

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Exploring the Oregon Trail

**Directions:** On the Social Studies links page, find "History Globe—Oregon Trail Tour" (<http://www.historyglobe.com/ot/otmap2.htm>). Click the "Trail Tour" button to begin your journey west. Then, click the "Next" button to visit each stop along the trail until you reach Oregon City. Use the information to answer the following questions:

1. **Independence** The town of Independence was founded in \_\_\_\_\_. It began as a trading post and by the 1840's it was the most popular "jumping off" point for pioneers heading west to Oregon or California.
2. **Courthouse and Jailhouse Rock** These curious rock formations are located in the \_\_\_\_\_. They were the first major landmarks seen by pioneers heading west.
3. **Chimney Rock** Located some twelve miles west of Courthouse and Jailhouse Rock, Chimney Rock was one of the most picturesque landmarks along the Oregon Trail. It signaled \_\_\_\_\_ as the trail became more steep and rugged heading west towards the Rocky Mountains. It measures \_\_\_\_\_ feet tall from the tip to the base.
4. **Fort Laramie** The fort was begun by fur traders as Fort William in 1834 where the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ rivers meet. In 1849, the U.S. Military purchased the fort and named it in honor of Jacques La Ramie, a local French fur trapper. It was one of the most important forts in the settlement of the American West,
5. **Independence Rock** This giant piece of granite is \_\_\_\_\_ feet long, \_\_\_\_\_ feet wide, and \_\_\_\_\_ feet high. The landmark was a favorite resting place for travelers along the trail. It was called the "Great Register of the Desert" because more than \_\_\_\_\_ names of early emigrant were carved on this boulder. Starting the trail in the early spring, emigrants along the Oregon Trail hoped to reach Independence Rock by July 4, Independence Day. If they had not arrived by then, they knew they were behind schedule.
6. **Fort Bridger** A mountain man named \_\_\_\_\_ began this fort as a trading post in 1842. It soon grew to be one of the most important outfitting points for emigrants along the Oregon Trail.
7. **Soda Springs** Natural bubbling pools of carbonated water, caused by ancient volcanic activity, have long made Soda Springs an attraction. Local Indians, fur traders and trappers visited the springs prior to the days of the Oregon Trail emigrations. The springs are located along a shortcut in the trail off of the main route to Fort Hall. Emigrants used the pools of water for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ purposes. Many pioneers and their animals became sick when they drank too much of the alkali water from the springs.

8. **Fort Hall** Established by Nathaniel Jarvis Wyeth in 1834 along the Snake River, Fort Hall first served as a \_\_\_\_\_. Early emigrants on the Oregon Trail usually abandoned their wagons at the fort and continued on foot with their animals. That changed in \_\_\_\_\_ when Dr. Marcus Whitman, who had established a mission near Walla Walla, Washington, led a wagon train westward from the fort. From then on, migrations along the trail increased as the pioneers could now travel all the way to Oregon with their wagons and possessions.

9. **Fort Boise** Begun by a British firm, Fort Boise was established in \_\_\_\_\_ as a direct competitor to the nearby Fort Hall. It was first located along the Snake River near the present town of Parma, Idaho. The fort served as a supply point along the Oregon Trail until \_\_\_\_\_, when it was abandoned due to flooding and Indian attacks. In 1863, the military constructed a new Fort Boise near the present town of Boise, Idaho.

10. **Whittman Mission** Founded in \_\_\_\_\_ by Methodist missionaries, Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife, Narcissa, the Whitman Mission was the site of one of the worst tragedies along the Oregon Trail. The Whitmans offered religious instruction and medical services to the local Cayuse Indians. They also gave care and supplies to wagon parties traveling along the Oregon Trail. When a measles epidemic broke out at the mission in November 1847, many of the Indians were killed while the white newcomers survived. The Cayuse suspected that the Whitmans and their foreign religion were the cause of the fatal disease. In retaliation, the Whitmans and eleven other whites were killed by the Cayuse, and the mission was burned down.

12. **The Dalles** The Dalles was named by fur trappers for the French word for gutter. Here emigrants floated down the \_\_\_\_\_ River in rafts through the stony river gorge. The passage, with emigrants and their wagons crowded onto a small wooden raft, was often perilous. The Barlow Toll Road opened in \_\_\_\_\_, offering emigrants an alternative to the Columbia River route to Oregon City. The wagon ride along the toll road took a long route around Mount Hood, but it was a much safer method than rafting.

13. **Oregon City** Founded in \_\_\_\_\_ near where the Willamette River flows into the Columbia River, Oregon City was the first territorial capital of Oregon. The area had long been used as a natural place of commerce between Indians and whites. The river provided a dependable source of power for mills. So many people migrated along the trail that Oregon City grew rapidly as an economic center in the territory. Emigrants went to Oregon City to establish their land claims. Local industries sprung up to resupply emigrants planning to start their farms. Today, the city is a suburb of the larger city of \_\_\_\_\_, Oregon.

14. NOW, click the "**Modern Map**" button and discover the names of the present-day states the Oregon Trail pioneers traveled through. Write the names of the states in order beginning in with the "jumping-off" point in Independence, Missouri. Pioneers traveled though \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.