

Sample Lesson #2

The Coming of the Canals

In the 1800s, Ohio farmers grew beans, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, squash, and other vegetables. Indians had grown these crops for many years. Like them, settlers used what they grew to feed their families. Settlers also raised tobacco, wheat, corn, and other grain crops to sell. Most sold their **agricultural** products nearby since they did not have a way to transport goods over the Appalachian Mountains.

Trails that had been used by the Delaware, Seneca, and other tribes became the first roads. Some were made of logs or planks. However, many were dirt roads, full of ruts, mud, holes, and tree stumps.

In 1811, workers started to build the National Road. It was the first gravel road to cross the Appalachian Mountains.

By 1838, the National Road reached across Ohio. It was then easier for carriages and wagons to travel between Ohio and the East Coast. However, the journey was still long and difficult. Some cargo was sent to New Orleans on steamboats traveling the Ohio River to the Mississippi River. Even so, Ohio was not able to fully take part in trade with eastern states or between the United States and Europe.

During the 1820s and 1830s, Ohioans built the Ohio & Erie Canal and the Miami & Erie Canal. German and Irish immigrants did most of the work on these two canals. **Immigrants** are people who leave their homeland and travel to another country to live there permanently. The canals allowed Ohio farmers to transport their products to Lake Erie. From there, cargo moved east on the Erie Canal. Ohio could more easily trade with eastern states. Ohioans could use port cities in the East to ship cargo to Europe.



One of the early hotels on the National Road
Cambridge, Ohio

Source: Library of Congress

1. Why was the National Road so important to Ohio and the United States?
 - A) It helped Ohio farmers grow their crops.
 - B) It improved travel between Ohio and the East Coast.
 - C) It helped bring an end to the American Civil War.
 - D) all of these
2. Study the map of Ohio Canals in the *Help Pages*. What was the best route for a farmer near Columbus who wanted to send products to a dock on Lake Erie?
 - A) Ohio & Erie Canal going north
 - C) Miami & Erie Canal going north
 - B) Ohio & Erie Canal going south
 - D) Ohio River going north
3. How did building the three canals help Ohioans?
 - A) The canals provided jobs for laborers.
 - B) The canals made transportation easier.
 - C) Ohioans could move cargo to shipping docks on the East Coast.
 - D) all of these
4. Who did most of the work of digging the canals during the 1820s and 1830s?
 - immigrants
 - slaves
 - union workers
 - farmers
5. In the 1800s, Ohio's main products were _____.
 - industrial
 - imported
 - roadways
 - agricultural
6. Why was Ohio able to help the United States grow during the 1800s?
 - A) Ohio was one of the first thirteen colonies.
 - B) Ohio had plenty of waterways that allowed products to be shipped.
 - C) During the 1800s, most Americans lived in Ohio.
 - D) Ohio was the only state that had the National Road.
7. During the 1800s, a major source of conflict between the North and South was _____.
 - A) the practice of impressments
 - C) the issue of slavery
 - B) the Enabling Act of 1802
 - D) American independence
8. Name an Ohio abolitionist. _____