

OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

Andrew J. Russell and the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad Curriculum



The museum of us.

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LESSON THREE

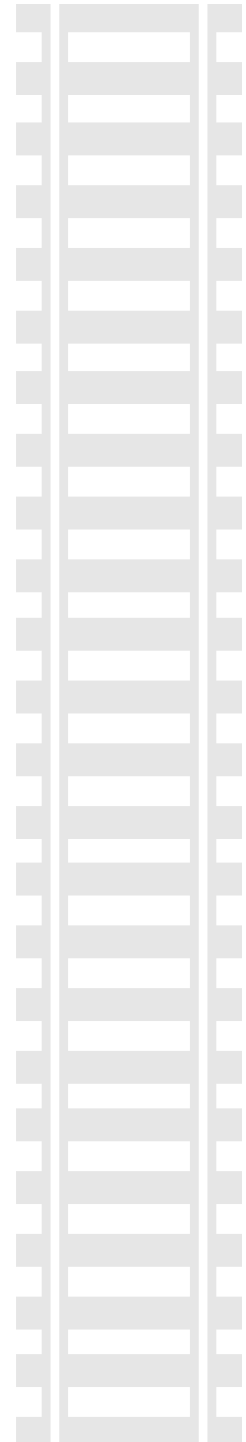
Photographs as Evidence

A Case Study: Andrew J. Russell and the American West

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LESSON FOUR

The Impact of the Transcontinental Railroad Document
Based Question (DBQ)



GENERAL NOTE TO TEACHERS

AUDIENCE

These four lessons were created for 8th grade students but could be adapted for use in 11th grade classrooms as well. They are meant for students in a history class who may be learning about the Transcontinental Railroad.

NOTES ON LESSONS

Each lesson incorporates photographs by Andrew J. Russell, all of which can be examined more closely on Oakland Museum of California's Picture This website, under "Early Statehood: 1850-1880s: Railroads Tie California to the Rest of the Nation." While the four could be taught in sequence, they were designed as stand-alone lessons.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/timeline/early-statehood-1850-1880s/railroads-tie-california-rest-nation/info>

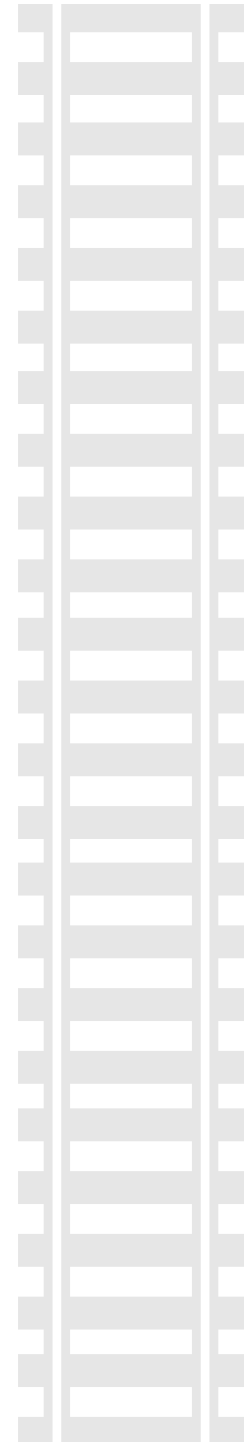
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information on each photograph in the curriculum or to view the Oakland Museum of California's entire Andrew J. Russell collection, please visit the Andrew J. Russell Collection tab on our Collections website.

<http://collections.museumca.org/?q=category/2011-schema/history/art/andrew-j-russell>



This curriculum was made possible by the generous support of the National Endowment for the Arts.



GENERAL NOTE TO TEACHERS, CONT...

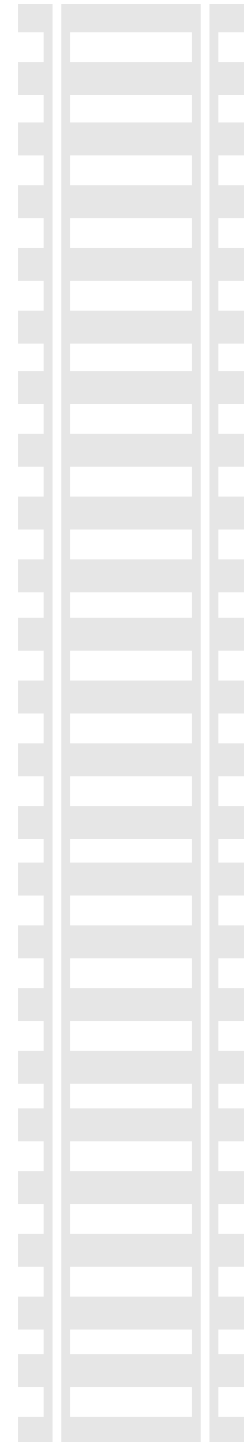
WHAT IS MISSING

These lessons are built around the photographs in The Andrew J. Russell Collection at the Oakland Museum of California. Russell's photographs document the building of the Union Pacific from Omaha to Promontory Point only; therefore, there are no lessons about the construction of the railroad from California to meet the Union Pacific, and the narrative of the Central Pacific Railroad Company building the railroad through the Sierra Mountains and the use of Chinese labor is not featured in the curriculum. A teacher seeking to cover this part of the story can find excellent resources from the Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum and American Experience: Transcontinental Railroad PBS series. <http://cpr.org/Museum/index.html>

