

Information writers think about how the geography of the place impacted how events unfolded.

Phrases to help situate places geographically:

Further north...

South of...

Closest to...

East of...

West of...

A great distance from...

By the...

Located in or near...

Possible geographical revisions:

- Where was the route?
- Where did important events occur?
- Which physical features had an impact?
- What did the location mean for the climate and weather?
- What distances were involved?

The Oregon Trail

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Many people living in the eastern United States wanted to have a better life for themselves and their children. So, they traveled in wagons on trails into the western states to get land. One famous trail they traveled was called the Oregon Trail. It covered 2,000 miles and started in Independence, Missouri. From there it followed the Platte River westwards, crossing the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada Mountains, then crossed Wyoming and ended in Oregon City in the Willamette Valley in Oregon.

Making the long journey along the Oregon Trail was fraught with dangers and hardships for the early settlers and pioneers. There were extreme weather conditions such as hailstorms, lightning and grassfires. Travelers also had to cross swollen rivers where deep, swift water led to the loss of life of settlers and their animals, as well as the loss of supplies, goods and equipment.