

Real Reader: A Cowboy's Life

Objective

The student will read an account of cowboy life on the trail and ask questions to determine which of three volunteer readers has the correct passage.

Procedures

1. Choose three students to serve as “Real Readers” of the following stories. All three stories are mostly the same, but subtle changes have been made in specific facts in the two marked “not real.”
2. Hand out copies of the “real” story to the class, and instruct students to read it.
3. The assigned “Real Readers” will come in one at a time and say, “I am the Real Reader.”
4. Divide the class into groups of two or three students, and have each group ask the three “Real Readers” questions to determine which one has the correct story.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

GRADE 3

Speaking and Listening:
R.1,2,3. Fluency: 1,2. Reading
and Writing Process: R.1,2,3

GRADE 4

Speaking and Listening:
R.1,2,3. Fluency: 1,2. Reading
and Writing Process: R.1,2,3,4

The Real Reader

The Cowboy's Life (Real)

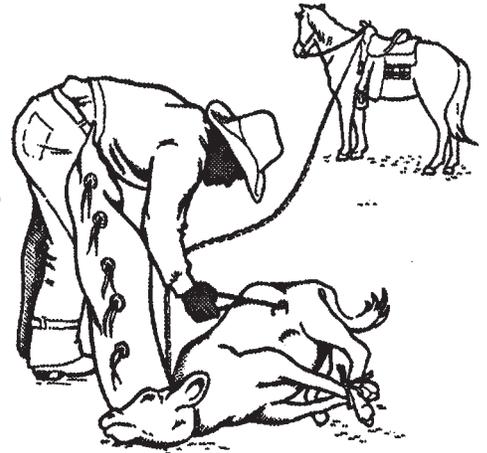
Between 1865 and 1887, millions of longhorn cattle walked from Texas, through Oklahoma, to Kansas and Missouri. They were led by 25-30 thousand cowboys.

Most of the cowboys were teenagers. Usually the oldest people on any drive were the trail boss and the cook, and their average age was 30. The young cowboy worked an exhausting schedule. He spent about 18 hours in the saddle every day for 3-4 months at a time. At night he rolled out his bed roll and slept on the bare ground.

The cowboy had to stop stampedes of nervous cattle. He had to round up strays. He had to outwit cattle rustlers. He had to watch out for poisonous snakes, cross wild rivers and keep riding even in hail storms. Sometimes he went for two or three days without water.

The chuck wagon was the kitchen of the cattle drive. It was also the compass. Before going to sleep, the cook pointed the wagon's hitching pole toward the North Star. The next morning, it showed the cowhands the way to go.

Young men chose to be cowboys because they thought it would be exciting. They wanted to prove to their families they could make it on their own. For many, working a trail drive brought in more money than they had ever seen in their lives—an average \$30 a month.



The Cowboy's Life (Not Real)

Between 1865 and 1887, millions of longhorn cattle walked from Texas, through Oklahoma, to Kansas and Missouri. Twenty-five to thirty thousand cowboys went on the trail drives.

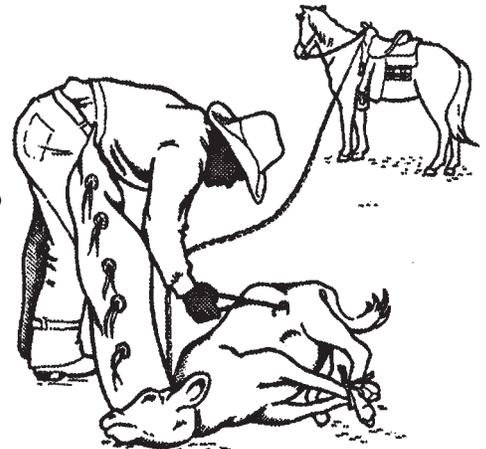
The most famous trail was the Chisholm Trail. It was named for the Cherokee Indian trader Jesse Chisholm. The trail entered Oklahoma from Texas at the Red River Station and went north to Kansas. Most cattlemen preferred the Chisholm Trail or the Great Western Trail because these trails were the shortest. However, the Great Western Trail was dangerous because of hostile Indians.

Most of the cowboys were old men. Usually the youngest people on any drive were the trail boss and the cook, and their average age was 30. The cowboy worked an exhausting schedule. He spent about 18 hours in the saddle every day for 3-4 months at a time. At night he rolled out his bedroll and slept on the bare ground.

The cowboy had to stop stampedes of nervous cattle. He had to round up strays. He had to outwit cattle rustlers. He had to watch out for poisonous snakes, cross wild rivers and keep riding, even in hail- storms. Sometimes he went for 2-3 days without water.

The chuck wagon was the kitchen of the cattle drive. It was also the compass. Before going to sleep, the cook pointed the wagon's hitching pole toward the North Star. The next morning, it showed the cowhands which way was north.

Men chose to be cowboys because they thought it would be exciting. They wanted to prove to their families they could make a lot of money. For many, working a trail drive brought in more money than they had ever seen in their lives—an average \$30 a month.



The Cowboy's Life (Not Real)

Between 1865 and 1887, millions of longhorn cattle walked from Texas, through Oklahoma, to Kansas and Missouri. Twenty-five to thirty thousand cowboys went on the trail drives.

The most famous trail was the Chisholm Trail. It was named for the Cherokee Indian trader Jesse Chisholm. The trail entered Oklahoma from Texas at the Red River Station and went north to Kansas. Most cattlemen preferred the Chisholm Trail or the Great Western Trail because these trails were the shortest. However, the Great Western Trail was dangerous because of hostile Indians.

Most of the cowboys were teenagers. Usually the youngest people on any drive were the trail boss and the cook, and their average age was 30. The young cowboy worked an exhausting schedule. He spent about 12 hours in the saddle every day for 5-6 months at a time. At night he rolled out his bedroll and slept on the bare ground.

The cowboy had to stop stampedes of nervous cattle. He had to round up strays. He had to outwit cattle rustlers. He had to watch out for poisonous snakes, cross wild rivers and keep riding, even in hailstorms. Sometimes he went for 2-3 days without food.

The chuck wagon was the kitchen of the cattle drive. It was also the compass. Before going to sleep, the cook pointed the wagon's hitching pole toward the Big Dipper. The next morning, it showed the cowhands which way to go.

Men chose to be cowboys because they thought it would be exciting. They wanted to prove to their families they could make it on their own. For many, working a trail drive brought in more money than they had ever seen in their lives—an average \$100 a month.