INTERPRETING PHOTOGRAPHS

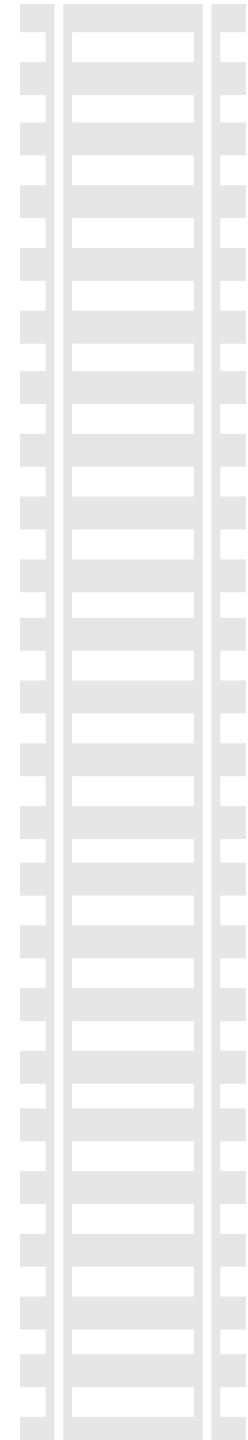
There are many resources available that provide strategies for using photographs as evidence. For instance:

1. The Smithsonian produced a guide entitled "Engaging Students with Primary Sources," which presents strengths and weaknesses of primary sources like photographs. It also includes tips for reading and finding photographs. <http://historyexplorer.si.edu/PrimarySources.pdf>
2. Thinking through the Oakland Unified School District's "The 6 W's of Sourcing" can be a useful exercise to get students in the mindset of photo analysis. (The 6 W's Analysis Chart is available on the next page.)
3. "Take a good look!" is an activity created by Oakland Museum of California and made available on the Picture This website. The page includes more than 30 questions that could be used to help students start to think critically about works of art – their subject, composition, and purpose. <https://www.museumca.org/picturethis/looking-telling-take-good-look>



THE 6 W'S OF SOURCING-DOCUMENT ANALYSIS CHART

<u>Who</u> created the source? (And what do you know about this person)	<u>What</u> type of document? (Book, letter, speech, photo, map, graph, chart?)
<u>When</u> was this document created? (And what was happening during this time?)	<u>Where</u> was this document created? (And what do you know about this place?)
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE Text: What is the document talking about? Image: What do you see?	
<u>Who</u> is the audience? (One person? A whole nation? A specific group?)	
<u>Why</u> was this document created? (What is its purpose? What could motivate its author?)	
ANALYSIS: Explain how the document supports an argument.	



LESSON ONE

Introduction to the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad

Duration: up to one class period

ORGANIZING QUESTION

Can you predict the arguments people had over where the Transcontinental Railroad was built?

OBJECTIVES

To use prediction as a hook to engage students in the topic of the Transcontinental Railroad.

CA HISTORY CONTENT STANDARDS

8.8.2.2. Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears," settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. CCSS (Anchor Reading Standard): Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

PART ONE

In partners, have students examine a topographical map of the United States. (See attached map.) Tell them that they live in the 1850s, and people on both the East Coast and West Coast want to build a railroad that connects the two coasts together. Ask each pair to pick a route that their railroad will take. Ask students to explain why they choose the route they did and also to predict, based on the topographical map, any obstacles they foresee in the building of their railroad. Finally, ask the pairs to predict how the people who already lived in the areas where the railroad was built might feel about the advent of the Transcontinental Railroad. The people to be considered should include the Native American tribes and people who lived in towns like Salt Lake City as well as some smaller communities.

Explain to students that different Americans wanted the Railroad to be built in different places. Many people thought the building of the Railroad would help the communities around it by bringing trade, so they had a vested interest in where the Railroad was to be built. Southerners wanted it to go through the South. The senator from Illinois, Stephen Douglas, wanted it to go through his state. Other Northerners wanted it to start in other northern areas. Because

LESSON ONE

Introduction to the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad

Duration: up to one class period

northern and southern states weren't able to agree, the decision to build the Railroad only happened after the South seceded from the Union during the Civil War. The War left the northern states free to determine the route.

PART TWO

Show students four photographs from The Russell Collection (“Wind Mill, Laramie City,” “Smith’s Rock, Green River Valley,” “Promontory Trestle, Engine on Trestle West No. 3,” and “Tunnel No. 3, Weber with Engine”). Ask students, “Did your predictions about what obstacles railroad builders faced seem accurate? What clues in the photographs either support or contradict your guesses?”

