Three Truths and a Lie 3

1. Problems faced by homesteaders:
2. Some parts of the Plains were more fertile than others so it was easier to grow things there
3. Due to drought, 11,000 homesteads were repossessed in Kansas between 1889 and 1893
4. Homesteaders who found it difficult to adapt found it most difficult to survive
5. There were regular plagues of flying ants which decimated crops in the 1870s. Sometimes the columns of them covered nearly 40,000 square kilometres.
6. More problems faced by homesteaders:
7. Sodhouses were very leaky when it rained and infested with mice and insects
8. Illness, particularly the Black Death, was very common among homesteaders; rats in the New Mexican desert still carry the plague germ.
9. There was very little wood for building houses or to burn as fuel.
10. Most sodhouses had real glass windows fitted into their walls.
11. Making a success of a homestead:
12. New machinery like threshers and reapers were useless on the Plains because they didn’t have the wood to fuel them, so they just worked harder
13. Homesteader women used to keep chickens and plant fruits and vegetables to supplement the crops that were grown
14. Homesteader women used to treat snakebites by applying warm manure to the bite
15. Most homesteaders only had one set of clothes. Some had a second set for Sunday best.
16. Reasons for movement to the West coast:
17. Population explosion in the east: the population of Missouri went from 14,000 in 1830 to 353,000 in 1840.
18. The 1840 Oregon Pre-emption bill said that farmers who squatted on a piece of land, built a house and planted trees could buy the land at a minimum price
19. The 1837 financial crisis meant wages were cut by 40%
20. One propaganda story about Oregon claimed that the pigs ran around with knives and forks sticking in them so that you could cut a slice off whenever you were hungry
21. Reasons for movement to the Plains:
22. The abolition of slavery: in 1869, around 40,000 freed slaves moved to the Plains. This was the peak of migration.
23. Farmers from the eastern states and Scandinavia were after all the empty farmland available
24. The Indians were cleared from the Plains which enabled more settlement by white farmers
25. The railroads sold off the land bordering their tracks very cheaply to farmers
26. US Government vs Plains Indians:
27. The Total War strategy was first used in the Civil War and meant destroying all the Indians’ resources so they couldn’t survive
28. The US Army fought winter campaigns against Indians when they most needed to conserve food and energy
29. During the Civil War, the regular army on the Plains was replaced by volunteers who were undisciplined and made relations with the Plains Indians worse
30. The army captured Indians and forced them to become scouts to help them wage war on the other Indians
31. US Government vs Plains Indians 2:
32. The term **buffalo soldier** comes from the black regiments who fought the Indians- their curly hair reminded the Sioux of buffalo
33. The army build foughts across the Plains from which to launch attacks on the Indians
34. By 1882, 5000 hunters and skinners were chasing the buffalo herd in the northern states
35. Although the government tried to pass a law protecting the buffalo in 1874, the President didn’t sign it
36. Little Crow’s War:
37. The Santee Sioux were starving because cutworms devastated their corn crops in 1861
38. They were so desperate that they became violent and attacked the Indian Agency, killing 20 men
39. This violence escalated and rogue bands of young Sioux killed more than 700 settlers
40. 2000 Santee Sioux were captured or surrendered, of whom 303 were executed
41. Red Cloud’s War:
42. The war was caused when the discovery of new gold mining areas led settlers onto the new Bozeman Trail, which crossed Sioux lands, breaking the 1851 Fort Laramie treaty
43. The government tried to negotiate with Red Cloud but Red Cloud decided to declare war instead
44. Red Cloud held Fort Kearney under siege and prevented any more settlers from using the Bozeman Trail
45. The government eventually realised they couldn’t win and so signed a second Fort Laramie treaty which set up the Great Sioux Reservation
46. The Journey West
47. Travellers to California had to cross an 80km desert at the end of the journey
48. Most of the Oregon Trail followed the Mississippi River
49. Many emigrants to Oregon paid Indians to paddle their gear down the Snake River at the end of the journey
50. If you go to Independence Rock in the Rockies today, you can still see graffiti from the homesteaders