

I Saw the Elephant...
CALIFORNIA TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER
Elko, Nevada

Activity – Animals on the Trail

Theme: Emigrants used specific draft animals to pull their wagons along the California Trail. Picking the best animal for your group could make or break the trip.

Goals: Emigrants consistently needed to make decisions on the California Trail, including choosing the best animal to fit their needs.

Objectives: Students will be able to:

1. name 3 draft animals emigrants used on the California Trail
2. state 2 reasons that one animal is a better choice than others

Standards:

- G7.3.2 Identify transportation and communication networks.
- H2.4.2 Describe the experiences of pioneers moving west.
- G7.4.2 List examples of movements of people, goods, and ideas into and across Nevada.

WANTED!

Draw the animal you would want to bring you to California.
Use the table below to help make your decision.

Horses	Mules	Oxen
Grain must be brought in wagon	Must bring extra grain for animal	Can eat native grasses
Travel fast	Travel Fast	Travel slowly
Tolerate heat	Tolerate heat	Don't tolerate heat well
Most expensive	Expensive	cheap
Desirable to Indians	Less desirable to Indians	Aren't desirable to Indians
Require expensive equipment	Require expensive equipment	Require expensive equipment
Poor traction in sand and mud	Poor traction in sand and mud	Good traction in sand and mud
Good attitude	Bad attitude	Good attitude
Run off	Run off	Stay at camp
Can be worked to death	Will stop work when tired	Will stop work when tired
Strong	Not as strong	Strongest