Photographs listed above are located below after the U.S. map.

Possible topographical map available on Graphatlas.com:

http://www.graphatlas.com/united_states_map_physical_land_elevation_water_depth.png





Russell, Andrew J. *Wind Mill, Laramie City*. Laramie, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/wind-mill-laramie-city>



Russell, Andrew J. *Smith's Rock, Green River Valley*. Green River, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/smiths-rock-green-river-valley>



Russell, Andrew J. *Promontory Trestle, Engine on Trestle West No. 3*. Promontory, UT. nd. Glass lantern slide. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/promontory-trestle-engine-trestle-west-no-3>



Russell, Andrew J. *Tunnel No. 3, Weber with Engine*. Weber Canyon, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/tunnel-no-3-weber-engine>

LESSON TWO

Building the Union Pacific Portion of the Transcontinental Railroad

Duration: One to two class periods. You have the option of having students work individually to answer all the questions. Alternatively, you could assign a student or a pair of students one or two of the statements to prove or disprove and then have the class share their findings with each other.

ORGANIZING QUESTION

What were the experiences and challenges in building the Union Pacific portion of the Transcontinental Railroad?

OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce students to different aspects of the building of the Transcontinental Railroad including boom towns, working conditions on the Railroad, the challenges of building and the perspectives of some Native Americans.
2. Integrate information from photographs and text.
3. Synthesize information in order to make an argument (a model is provided).

CA HISTORY CONTENT STANDARDS

8.8.2.2. Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears," settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. CCSS (Anchor Reading Standard): Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NOTE IN STATEMENT FOUR

In Statement Four, students are asked to reach a conclusion about working conditions on the Railroad. The photograph they examine is of Jack Casement who directed working crews on the Union Pacific. Students may notice that he is holding a bullwhip and it is unclear why. They are free to speculate. In addition, they may notice that there are tents on top of the train cars. According to Drew Johnson, Curator of Photography and Visual Culture at the Oakland Museum of California, workers pitched tents on top of the train because they did not want to sleep in the trains themselves because it was so hot and foul-smelling.

For each of the following statements explain whether it is supported or not supported by information from the photographs and the text. A model is provided below.

MODEL

Supported or Not Supported?

Towns that developed as the Railroad was built were elegant places to live.

SOURCE ONE



Russell, Andrew J. *Front Street, Sherman, Looking West*. Sherman, WY. 1869. Stereographic collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/front-street-sherman-looking-west>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that the towns were elegant places to live?

MODEL, CONT...

SOURCE TWO

According to the Linda Hall Library, an independent research library:

The towns were often temporary and made up of tents and cheap board structures that easily could be dismantled and moved to the next location. The towns offered everything from dentistry to hardware supplies to saloons.¹

Were towns that developed as the Railroad was being built elegant places to live?

Develop 1 or 2 sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photograph and the text to answer the question.

Towns built during railroad construction were not elegant places to live. They were made cheaply so they could be torn down. In addition there were no paved streets or sidewalks and even the windows on the buildings looked like they weren't straight.

STATEMENT ONE

Supported or Not Supported?

Many Native Americans were happy to see the railroads being built.

SOURCE ONE

According to Ken Burns and Stephen Ives, two award-winning documentary filmmakers:

On June 26th, 1867, an Army detail (protecting railroad workers) was overtaken by a war party. One of those killed was Frederick Wyllyams. An Englishman, Dr. William Bell, described the body, 'The muscles of the right arm, hacked to the bone, speak of the Cheyennes, or 'Cut arms' the nose slit denoted the "Smeller tribe" or Arapahos; and the throat cut bears witness that the Sioux were also present....it was evident, from the number of different devices, that warriors from several tribes had each purposely left one in the dead man's body.'²

STATEMENT ONE, CONT...

SOURCE TWO



Russell, Andrew J. *Group of Ute Indians on the War Path*. n.p. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/group-ute-indians-war-path>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that Native Americans were happy to see the railroads being built?

STATEMENT ONE, CONT...

SOURCE THREE



Russell, Andrew J. *Slaughterhouse, Promontory*. Promontory, UT. 1869. Stereographic collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. (This image depicts the "slaughterhouse" at the Blue Creek camp in Promontory, Utah. Cattle, like these, would have been brought and slaughtered along the route to feed railroad workers.) <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/slaughterhouse-promontory>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that Native Americans were happy to see the railroads being built?

STATEMENT ONE, CONT...

SOURCE FOUR

From "Where the Buffalo No Longer Roamed," a *Smithsonian.com* article on the effects of the Transcontinental Railroad:

Massive hunting parties began to arrive in the West by train, with thousands of men packing .50 caliber rifles, and leaving a trail of buffalo carnage in their wake. Unlike the Native Americans or Buffalo Bill, who killed for food, clothing and shelter, the hunters from the East killed mostly for sport...railroads began to advertise excursions for "hunting by rail," where trains encountered massive herds alongside or crossing the tracks. Hundreds of men aboard the trains climbed to the roofs and took aim, or fired from their windows, leaving countless 1,500-pound animals where they died.³

STATEMENT ONE, CONT...

