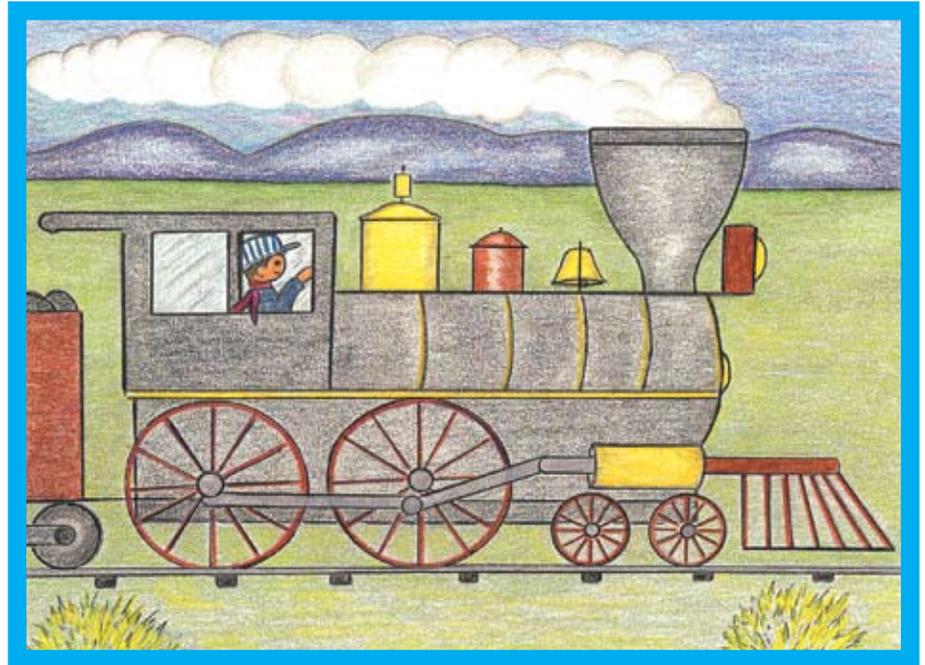


# Iron Horses and the Transcontinental Railway



When President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act on July 1, 1862, one of the great adventures in American history began. Two companies were chosen to build a transcontinental railroad spanning the western United States. Paid by the mile, construction began in the summer of 1864 with the Union Pacific Railroad racing westward from its starting point in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Two-thousand miles away, the Central Pacific Railroad raced to lay line eastward from its starting point in Sacramento, California. No predefined meeting point was set and each company was hungry to lay more track than its competitor. Seven grueling years later, the race ended and a gold spike was driven to join the hundreds of miles of newly laid track at Promontory Summit, Utah.

The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad meant that the four to six month journey endured by overland pioneers now took only six days. Almost overnight, the Pacific States were transformed by the influx of new settlers and goods. By 1880, the Pacific railroad was hauling almost \$50 million worth of freight annually and was the major arterial for 200 million acres of land between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean.



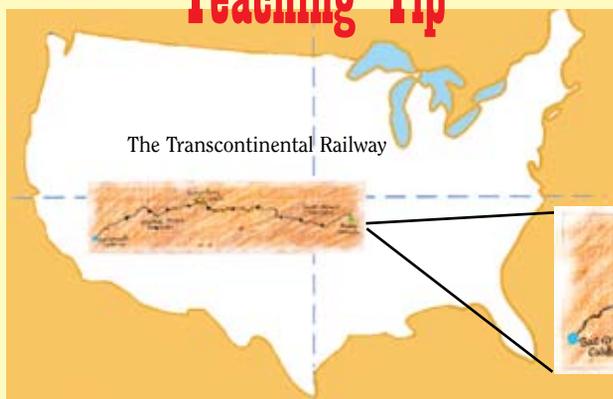
The two railroad companies were handsomely rewarded for their efforts. The Pacific Railroad Act granted them \$48,000 in government bonds and 6,400 acres of land for each mile of track laid. Later revisions to the bill doubled the land grant.

Amidst the engineering marvels and tales of almost super-human achievement, the building of the Transcontinental Railroad was also characterized by scandal, the near extinction of the buffalo, terrible and

dangerous labor conditions for some of the workers and the annihilation of the West's Native American peoples former way of life. It is but one of the fascinating chapters in America's history.

*As the publisher of the award-winning Draw•Write•Now® series of books, Carolyn Hurst has spent the last decade researching how children learn to draw and the benefits of teaching directed-drawing. Carolyn, her husband Steve, and their two children, Natalie and Evan share their Poulsbo, WA farm with two dogs, a cat, two pygmy goats and five horses.*

## Teaching Tip



When you want to show a small area on a large map you can show where the area is on the large map and then show the area enlarge so people can read the writing on that portion of the map.

