

PASSAGE 2 – Questions 11-20

In the early 1800s, to reach the **jump-off point** for the West, a family from the East of the United States could either buy steamboat passage to Missouri for themselves, their wagons, and their livestock or - as happened more often- simply pile everything into a wagon, hitch up a team, and begin their overland trek right in their front yard.

Along the macadamized roads and turnpikes east of the Missouri River, travel was comparatively fast, camping easy, and supplies plentiful. Then, in one river town or another, the **neophyte** emigrants would pause to lay in provisions. For outfitting purposes, the town of Independence had been **preeminent** ever since 1827, but the rising

momentum of pioneer emigration had produced some rival jump-off points. Westport and Fort Leavenworth flourished a few miles upriver. St. Joseph had sprung up 55 miles to the northwest; in fact, emigrants who went to Missouri by riverboat could save four days on the trail by staying on the paddle-wheelers to St. Joe before **striking** overland.

At whatever jump-off point they chose, the emigrants studied guidebooks and directions, asked questions of others as green as themselves, and made their final decisions about outfitting. They had various, sometimes conflicting, options. For example, either pack animals or two-wheel carts or wagons could be used for the overland crossing. A family man usually chose the wagon. It was the costliest and slowest of the three, but it provided space and shelter for children and for a wife who likely as not was pregnant. Everybody knew that a top-heavy covered wagon might blow over in a prairie wind or be overturned by mountain rocks, that it might mire in river mud or sink to its hubs in desert sand - but maybe if those things happened on this trip, they would happen to someone else. Anyway, most pioneers, with their farm background, were used to wagons.

11. What is the topic of this passage?

- A. Important river towns
- B. Getting started on the trip west
- C. The advantages of traveling by wagon
- D. Choosing a point of departure

12. All of the following can be inferred from the passage about travel east of the Missouri EXCEPT that it _____.

- A. was faster than in the West
- B. was easier than in the West
- C. took place on good roads
- D. was usually by steamboat

13. The phrase "jump-off point" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. a bridge across a river
- B. a point of departure
- C. a gathering place
- D. a trading post

14. Which of the cities that served as a jump-off point can be inferred from the passage to be farthest west?

- A. Independence
- B. St. Joseph
- C. Westport
- D. Fort Leavenworth

15. The word "preeminent" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. oldest
- B. superior
- C. most easily reached
- D. closest

16. The author implies in the passage that the early emigrants _____.

- A. knew a lot about travel
- B. were well stocked with provisions when they left their homes
- C. left from the same place in Missouri
- D. preferred wagon travel to other types of travel

17. The word "neophyte" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. eager
- B. courageous
- C. prosperous
- D. inexperienced

18. All of the following were mentioned in the passage as options for modes of transportation from the Missouri River to the West EXCEPT _____.

- A. a wagon
- B. a riverboat
- C. a pack animal
- D. a two-wheel cart

19. The word "striking" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. hitting
- B. orienting
- C. departing
- D. marking

20. All of the following features of the covered wagon made it unattractive to the emigrants EXCEPT _____.

- A. speed at which it could travel
- B. its bulk
- C. its familiarity and size
- D. its cost