

### BELL RINGER

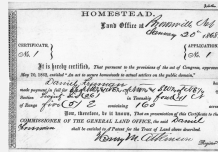
1. What was the significance of Buffalo in the Great Plains?
2. What were two factors that drive Americans West?
3. What does the term assimilation mean and how does it relate to westward expansion?

### TRANSCONTINENTAL RAIL ROAD: THE MOVE WEST

Unit 1

### SETTLERS MOVE WEST: GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED SETTLEMENT

- **Homestead Act (1862)** – gave 160 acres of land to any citizen over 21 who headed a household
  - By 1900, 600,000 families accepted land
  - Included **exodusters** – blacks who moved westward from the post-Reconstruction south
- Not all families were successful – dry land, hard to enforce the 160 acre allotment against railroad companies and miners



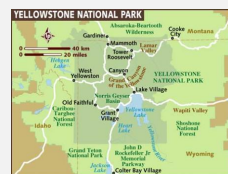
### SETTLERS MOVE WEST: GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED SETTLEMENT

- **Oklahoma Land Rush** – (April 2, 1889) - Fed gov't gave away land in Oklahoma to settlers
  - First come, first serve
  - Gun went off, land was claimed with flag in the ground
- Some settlers claimed land the night before.
- "too soon" = the **Sooners**



### CLOSING THE FRONTIER

- 1872 – Yellowstone National Park established by the fed gov't
- As western lands were claimed and settled so quickly, some believed that land should be protected and designated as wilderness.
- By 1880, more than 19 million acres of land had been bought and settled.
- By 1890, the frontier line no longer existed.



Frontier Settlements: 1870-1890



### SETTLERS MOVE WEST: RAILROAD EXPANSION

- 1850-71 – Fed gov't gave large **land grants** to railroad companies
  - Land grant = piece of land in exchange using the land how the gov't wanted
  - Railroad companies sold some land to farmers
- Central Pacific and Union Pacific raced to lay track to the Pacific
  - Used immigrant workers – **Mexicans, Chinese, and Irish** (= Civil War vets and blacks)
  - 8 miles of track/day
  - Very dangerous – explosives to blow through mountains
- By 1890s – east and west coasts linked by many tracks



TRANSCONTINENTAL R.R.  
VS.  
SOCIAL MEDIA

- How are they similar?
- How are they different?
- You can't always judge the past by the present.