

# **IOWA PAST TO PRESENT TEACHERS GUIDE**

## **Revised 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**

### **Chapter 4: Pioneers on the Prairie**

#### **CONTENT OBJECTIVES**

Following the completion of the readings and activities for this chapter, students will have acquired the following understandings:

- a. Most pioneer settlers came to Iowa from the eastern United States and Europe.
- b. Iowa land was surveyed by the government and sold at auctions held by government land officers.
- c. For most settlers, living on the prairie meant a change in farming and household practices.

#### **VOCABULARY TO KNOW**

1800s, nineteenth century	settlement
immigrant	sod house
land survey	squatter
pioneer	township
prairie	woodscraft

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY**

1. Visit a preserved virgin prairie. Throughout Iowa, several plots have been set aside for educational purposes. Kalsow Prairie near Fort Dodge, Caylor Prairie near Spirit Lake and the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge near Prairie City are available for groups to visit. Consult your county conservation board for assistance in teaching about prairie life. Many counties have nature centers set aside primarily for educational purposes. For more information go to Iowa Prairies
2. Have students survey their families to discover when and from where their family moved to Iowa. Some students will discover that their ancestors came directly from Europe. Others will find that their families moved to Iowa from an eastern state. Have students share their findings with the class.

## **Activity 4-1: MIGRATION STATISTICS**

**Skills.** Reading charts and maps

**Materials.** Tables of 1870 census (in text), classroom maps of the United States and the World

### **Procedure**

1. Find 1870 census tables in text.
2. Identify 1870 with the close of the pioneer period in Iowa. Note that the native-born population of Iowa was almost five times as great as the foreign-born population for 1870
3. Note that about one-third of Iowa's population in 1870 was born in Iowa.
4. Have students identify and locate on the United States map the five states in which the largest number of Iowans were born.
5. Have students identify and locate on the world map the three foreign countries in which the largest number of Iowans were born.
6. Have volunteers do a survey of the students in the classroom, determining the birthplaces of the students and their immediate family members. A chart of their findings could provide a birthplace profile for the classroom.

## **Activity 4-2: PIONEER TRANSPORTATION**

**Skills.** Collecting information from primary source materials

**Materials.** Student copies of the letter of Ephraim G. Fairchild (also in text), student copies of handout 4-2, markers or crayons.

### **Procedure**

1. Introduce the lesson by rereading the section on pioneer transportation in the textbook.
2. Allow time for students to read the Fairchild letter independently or have it read aloud for the class.
3. Assign a different color to each means of transportation listed in the letter (train, - wagon, walking, etc.). Using markers or colors, have students mark the parts of the letter which refer to a means of transportation. Discuss the variety of transportation methods used.
4. Distribute copies of handout 4-2. Using crayons, have students trace the route of the travelers, color-coding the route according to the colors used on the letter.

