

# Trails to the Past

Routes have changed over time. In the 1800s, people used trails to head west. They found many adventures along the Oregon Trail or the California Trail. The Oregon Trail saw its heaviest use in the 1840s and 1850s. By 1870, the railroad stretched from coast to coast. Pioneers no longer used the Oregon Trail. By that time, though, thousands of Americans had traveled in wagon trains along the Oregon Trail.

Look at the map of the Oregon Trail. Notice the small map in the upper right corner of the map. This is called an **inset map**. It shows the part of the country that the larger map tells about.



**Directions** Study the map. Use the map to answer the questions.

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| <p><b>1.</b> About how long was the Oregon Trail?</p> <p>_____</p>                             | <p><b>3.</b> Which river did the Oregon Trail follow east of the Rocky Mountains?</p> <p>_____</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b> In which cities did the Oregon Trail begin and end?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Which river did the Oregon Trail follow west of the Rocky Mountains?</p> <p>_____</p> |

**Activity**

Imagine that you and your family traveled west on the Oregon Trail. What kinds of problems or adventures would you have along the way? Write a short story about what might happen to you on the trip. Draw a picture of your wagon train.

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## Answer Key

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1. about 1,800 miles
2. Independence, Missouri, to Portland, Oregon Territory
3. North Platte River
4. Snake River