Were Native Americans happy to see the railroads being built?

Develop one or two sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photographs and the text to answer the question.

STATEMENT TWO

Supported or Not Supported?

Building the Railroad was so hard that there was no time for fun.

SOURCE ONE

Again, according to Ken Burns and Stephen Ives:

As the railroad progressed westward, the phenomenon called 'Hell on Wheels' followed in close pursuit – saloons, gambling houses and brothels opened their doors at the end-of-track towns that sprouted along the route, and prospered from the hard-earned cash of the Union Pacific laborers.ⁱⁱ

STATEMENT TWO, CONT...

SOURCE TWO



Russell, Andrew J. *Rocky Mountain Glee Club, Echo City*. Echo City, UT. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/rocky-mountain-glee-club-echo-city>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that there was no time for fun?

STATEMENT TWO, CONT...

Was there no time for fun?

Develop one or two sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photograph and the text to answer the question.

STATEMENT THREE

Supported or Not Supported?

The western landscape made building the Railroad a job that was easily accomplished.

SOURCE ONE



Russell, Andrew J. *Tunnel No. 3, Weber with Engine*. Weber Canyon, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/tunnel-no-3-weber-engine>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that the landscape made building the railroads an easy job?

STATEMENT THREE, CONT...

SOURCE TWO



Russell, Andrew J. *Entering Black Hills, Carmichael's Cut, Granite Canyon*. Granite Canyon, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. (A railroad cut or cutting is the right-of-way cut through a hill so the rail track can lie relatively flat.) <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/entering-black-hills-carmichaels-cut-granite-canyon>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that the landscape made building the railroads an easy job?

STATEMENT THREE, CONT...

SOURCE THREE

According to Fred Gamst, anthropologist and professor:

Well, if you're a laborer there, there wasn't too much good news. They had simple, simple foods: boiled beans, the equivalent of hardtack. The water often had Giardia in it; it caused dysentery. They lived in tents and the outfit cars with their berths four or five high that you slept in. They had very little opportunity for baths or bathing, personal hygiene. So the stench both within the cars and outside of the cars had to be tremendous. You got your two or so dollars a day and your inadequate meals such as they were."⁴

Did the western landscape make building the Railroad a job that was easily accomplished?

Develop one or two sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photographs and the text to answer the question.

STATEMENT FOUR

Supported or Not Supported?

Working conditions for the men building the Railroad were difficult.

SOURCE ONE



Russell, Andrew J. *Construction Train at End of Track, General Casement's Outfit, General in Foreground*. n.p. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/construction-train-end-track-general-casements-outfit-general-foreground>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that working conditions were difficult?

STATEMENT FOUR, CONT...

SOURCE TWO

From *Westward to Promontory*, a book about building the Union Pacific:

Durant [one of the main people responsible for building the Railroad] was being held prisoner by his own workmen at Piedmont, Wyoming Territory. They had surrounded Durant's car and refused to let him move until they received five months back pay.⁵

SOURCE THREE

Also from *Westward to Promontory*:

They [the railroad workers] ate beef and bread and washed it down with strong black coffee, though whiskey was their favorite drink. They bathed only when there was a stream nearby – and at Promontory the nearest water was four miles away.⁶

Were working conditions for the men building the Union Pacific Railroad difficult?

Develop one or two sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photograph and the text to answer the question.

STATEMENT FIVE

Supported or Not Supported?

Building the Transcontinental Railroad was an amazing achievement.

SOURCE ONE



Russell, Andrew J. *Promontory Trestle, Engine on Trestle West No. 3*. Promontory, UT. nd. Glass lantern slide. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/promontory-trestle-engine-trestle-west-no-3>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that building the Transcontinental Railroad was an amazing achievement?

STATEMENT FIVE, CONT...

SOURCE TWO



Russell, Andrew J. *Panoramic No. 1, Salt Lake Valley from Corinne, Brigham City in the Distance*. Corinne, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/panoramic-no-1-salt-lake-valley-corinne-brigham-city-distance>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that building the Transcontinental Railroad was an amazing achievement?

STATEMENT FIVE, CONT...

SOURCE THREE



Russell, Andrew J. *East and West Shaking Hands at Laying Last Rail*. Promontory, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/east-and-west-shaking-hands-laying-last-rail>

What are three details you notice in the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

Does the photograph suggest that building the Transcontinental Railroad was an amazing achievement?

STATEMENT FIVE, CONT...

SOURCE FOUR

Also from *Westward to Promontory*:

The promise of the West was now truly available and settlers would come by the hundreds of thousands...Other transcontinental rail lines would be built, branch lines added. Within a relatively short time America's western frontier would vanish.^{iv}

Was the building of the Railroad an amazing achievement?

Develop one or two sentences that integrate the information learned from both the photographs and the text to answer the question.

STATEMENT FIVE, CONT...