## LETTER OF EPHRAIM G. FAIRCHILD

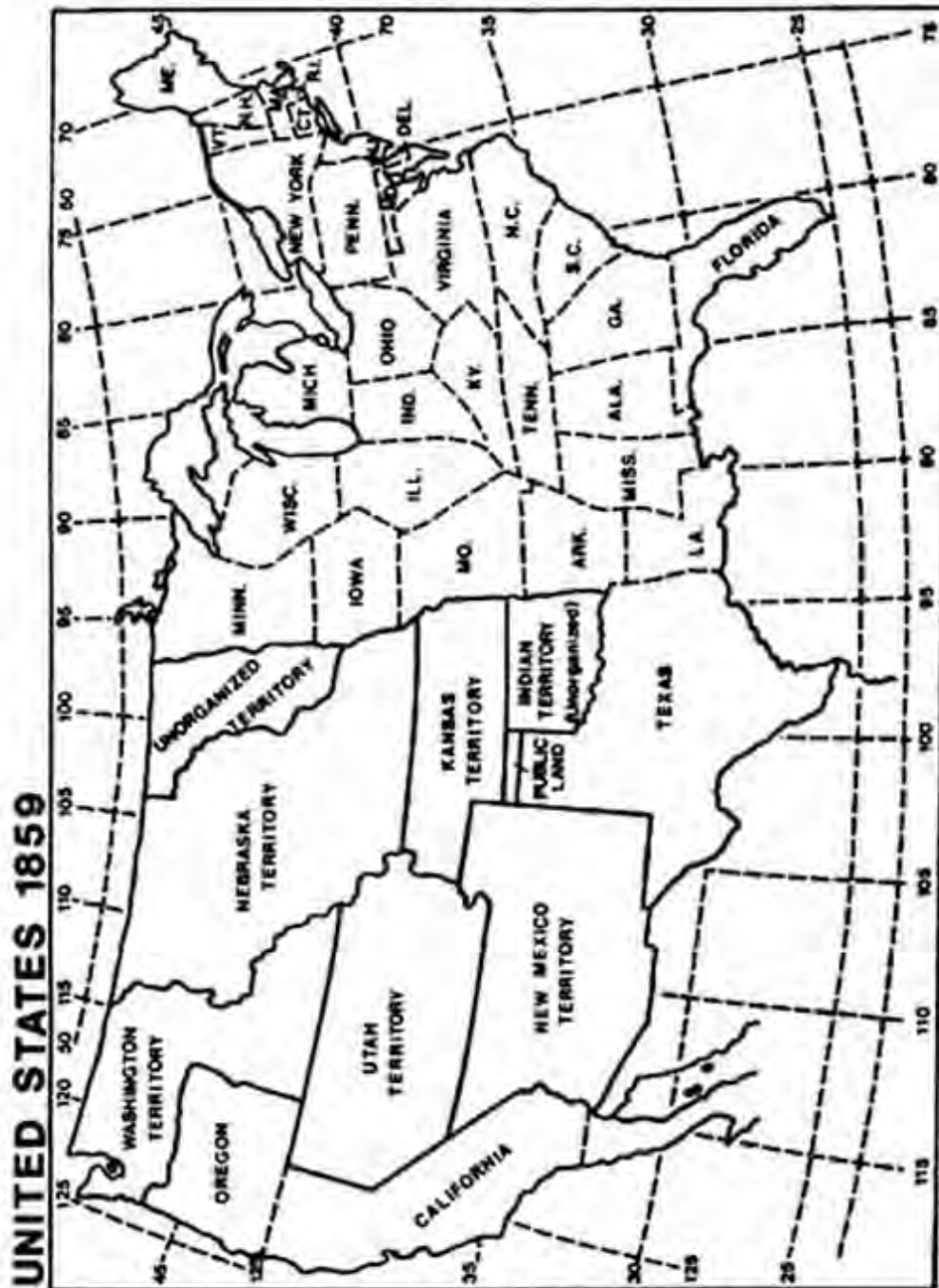
Pleasant Ridge March 23, 1857

Ever Kind and affectionate Father and Mother and all the rest of the friends. I take my pen in hand to write a few lines to you to let you know that we are all well at present and hope these few lines may find you all the same.

I will try to tell you some thing about our journey out west. we had a very slow trip, the cars run very slow all the way from Jersey City up to Dunkirk [N.Y.] so we did not make connection with the train from their and had to stop there from 2 oclock in the afternoon until 2 1/2 oclock Wednesday morning. then we Started for Cleveland and arrived there about noon and missed the train there again. we had to stay their till about 4 oclock in the evening. then we started for toledo and there we made connection with the wagon [train] going to chicago and there we had to stop about 4 or 5 hours longer. then we started about 9 in the evening for Dunleath [now called East Dubuque]. we arrived there about 9 or 10 on friday morning and there we met uncle Jerry. he started from home on wednesday and arrived at Dubuque on thursday and on friday we crossed the missippia on the ice with the horses and wagon. then we started for uncle Jerrie's.

we got as far as the 11 mild [mile] house. then we put up and in the morning we started again and went about 1 mild and broke the arm of the axel tree. then we was in a fix. no house nearer than a mild but Eliza and the children got out of the wagon and went on to the 12 mild house afoot and uncle and I unloded the things into another wagon and fixed up the wagon so as to get to the 12 mild house and there was a black smith shop and the smith thought he could fix it. so he went at it as soon as he cood and when he got it fixed it was about 2 or 3 oclock. then we started again and traveled on until night. then we put up at Ozark with a man by the name of E. West. they were verry nice people. the next morning which was sunday morning it thundred and lightened and rained quite hard untill about 9 oclock, then it stopped and about 10 uncle said he though we had better start before the river at canton got so high that it wood be dangerous. so we started and got acrost the river safe and went on home, we got to uncles about 4 oclock sunday after noon all safe and sound but mudier going I never saw in my life.

**Directions.** Mark the route of the Fairchild travelers, color-coding the route according to the means of transportation.



### **Activity 4-3: PRAIRIE FIRES**

**Skills.** Collecting information from primary source materials

**Materials.** Kenyon letter (in text)

#### **Procedure**

1. Introduce the letter by reviewing some of the hardships and dangers encountered by pioneer settlers on the prairie.
2. Read and discuss the Kenyon letter with the students.
3. Using the information in the text and the letter, have students compose a pamphlet for new settlers on the prairie, warning them of the dangers of prairie fires and instructing them on how to protect themselves from an approaching fire. Encourage students to use quotes of eyewitnesses (John Kenyon) and use illustrations in the pamphlet.

#### **Activity 4-4: BUYING LAND IN FRONTIER IOWA**

**Skills.** Collecting information from primary source materials, reading maps

**Materials.** Township diagram (in text), President Tyler's Proclamation (in text), handout 4-4 (*Iowa Territory* 1842 map)

#### **Procedure**

1. Open the class by rereading the material in the chapter on surveying and purchasing land. Discuss the township system, identifying and defining the following terms:

baseline

range

county

section

5th principal meridian

township

proclamation

2. Discuss the proclamation of President Tyler and the township and section diagrams.
3. Distribute copies of handout 4-4. Have students locate and shade the townships identified in President Tyler's proclamation.

## Name: \_\_\_\_\_

IOWA TERRITORY, 1842 OPEN FOR SETTLEMENT

The map shows the Iowa Territory in 1842, divided into sections for settlement. The grid is labeled with numbers 1 through 36, arranged in a 6x6 pattern. The map also shows the boundaries of the Iowa Territory, the Missouri River to the west, and the Arkansas River to the south. The map is titled "IOWA TERRITORY, 1842 OPEN FOR SETTLEMENT".

IOWA TERRITORY, 1842 OPEN FOR SETTLEMENT