



Name: _____

Date: _____ Class: _____

ACTIVITY: Supplies Word Problem

The Commissary Department moved supplies on boats whenever they could, but sometimes it wasn't possible. Then they had to use horses and wagons. Use the amounts in the letters you studied to find out how this worked.

Mr. Potts asked for a minimum of 14 hogsheads of rum, 3 hogsheads of molasses, and a wagon of salt. Two hogsheads can fit on one wagon. How many wagons will it take to move these supplies?

Some wagons used during the Revolution were 12 feet long. A horse is 8 feet long. If a wagon train has 5 wagons pulled by horses with 5 feet between each set, how long is the wagon train?

Consider Mr. Potts' supply wagons from the question above. If each wagon is pulled by horses and there are 5 feet between each set, how long is this wagon train?

A mile is 5,280 feet. Is Mr. Potts' wagon train a mile long?

How many wagons and horses (assuming 5 feet between each) would a wagon train need to be to be at least a mile long?

Wagon Trains

Think about these numbers. Think about what the wagon train would look like. Think about what it would sound like: horse hooves clomping, bridles jingling, loads jostling, men calling to each other. This must have been a big deal, especially on rough backcountry roads!

Do you think it was easy for these wagon trains to move supplies from one place to another?

The Moravians wanted a guard for their wagon. Do you think the wagon trains were in any danger? If so, from whom?

Sometimes the wagon trains included moving cattle for food. How might that change the train?

Explain why the wagon trains were important to the Revolutionary War.



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Mr. Potts asked for a minimum of 14 hogsheads of rum, 3 hogsheads of molasses, and a wagon of salt. Two hogsheads can fit on one wagon. How many wagons will it take to move these supplies?

$14 + 3 = 17$ hogsheads; $17/2$ per wagon = 8.5 wagons needed; + 1 wagon of salt = 9.5 wagons needed. Since we can't drive with half a wagon, we must have at least 10 wagons.

Some wagons used during the Revolution were 12 feet long. A horse is 8 feet long. If a wagon train has 5 wagons pulled by horses with 5 feet between each set, how long is the wagon train?

$12 \text{ feet/wagon} + 8 \text{ feet/horse} + 5 \text{ feet between them} = 25 \text{ feet per wagon-space}$; $25 \text{ feet per wagon-space} \times 5 \text{ wagons} = 125 \text{ feet}$.

Consider Mr. Potts' supply wagons from the question above. If each wagon is pulled by horses and there are 5 feet between each set, how long is this wagon train?

$9 \text{ wagons} \times 25 \text{ feet per wagon-space} = 250 \text{ feet}$.

A mile is 5,280 feet. Is Mr. Potts' wagon train a mile long?

$9 \text{ wagons} \times 25 \text{ feet per wagon-space} = 250 \text{ feet}$ so no, not a mile

How many wagons and horses (assuming 5 feet between each) would a wagon train need to be to be at least a mile long?

$5280 \text{ feet/mile divided by } 25 \text{ feet/wagon} = 211.2$ wagons. Since you can't have a fraction of a wagon, that means there would need to be at least 212 wagons to make a mile.

Wagon Trains

Think about these numbers. Think about what the wagon train would look like. Think about what it would sound like: horse hooves clomping, bridles jingling, loads jostling, men calling to each other. This must have been a big deal, especially on rough backcountry roads!

Do you think it was easy for these wagon trains to move supplies from one place to another?

Student answers will vary.

The Moravians wanted a guard for their wagon.

Do you think the wagon trains were in any danger? If so, from whom?

If the Moravians wanted a guard, one can assume that stealing had become more common. That much leather would also have been very valuable.

Sometimes the wagon trains included moving cattle for food. How might that change the train?

Student answers will vary, but it would have made the trains longer and louder.

Explain why the wagon trains were important to the Revolutionary War.

The wagon trains were very important for getting critical supplies to the soldiers. Without adequate supplies, the soldiers were at a greater risk for sickness and injury. Their mental strength decreased, as well, when they were hungry, cold, and/or sick. Keeping the army strong through proper provisions was important, and this meant keeping the wagon trains moving.