CONCLUSION

By looking at both photographs and text you have learned about the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Pretend you are writing a paragraph in a textbook for 8th graders about the Transcontinental Railroad. What are the most important points you think 8th graders should know?

LESSON THREE

Photographs as Evidence

A Case Study: Andrew J. Russell and the American West

Duration: One to two class periods

ORGANIZING QUESTION

How can you use photographs as evidence in history?

OBJECTIVES

Understand that photographs can be used as historical evidence and, like any other piece of evidence, they must be examined critically.

CA HISTORY CONTENT STANDARDS

8.8.2.2. Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears," settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand how to use photographs as historical evidence. They will understand that photographs, like any other primary source, need to be examined critically. Below are some specific suggestions to help guide the lesson.

1. In the hook activity, you can choose to have students write down their responses or simply share them orally with the class. The point is to have students think about how photographs can convey a message depending on the focus of the photographer.
2. Set One and Set Two try to get at the same idea with different photographs. If you wish, you could model the activity with Set One and then have students independently do Set Two. If you use Set One as a model, point out that Russell was trying to show what a difficult and triumphant job it was to build the Transcontinental Railroad. Set Two demonstrates the grandeur and vastness of the western environment. Students might also notice how dry it is compared to the East Coast.

LESSON THREE

Photographs as Evidence

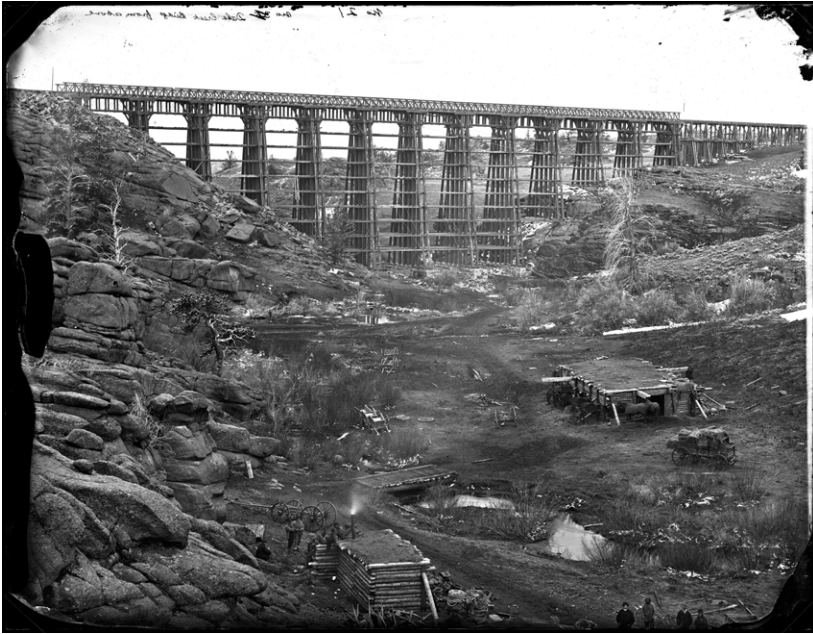
A Case Study: Andrew J. Russell and the American West

Duration: One to two class periods

3. In Set Four, students are asked if they think the photograph shown is really a war party. The reason some historians doubt this claim is the unlikely possibility that Native Americans posed quietly for the photograph for the time it would take to make it. It is also unlikely that they would have wanted a non-native photographer to take such a photograph.
4. There is some doubt as to the identity of this pioneer family in front of their sod house in photograph nine below. The photograph was marketed as an image of a Mormon with several wives; other sources claim it depicts a farmer with sisters, nieces and mother as well as his wife. By suggesting the subject was polygamous, Russell and his publishers could stimulate interest by appealing to their audience's prurient interests.
5. The conclusion is a fairly open-ended activity for students. However, it might be important to point out that one way historians determine reliability is through corroboration. Thus, they can compare Russell's photographs with other documents produced at the time, including textual as well as visual documents.

ALTERNATIVE SET-UP

Reproduce six to eight copies of each photograph and put students into groups. Give each group a set of photographs then have the students divide the photographs and create their own categories. Ask them to explain why the photographs they placed together belong in that category. In other words, in the lesson as it is presented, the categories are already determined (the environment, or how people in the West lived). In the alternative version, no categories are provided and students are given the freedom to create their own, as long as they can explain what in the photographs ties their categories together and what message the photographer is trying to convey.



1. Dale Creek Bridge from Above



2. Testing Combination Bridge



3. East and West Shaking Hands



4. Panoramic No. 1, Salt Lake Valley



5. Castle Rock, Green River Valley



6. Smith's Rock, Green River Valley



7. Group of Ute Indians on the War Path



8. Bear River City



9. *Mormon Family*

HOOK ACTIVITY

Photographers try to use their photographs to convey a message. Look at the photo below – what message do you think the photographer is trying to convey?



