

Survival Challenge

Would you Make it?

Grade: Elementary/Middle School

Purpose/Objective: Students will understand that life along the trail west was hard and will understand what essential supplies the pioneers needed as they headed west.

Lesson Plan:

1. Introduction (Discussion/Journal): Ask the students the following questions: What are your most valuable or prized possessions? What 10 things would you take from your house if you only had 1 minute before a disaster struck? What things would you consider most essential from your house? What things would you need to survive and get back on your feet?
2. Explain that there were many dangers along the trail as pioneers moved west. Often disaster would strike and only the most essential supplies would be saved.
3. Activity 1: Have students complete the Survival Challenge Worksheet.

Standards: SS 4.1.2, 7.2.3, 8.7.1

Use in Classroom: Social Studies

Survival Challenge

Name: _____ Date: _____

Total Score: _____

Directions: Read the story, complete the Survival Challenge, and see if you survive the trek west.

What was it like coming across the plains? Would you be able to make it from Iowa to Salt Lake City then to Cache Valley? Imagine starting in Council Bluffs, Iowa with a wagon train and coming 2,000 miles to Utah. Your wagon is filled with supplies for the trip and your new home. Your oxen are strong and the journey begins. Everyone knows it is going to be hard, but you are excited to be heading West.

The trip has been long and treacherous. The miles have been hard on your bare swollen feet and the rationed food is not satisfying your hunger as you walk each day. But all seems to be going fairly well until one day when the worst happens! A rainstorm from the night before has caused the small stream from the day before to become a raging river. The river has to be crossed for you to get to Utah. The wagon train can't wait for the river to go down because of the fast approaching fall season. Your oxen lumber into the river and the water becomes deeper and deeper as you are crossing. The oxen stop pulling and you realize that the wagon is stuck in the sand. There is no way to get the wagon out and the water is starting to push the wagon over. You have 1 minute to get ten things out of the wagon before it is pulled down the river. You will need enough supplies to make it the rest of the way to Utah, and enough supplies to make it through the first winter.

What will you take for your supplies?

Circle the items below that you would save from your wagon:

Water Barrel	Needle & Thread	Dipper
Butter Churn	Cornmeal	Axe
Cooking Pots	Rifle	Flint & Steel
Bedding	Soap	Clothing
Candle Mold	Shovel	Strong Wagon Box
Cayenne Pepper	Cows/Sheep/Oxen	Dried Peaches
Dried apples	Lard	Salt
Tin cups	Grinder	Rope
Sugar	Seeds	Knife
Flour	Hammer	Plates
Spices	Tent	Spoon
Bible	Scythe	
Large Skillet	Bacon or dried Meat	
Forks	Pulley	
Fishhooks	Plow	

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Educational Outreach Program

Pioneer Life
Pre/Post Visit Activities



Did You Survive?

Okay you've tried the test. Let's find out if you survived this disaster. Listed below are the ten correct answers and why. For each correct answer give yourself a score of 10, you need 75 to survive.

1. **Bedding**-You will need to be able to protect yourself from the cold temperatures and there is nowhere to buy new blankets.
2. **Flint & Steel**-You will have to be able to light a fire to warm your house and cook your food.
3. **Flour**-Flour is an essential part of your family's diet through bread. You won't be able to get any more flour until next year.
4. **Axe**-Somehow you have to be able to cut wood for your new home and fire. The head of the axe can also be used as a hammer.
5. **Knife**-You will need to cut food, clean fish, and skin animals. Knives also have many other uses.
6. **Needle & Thread**-This will be important for mending clothes as you won't be able to get new ones for quite a while. Also if someone gets cut badly, the needle and thread will be needed for stitches.
7. **Rifle**-You will need a gun to shoot wild animals for food, as well as protecting yourself and your family.
8. **Livestock**- If you have your livestock with you, you will have a supply of food throughout the year.
9. **Cooking pots**-You will need something to cook in and you will also be able to use the cooking pots for carrying water.
10. **Extra Clothing** – It's summer now, but it's going to be getting a lot colder so you'll need to have warm clothes. Also, if something happens to your clothes and they get damaged or wet you will need some extra clothes.