

# Westward, Ho!

## Discussion Suggestions

1. Discuss the importance of planning in preparing for a trip. What preparations do students make before going to school? Before going on vacation? Planning was extremely important if emigrants were to be successful.
2. Discuss the similarities of emigrating to the west coast on the Oregon Trail to space travel. What is different?
3. Discuss some of the things we take for granted today that emigrants on the Oregon Trail did not enjoy. Ask students to list some. Add your own. (Suspension bridges, automobiles, electricity, flashlights, television, radio, cell phones).
4. Discuss other periods in history when many people have emigrated. Does the desire to move have anything to do with human nature?
5. Discuss the difference between the words emigrate (to leave one's place of abode or country for residence elsewhere) and immigrate (to come into an area of which one is not native for permanent residence). Why do we refer to the people on the Trails on their way to new homes as "emigrants?"
6. Discuss the methods of transporting people and goods across the continent (land travel versus water travel). Ask students to compare and contrast available forms of transportation of the mid-nineteenth century and those available today.