6

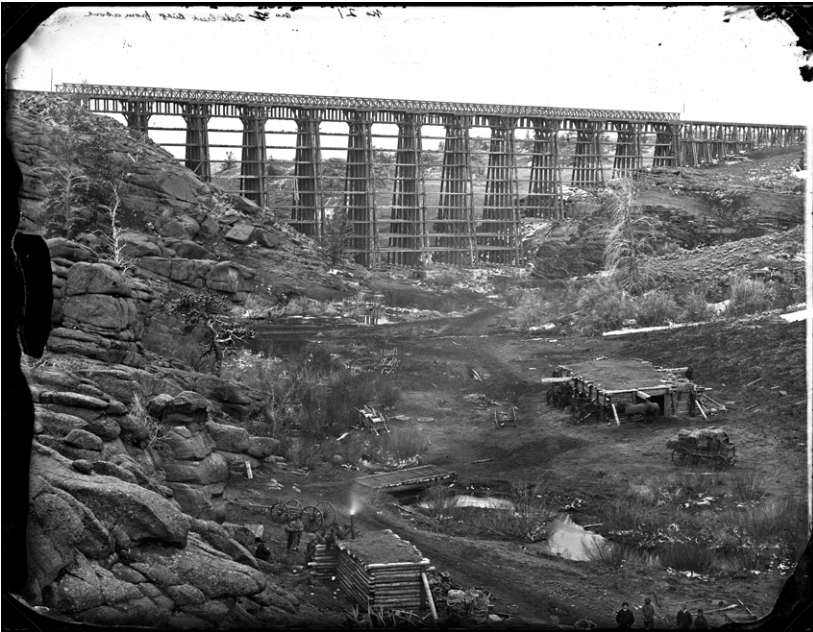
Imagine you are a photographer for your school. You want to take a photograph that shows that your school has a good sports program. If you could only take one photo, what would it be? Describe it briefly below. Include three details that you want people to notice to give them clues about the sports program.

If you wanted to show that students were bored, what would your photograph be? Include three details that you would want people to notice that would give them clues about bored students.

If you want to show that your school encourages academic excellence, what would your photograph be? Include three details that you want people to notice that give them clues about academic excellence.

SET ONE

Andrew J. Russell was a photographer who lived over 150 years ago. Through his art, he was trying to convey a message. He took photographs of the first transcontinental railroad to be built in the United States-the first railroad to connect the East Coast to the West Coast. Below are three photographs by Russell. Look at them carefully. Record five observations for each image.



Russell, Andrew J. *Dale Creek Bridge from Above*. Dale Creek, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/dale-creek-bridge-above>

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

SET ONE, CONT...



Russell, Andrew J. *Testing Combination Bridge, Devil's Gate, Weber Canyon, Weber Canyon, UT. 1869.* Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/testing-combination-bridge-devils-gate-weber-canyon>

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

SET ONE, CONT...



Russell, Andrew J. *East and West Shaking Hands at Laying Last Rail.*
Promontory, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of
Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/east-and-west-shaking-hands-laying-last-rail>

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Considering these three photographs, what message do you think Russell is trying to convey about the Transcontinental Railroad?

Evidence Details you observe	Claim Message that Russell is trying to convey	Reasoning What is the connection between evidence and claim?
<i>Sample:</i> In "Testing Combination Bridge," there are about two cars and three engines on the bridge.	<i>Sample:</i> Russell was probably saying that the bridges are strong and safe for people to use.	<i>Sample:</i> Three engines and two train cars are much heavier than one engine and train cars full of people.
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

The Union Pacific, one of the railroad companies building the Railroad, paid Russell for his photography.

Do you think the message in the photographs is something Union Pacific would want published? Why or why not?

Photographs Russell could have taken:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

After reading the description below, describe three photographs Russell could have taken if he wanted to convey a different message.

According to Fred Gamst, anthropologist and professor:

Well, if you're a laborer there, there wasn't too much good news. They had simple, simple foods: boiled beans, the equivalent of hardtack. The water often had Giardia in it; it caused dysentery. They lived in tents and the outfit cars with their berths four or five high that you slept in. They had very little opportunity for baths or bathing, personal hygiene. So the stench both within the cars and outside of the cars had to be tremendous.^{iv}

SET TWO

In addition to working for the Union Pacific, Russell hoped to sell his photographs to curious people who lived on the East Coast. Easterners had heard of the “Wild West,” but they didn’t know how it looked. People east of the Mississippi lived on small farms, in towns, and in large cities-but the western landscape was new to them.

Look at the three photographs below. What message is Russell communicating about the West?



Russell, Andrew J. *Panoramic No. 1, Salt Lake Valley from Corinne, Brigham City in the Distance*. Corinne, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/panoramic-no-1-salt-lake-valley-corinne-brigham-city-distance>



Russell, Andrew J. *Castle Rock, Green River Valley*. Green River Valley, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/castle-rock-green-river-valley>



Russell, Andrew J. *Smith's Rock, Green River Valley*. Green River, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/smiths-rock-green-river-valley>

Evidence Details you observe	Claim Message that Russell is trying to convey	Reasoning What is the connection between evidence and claim?
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

SET THREE

Russell also wanted to show how people in the West lived. Look at the three photographs below, and list four details you notice about each photograph.



