question 10

- **B1** winter wheat
- **Answer:** Winter wheat

Question 11

- **B1** it offered free or very cheap land (typically 160 acres) to claimants
- **B1** it allowed many ordinary citizens, including immigrants, to own land and settle
- **Answer:** It offered free or very cheap land and allowed ordinary citizens and immigrants to claim land and become farmers.

Question 12

- **B1** it allowed farmers to enclose fields and stop cattle from roaming freely
- **B1** it cut the open range into smaller fenced parcels, reducing the ability of ranchers to drive large herds long distances
- **Answer: It let farmers enclose land so cattle could not roam freely, and it broke up the open range, reducing long cattle drives.**

Question 13

- **B2** dug and maintained communal canals and ditches to divert mountain streams to fields
- **B2** organised water sharing through local councils so each farm received a measured turn of water
- **Answer: They dug communal canals and ditches to divert mountain streams, and organised water sharing through local councils so each farm had a turn of irrigation.**

Question 14

- **B2** severe weather, including drought and dust storms, caused crop failure and soil exhaustion
- **B2** pests and soil conditions such as insect outbreaks and the difficulty of breaking sod made farming unprofitable for some settlers
- **Answer: Severe weather like droughts and dust storms caused crop failure, and pests plus tough sod and poor soils made farming unprofitable for many homesteads.**

Question 15

- **Level 1** (1-2): Identifies one or two simple consequences of the open range collapse with little supporting detail.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Identifies and begins to explain one consequence, supported by some accurate detail.
- **Level 3** (5-6): Explains two consequences, supported by accurate and relevant detail and some analysis of how they followed from the collapse.
- **Level 4** (7-8): Explains two consequences in a well-developed way, showing clear links between the environmental and economic causes and the outcomes, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Many ranchers suffered catastrophic stock losses in 1886-87, forcing the sale of land or a shift from large ranching to smaller, fenced farms, so the scale and organisation of the cattle business changed.
 - Barbed wire and enclosure reduced the need for long cattle drives and for shared grazing on public land, so the cattle trade became more localised and reliant on fenced pastures and feed, changing transport and market arrangements.
 - The collapse encouraged investment in mixed farming and hay production to feed cattle in winter, so some parts of the Plains diversified economically rather than depending solely on open range beef production.
 - Conflict increased between ranchers who wanted open grazing and farmers who fenced land, leading to legal disputes and sometimes violence before courts and state laws settled property rights in favour of private enclosure.

Question 16

- **Level 1** (1-2): Simple, generalised statements about success and failure with little organisation or sense of change over time.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Some accurate knowledge organised into a basic sequence, with limited analysis of causes and effects.
- **Level 3** (5-6): A coherent narrative that explains changes over time and analyses reasons for success and failure, supported by accurate detail.
- **Level 4** (7-8): A well-organised, analytical narrative that links events and developments across the period, explaining why particular settlements succeeded or failed with precise and accurate supporting detail.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Mormon settlements succeeded because central leadership under Brigham Young organised migration, land division and cooperative labour to build canals for irrigation, enabling agriculture in an arid region where isolated homesteads often failed.
 - The Homestead Act encouraged many families to settle by granting land, but success depended on local conditions: homesteads near reliable water, on good soils, or where settlers used adapted crops and improved ploughs had better chances than those facing drought, insects or unbroken sod.
 - Environmental shocks, such as drought and insect infestations, and the difficulty of ploughing prairie sod, could turn a promising homestead into failure within a few seasons, whereas organised communities that shared resources and knowledge could withstand setbacks better.
 - The cattle boom provides contrast: the open range allowed rapid expansion of the industry but left ranchers vulnerable to extreme weather; after the winters of 1886-87 and the adoption of barbed wire the industry restructured, showing how both technology and weather shaped which settlement strategies were viable.

Question 17

- **Level 1** (1-4): For each part answered: identifies a general point of importance with little or no supporting detail or explanation.
- **Level 2** (5-8): For each part answered: begins to explain importance, supported by some accurate detail.
- **Level 3** (9-12): For each part answered: explains importance clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail, with some analysis of consequences.
- **Level 4** (13-16): For each part answered: explains importance in a well-developed, analytical way, fully supported by precise and accurate detail, showing clearly why the factor mattered for the outcome named.
- **Indicative content:**
 - (a) Irrigation and cooperative organisation mattered because the Salt Lake Valley was arid; canals and shared labour turned otherwise marginal land into productive farmland and allowed tightly planned settlements to survive and grow.
 - (a) Cooperative practices also meant resources and labour could be pooled in bad years, enabling communal repair of irrigation channels and mutual support, which single homesteads often lacked.
 - (b) The Homestead Act mattered because it provided legal access to land for ordinary farmers and immigrants, creating an incentive to migrate and attempt permanent settlement rather than temporary grazing or mining.
 - (b) However the Act's 160 acre allotments were sometimes too small in drier regions, so its importance varied: where rainfall was adequate it helped establish family farms, but in marginal land the grant did not guarantee success.
 - (c) Environmental factors mattered because droughts, dust storms, insect outbreaks and extremely harsh winters could destroy crops and livestock quickly, turning new settlements into failed claims and forcing abandonment.
 - (c) Environmental impact interacted with technology and organisation: settlements with irrigation, adapted crops, or cooperative institutions were more able to survive environmental stress than isolated homesteads dependent on a single season's crop.