

The Transcontinental Railroad

Meet the History Kids! They love history and teaching history to other kids. Today they want to teach you about the Transcontinental Railroad.

Before the railroad, it would take months to move people or supplies across the United States.

A merchant named Asa Whitney worked hard to get Congress to pass an act to pay for a railroad but it did not happen.

In the 1860's, an engineer named Theodore Judah started to lobby Congress. He found a path through the Sierra Nevada Mountains for the railroad.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Bill that Congress passed. This act approved building the railroad and paid for it.

The Transcontinental Railroad was built from 1863 to 1869.

There would be two main routes. The Central Pacific Railroad would start in California.

The Union Pacific Railroad would start in the Midwest. Where would the two routes meet?

On May 10, 1869, the two railroads met in Promontory Summit, Utah.

Here is the famous photo of driving the last spike.

Show me the numbers! What are some of the numbers related to the railroad?

How many years did it take to build?

The Transcontinental Railroad took 6 years to build.

What was the most track laid in one day?

10 miles of track was laid in one day.

How many miles did the First Transcontinental Railroad cover?

When the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific met in 1869, they covered 1,776 miles total.

How much did it cost to ride the railroad?

If you traveled across the whole railroad, it would cost \$136 for a first class sleep car, \$110 for second class, and \$65 for a third or "emigrant" class bench.

Before the Transcontinental Railroad was built, it would cost almost \$1,000 dollars to travel across the country.

The Transcontinental Railroad changed transportation in America.