Russell, Andrew J. *Group of Ute Indians on the War Path*. n.p. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/group-ute-indians-war-path>

1.

2.

3.

4.

SET THREE, CONT...



Russell, Andrew J. *Bear River City*. Bear River City, WY. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/bear-river-city-0>

1.

2.

3.

4.

SET THREE, CONT...



Russell, Andrew J. *Mormon Family*. Kaysville, UT. 1868. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/mormon-family>

1.

2.

3.

4.

SET THREE, CONT...

What are some similarities and differences you notice in these photographs?

CONCLUSION

You have examined several photographs by Andrew J. Russell. List three things you have learned about either the West or the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

1.

2.

3.

Historians collect evidence (including diaries, letters, newspaper accounts, and photographs) to give them a sense of what happened in the past. When they examine a source, whether it is a diary or a newspaper account, they need to determine if it is reliable. In other words, do they believe what they are reading or seeing?

Write a short paragraph answering the following questions:

In what ways could Russell's photographs be considered reliable evidence? Why might you question them? What questions do you need to ask about any photos taken in the past to determine if they are reliable?

Look back at the photo you examined at the beginning of the lesson (of the woman stretching against the car). Now that you have had some practice analyzing photographs, what do you notice in that photo that you may not have noticed before? Are there any questions you now have about that photo that you may not have had before?

Extension: Think of something that interests you and your classmates that you can see (like your city or your school). Take two photos – each trying to convey a different message. Share the photos with your class and see if they can figure out what messages you were trying to convey.

LESSON FOUR

The Impact of the Transcontinental Railroad Document Based Question (DBQ)

Duration: One to two class periods

GUIDING QUESTION

What was the impact of the Transcontinental Railroad on both people and the environment?

OBJECTIVES

Ability to use historical documents to construct an argument on the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

CA HISTORY CONTENT STANDARDS

8.8.2.2. Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears," settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

This activity is meant to get at the impacts of the Transcontinental Railroad, both beneficial and harmful. In completing this DBQ, students should understand that while the Railroad provided economic opportunities for immigrants and Civil War veterans, and was seen as a great national and technological achievement, it also had the effect of disrupting Native American lifeways—most immediately through decimation of the American bison (commonly referred to as buffalo) and later, through the settlement by non-natives on Native American lands. Thus, any historical change can benefit some and hurt others.

In order for students to successfully complete this DBQ, you may need to do the first photograph with them. You can help them notice the train, which looks strong, powerful, and shows "progress," and that the men, who are doing many jobs, are taming an environment that is hostile and rugged. Some students might see the encroachment of the train on a natural landscape

LESSON FOUR

The Impact of the Transcontinental Railroad Document
Based Question (DBQ)

Duration: One to two class periods

as harmful-which is certainly another interpretation of the photograph, though probably not the one the photographer, Russell, intended. This is an opportunity to discuss how historical interpretation of evidence changes over time.

Textual sources can also be interpreted in various ways. For example, Source Six that quotes Frank Mayer can be used to demonstrate how destructive railroad buffalo hunting was for the Native Americans. On the other hand, it was clearly a bonanza for people like Mayer. The point is not for a right or wrong answer, but an ability on the part of students to justify their opinions with clear reasoning.

PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY AND SHORT ESSAY

At the end of the lesson, students are prompted to “Write a short essay explaining if you think the building of the Transcontinental Railroad was harmful or helpful.” There is an optional pre-writing activity to prepare students for the short essay.

**THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD:
GOING WEST DOCUMENT BASED QUESTION**

Using the sources provided, write a short essay either agreeing or disagreeing with the following statement:

The impact of the Transcontinental Railroad was more harmful than helpful.

Below are six sources you can use to help answer the prompt. Three of the sources are photographs. Photographs, like written text, are pieces of evidence that historians use to tell us about the past; however, “reading” a photograph is different than reading a text. In order to “read” a photograph you must look at it carefully and notice the details in the photograph. Then, you try to determine what message the photographer is trying to make. For example, if you see a photograph of a hamburger with cheese dripping from it you may conclude that the photographer is trying to tell you to buy a hamburger. Therefore, as you examine these sources, try to “read” the photographs so that you understand the message that is being conveyed.

SOURCE ONE



Russell, Andrew J. *Temporary and Permanent Bridge, Green River, Citadel Rock in Distance*. Green River, WY. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.
<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/temporary-and-permanent-bridge-green-river-citadel-rock-distance>

What are five details you notice about the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Choose one:

1. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was harmful.*
2. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two details from the photograph that helped you decide.

SOURCE TWO



Russell, Andrew J. *Slaughterhouse, Promontory*. Promontory, UT. 1869. Stereographic collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. (This image depicts the “slaughterhouse” at the Blue Creek camp in Promontory, Utah. Cattle, like these, would have been brought and slaughtered along the route to feed railroad workers.) <http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/slaughterhouse-promontory>

What are five details you notice about the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Choose one:

1. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was harmful.*
2. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two details from the photograph that helped you decide.

