

Research & Build A Covered Wagon

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60 pts. Possible

In this assignment, you will research the Conestoga wagon and its use and role in America's westward expansion. You will take notes on relevant facts from your research (to turn in with the project). Once you have completed your research, you will construct a small-scale (12 inches long or less) replica of a Conestoga wagon from scrap materials you have around the house (i.e. card board, peanut butter jar lids, paper towel tubes, construction paper, scrap wood, hangers, etc.). You may choose to purchase construction materials, but doing so is not a requirement of this project, and turning in a more impressive looking model due to purchased materials should not be expected to increase your project grade. Once your model wagon is constructed, use a felt tipped marker/pen or other method of marking at least 6 key components of the Conestoga wagon with a #1 - #6. Then provide a corresponding report on your research, using the numbered model parts to show your knowledge of the wagon and it's use and role in America's westward expansion. Your report format may simply be one or more paragraphs for each number.

Examples: Your wagon might have the wheel labeled #1, the canvas top labeled #2, the hitch labeled #3, the wagon body labeled #4, etc. Then in your research report, you simply write a paragraph or more for each number, briefly explaining the part and then using it as a starting point to tell more information from your research about its use or impact. For the wheel, you might explain why the back wheels were bigger than the front, tell how young pioneers were sometimes injured or killed when walking too close to wheels or tell how and why wheels were prone to breaking, and the possible consequences of the delay it caused. You might also use the wheel to discuss the mileage and terrain on the major trails. For the canvas, you might discuss how the wagon got the nickname "prairie schooner." For the hitch, you might discuss the weight that had to be pulled and the animals that were commonly used and why. For the body of the wagon, you might explain how the body was made water tight with tar so it could be floated down river like a raft. These are a few examples of the many ways you can use numbered locations on the model to correlate to paragraphs on your report in a way that explains both the Conestoga wagon and the larger picture of westward expansion as well.

Ultimately, your report should be at least one thorough and informative paragraph for each numbered location on the model. You must provide all three elements (research, model, report) of this project in order to get ANY points for it.

Grading Rubric

Model: Professional appearance (accurate design, careful construction, creative, etc.):	0-15 pts. _____
Research: Notes and other evidence show evidence of thorough topic research:	0-10 pts. _____
Report: Relevant and accurate information representing both the wagon and the larger theme of its role in the westward expansion of the U.S.:	0-15 pts. _____
Presentation: Presentation to your group demonstrates your knowledge of the research:	0-10 pts. _____

Total Score _____ **/50**