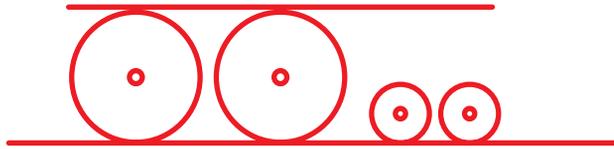
The example below shows the two railway lines and where they met to form the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869. It would take a large map to be able to read the cities, and locations. By making your call out larger you can add much more information on your subject, while still showing the location on the large map.



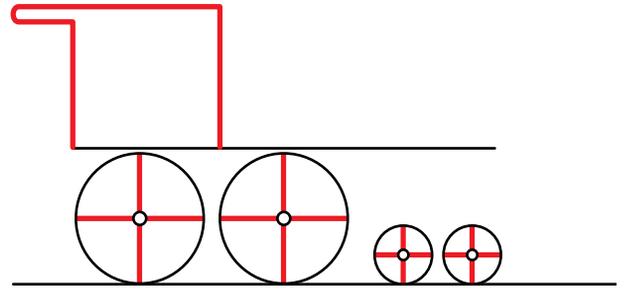
# Railroads

Steam Engine on the Transcontinental Roadroad in 1869

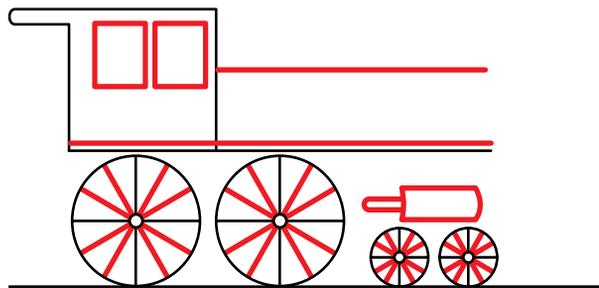
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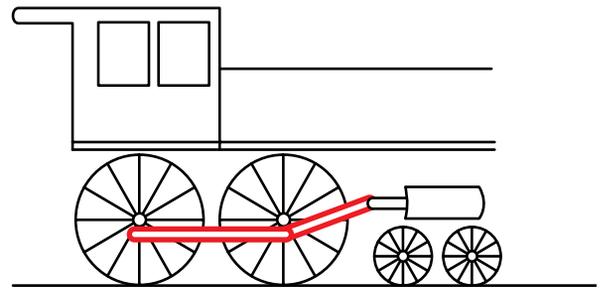
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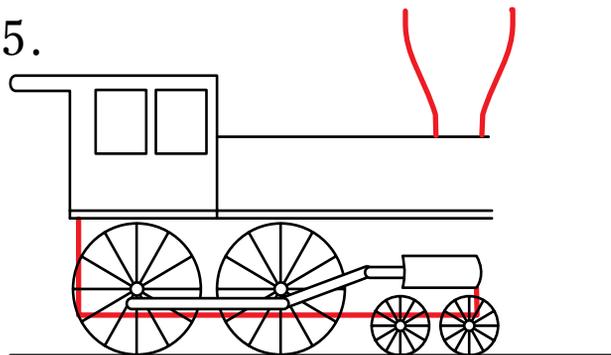
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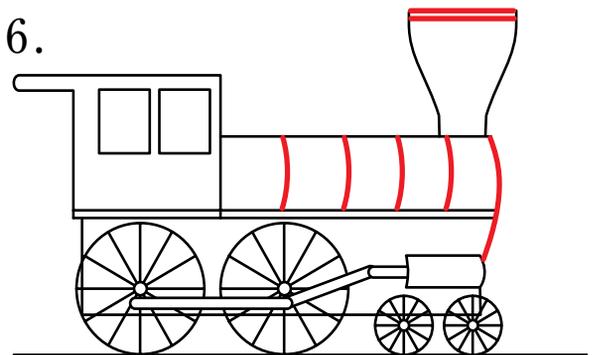
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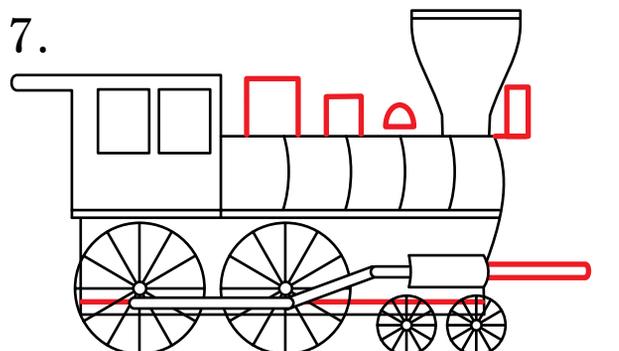
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