Construction of America’s First Transcontinental Railroad

Weekly Syllabus

Class 1
1) Covers the years 1853 to 1869
2) Planning beginning in 1853
3) Building 1863 to 1869

Class 2
1) Survey of possible routes
2) Advocates
3) The final route
4) Triggers that began construction
5) National issues of the period
6) Justification for use of federal funds

Class 3
1) Rates
2) Movies worth watching
3) Topography
4) Main line
5) The companies and people

Class 4
1) Promotion to investors
2) Terminus cities
3) The CP & UP
4) Building in the winters

Class 5
1) The rails
2) The rolling stocks

Class 6
1) Supplying the operations
2) Delivery of massive amounts of materials
Class 7
1) The crews
2) Work trains
3) Building the grade, “grade is king”
4) Route specifications
5) Sequence of construction

Class 8
1) Switches
2) Bridges
3) Trestles
4) Snow tunnels

Class 9
1) Construction of the tunnels – muscle and black powder

Class 10
1) Laying the rails -- detailed explanation

Class 11
1) The completion
2) Golden spike ceremony
3) Inspection and rejection of line
4) Release for use full route
5) Scandal and riches