SOURCE THREE



Russell, Andrew J. *East and West Shaking Hands at Laying Last Rail*. Promontory, UT. 1869. Imperial collodion glass plate negative. Collection of Oakland Museum of California.

<http://picturethis.museumca.org/pictures/east-and-west-shaking-hands-laying-last-rail>

What are five details you notice about the photograph?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Choose one:

1. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was harmful.*
2. *The photograph shows that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two details from the photograph that helped you decide.

SOURCE FOUR

According to *United States History: Independence to 1914*:

The transcontinental railroad increased both economic growth and the population in the West. Railroad companies provided better transportation for people and goods. They also sold land for settlers which encouraged people to move west.

New railroads helped businesses. Western timber companies, miners, ranchers, and farmers shipped wood, metals, meat and grain east by railroad. In exchange, eastern businesses shipped manufactured goods to the West.⁷

Choose one:

1. *These paragraphs show that building the Railroad was harmful.*
2. *These paragraphs show that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two reasons why.

SOURCE FIVE

According to Ken Burns and Stephen Ives, two award-winning documentary filmmakers:

The railroad would allow Civil War veterans, poor farmers from the East and landless peasants from Europe to have a farm they could call their own...after the first transcontinental railroad was completed, immigrants who entered the U.S. at immigration checkpoints on the Eastern Seaboard such as Ellis Island began using the train system to migrate west. In fact, the railroad companies themselves promoted such plans because increased population in the West meant more business for railroads."

Choose one:

- 1. This paragraph shows that building the Railroad was harmful.*
- 2. This paragraph shows that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two reasons why.

SOURCE SIX

Again, according to Ken Burns and Stephen Ives:

The railroads would bring onto the Great Plains the buffalo hunters who would drive a magnificent animal that symbolized the West to the brink of extinction. The Union Pacific hired men to hunt buffalo to feed the hungry railroad crews as they built their iron road across Indian lands.

Frank Mayer was one of the men the railroad hired. He said, 'When I went into the business, I sat down and figured that I was indeed one of Fortune's children. Just think. There were 20 million buffalo, each worth at least \$2 - \$3 each. At the very outside, cartridges cost 25 cents each, so every time I fired one I got my investment back twelve times over. I could kill a hundred a day...that would be \$6,000 a month-or three times what was paid to the President of the United States. Was I not lucky that I discovered this quick and easy way to fortune?'ⁱⁱⁱ

Choose one:

- 1. These paragraphs show that building the Railroad was harmful.*
- 2. These paragraphs show that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two reasons why.

SOURCE SEVEN

Also according to *United States History: Independence to 1914*:

Everything the Kiowas (an Indian tribe who lived where the railroads were being built) had came from the buffalo. Their tipis were made of buffalo hides, so were their clothes and moccasins. They ate buffalo meat. Most of all, the buffalo was part of the Kiowa religion. The buffalo were the life of Kiowas.^{vii}

Choose one:

1. *This paragraph shows that building the Railroad was harmful.*
2. *This paragraph shows that building the Railroad was helpful.*

List two reasons why.

After you have examined all the sources, what are two reasons someone could call the building of the Transcontinental Railroad helpful?

1)

2)

What are two reasons someone could call the Railroad harmful?

1)

2)

PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY

The following is an optional pre-writing activity for this essay:

Have students draw a line and number it one to ten. Ask students, “If one is harmful and ten is helpful – put an X where you would place the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.” Then make the same line up on the board. Either have students come up and mark the number they picked, or you can do this with a show of hands. Discuss why students put their marks in different places, trying to flesh out the arguments that students are making.

SHORT ESSAY ACTIVITY

Write a short essay explaining if you think the building of the Transcontinental Railroad was harmful or helpful. Give at least three pieces of evidence to prove your point.

ENDNOTES

¹ Sally Crosson, "The Transcontinental Railroad," *Linda Hall Library*, 2012, <http://railroad.lindahall.org/index.html>.

² Ken Burns and Stephen Ives, "New Perspectives on The West," *PBS*, 2001, <http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/>.

³ Gilbert King, "Where the Buffalo No Longer Roamed," *Smithsonian Magazine*, July, 17, 2012, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/where-the-buffalo-no-longer-roamed-3067904/>.

⁴ Fred Gamst, "Transcontinental Railroad," *American Experience*, directed by Mark Zwonitzer and Michael Chin, PBS, 2003, transcript, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/transcript/tcrr-transcript/>.

⁵ Barry B. Combs, *Westward to Promontory: Building the Union Pacific across the Plains and Mountains* (Palo Alto, CA: American West, 1969).

⁶ "35 Nike Print Advertisements That Boosted the Company's Income," *Design Your Way*, <http://www.designyourway.net/blog/inspiration/35-nike-print-advertisements-that-boosted-the-companys-income/>

⁷ *United States History: Independence to 1914* (Austin, TX: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2006).