Primary Manual 5, Lesson 40: The First Pioneer Company Crosses the Plains

Attention Activity
Ask for a volunteer to be blindfolded. Blindfold the child and turn him or her around several times. Then ask the child to find the doorway to the classroom. Have the other children stand as obstacles in the path to the doorway. After the child runs into a few obstacles, take him or her back to the starting point. Explain that there is a better way of getting to the door.

Have the other children line up in two rows, forming a pathway to the doorway. Start the blindfolded child down the path between the children. After the child reaches the door, remove the blindfold and have all the children return to their seats.

- What kind of problems did (name of child) face as he (or she) tried to reach the door the first time?
- How were we able to help direct him (or her) to the door?

Explain that the Lord knew that the Saints would face many dangers and obstacles as they moved west to the Rocky Mountains. None of the Saints had ever been in that part of the country before. The Lord told Brigham Young to select a group of people to go as pioneers to prepare the way for the thousands of Saints who would follow. This first group of pioneers was to mark the route west and then return to guide others to their new home.

Explain that a pioneer is someone who prepares the way for others who will follow. Until the railroad was completed in 1869, all the Saints moving west were referred to as pioneers.

Game: Pioneer Jeopardy

RULES: One person from each teach approaches the table and stands at opposite ends facing each other. The person (or team) who is most reverent approaching the table gets to chose the category and amount first. The question must be read in full before anyone can answer. After the question is read, the first person to “slap” the light answers the question. If that person cannot answer or it is incorrect, the opponent gets the opportunity to answer. If the opponent cannot answer or answers incorrectly, nobody gets the points and the teacher reads the correct answer. Two different people from opposite teams then approach the table and rules are repeated.

If a person correctly answers the question, points are awarded and new opponents from opposite teams approach the table. The person whose teammate answered correctly gets to choose the next category and amount.

There are two “Daily Doubles” in the game. The person who chooses that category gets to wager their teams earnings.

All team members play in the Final Round. All team members must wager. Points are added or subtracted according to the correct answer.
Arithmetic
100  10+7= number of dogs first taken across the plains. (What are 17?)
200  74+74=number of men, children and women in the first company of pioneers which left Winter Quarters in April 1847. (What are 148?)
300  100-27=number of wagons that first set out toward the west from Winter Quarters. (What are 73?)
400  11 x 6= total number of oxen that first accompanied the Saints toward Utah. (What are 66?)

Camp Rules, Dude!
100  This is the shape the wagons must form at night. (What is a circle?)
200  Hey sleepy-head! It’s 9:01 PM! You’re one minute late for this. (What is bed?)
300  Rise and shine! This is the time to get up, pray, eat breakfast and feed and water the animals. (What is 5:00AM?)
400  Where do you think you’re going? Every man must stay by this, which carried equipment, food and other important supplies. (What is his wagon?)

Daily Life
100  No freeways here! The Pioneers made roads and these so that other Saints who came later could cross over rivers. (What are bridges?)
200  What!? No McDonalds? Nope, Pioneers did this if they got hungry. (What is hunt for food?)
300  Are you lost? Well, I hope you can find your way because Pioneers were the ones who created these for other Pioneers. (What are maps?)
400  *Daily Double* Though they did not drive cars across the plains, one man, William Clayton, invented a device called the “Odometer”. Today, there is an “Odometer” in every car. What does it do? (What is keeps track of distance?)

Lions, Tigers, Bears, oh my!
100  A male (boy) one of these animals is called a ‘buck’; a female (girl) is called a ‘doe’. (What are deer?)
200  These animals travel in packs. (What are wolves?)
300  This animal is also called a Bison. (What is a Buffalo?)
400  This reptiles rattle can be hear up to 60 feet away. (What is a rattlesnake?)

Pioneers Knee-Slappers
100  When Brigham Young left Winter Quarters, what did he see on his right hand? (Four fingers and a thumb!)
200  What animals can jump higher than a house? (All animals – houses can’t jump!)
300  What are eggshells used for? (To hold eggs together!)
400  Why did the horse eat with his mouth open? (Because he had bad stable manners!)
**Geography**

100  This popular trail that led through the Rocky Mountains was used by traders, fur trappers and explorers. (What is the Oregon Trail?)

200  Brigham Young built this trail along the north side of the Platte River and named it this. (What is the Mormon Trail?)

300  *Daily Double*  This “rock” near the Nebraska-Wyoming border, marked the halfway point of the journey from Winter Quarters to the Salt Lake Valley. (What is Chimney Rock?)

400  Name two states the Mormon Pioneers crossed. (What are Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming or Utah?)

**Final Question**

The Mormon Pioneers had a goal to reach the Salt Lake Valley, but, sometimes things were difficult and ran into obstacles along the way.

We, too, have goals we want to reach. But sometimes we too run into obstacles along our way. **Name one goal you are currently trying to reach. Read D&C 136: 31-32. What three things can we do to help accomplish our goals?** (learn wisdom/prepare, be humble, pray.)

**Closing/Testimony**

Brigham Young and the rest of the pioneers entered the Salt Lake Valley on 24 July 1847. Brigham Young was very sick and was riding in Wilford Woodruff’s carriage. Brother Woodruff turned the carriage so that President Young could look at the valley. The Lord had shown President Young a vision of the place where the Saints should settle, and after gazing at the valley for a long time, Brigham Young said, “It is enough. This is the right place. Drive on!” (quoted in B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, 3:224).

The pioneers were thankful that the Lord had blessed them during their travels to this new land. Not one person had died on the difficult journey. The pioneers’ hard work and courage had helped prepare the way for thousands of other Saints to come to the Salt Lake Valley. The pioneers knew they would fulfill the prophecy of Joseph Smith and “become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains” (*History of the Church*, 5:85).

**Time Filler/Take Home Worksheet**

“A Pioneer Story” by Amie Jane Leavitt, July 2008, *Friend*
A Pioneer Story
BY AMIE JANE LEAVITT

Read the story below. Fill in the missing words using the letters in the wagon wheel. Start at the arrow and move clockwise around the wheel, choosing every other letter to complete the blanks. The first one is started for you. See page 26 for answers.

In February 1846, the pioneers were forced to leave their homes in **N A ______**. The temperatures were so cold that the mighty **___________** River was frozen solid. The Saints walked on foot and drove their wagons across the slippery ice away from their beautiful homes in **___________**. It was very difficult to travel at this time of year. The Saints stopped at many places along the way, including Sugar Creek, Garden **______**, and Winter Quarters. They traveled over 1,000 miles across the plains, following their leader, Brigham **_______**, to their new home in the Rocky Mountains. The first group of Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847.