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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/122/2021_2022__E8_8B_B1_E8_AF_AD_E5_9B_9B_E7_c83_122634.htm A rapid means of long-distance transportation became a necessity for the United States as settlement spread ever farther west-ward. The early trains were impractical curiosities, and for a long time the railroad companies met with troublesome mechanical problems. The most serious ones were the construction of rails able to bear the load, and the development of a safe, effective stopping system. Once these were solved, the railroad was established as the best means of land transportation. By 1860 there were thousands of miles of railroads crossing the eastern mountain ranges and reaching westward to the Mississippi. There were also regional southern and western lines. The high point in railroad building came with the construction of the first transcontinental system. In 1862 Congress authorized two western railroad companies to build lines from Nebraska westward and from California eastward to a meeting point, so as to complete a transcontinental crossing linking the Atlantic seaboard with the Pacific. The Government helped the railroads generously with money and land. Actual work on this project began four years later. The Central Pacific Company, starting from California, used Chinese labor, while the Union Pacific employed crews of Irish labourers. The two groups worked at remarkable speed, each trying to cover a greater distance than the other. In 1869 they met at a place called Promontory in what is now the state of Utah. Many visitors

came there for the great occasion. There were joyous celebrations all over the country, with parades and the ringing of church bells to honor the great achievement. The railroad was very important in encouraging westward movement. It aim helped build up industry and farming by moving raw materials and by distributing products rapidly to distant markets. In linking towns and people to one another it helped unify the United States.

1. The major problems with Americas railroad system in the mid 19th century lay in _____. [A] poor quality rails and unreliable stopping systems [B] lack of financial support for development [C] limited railroad lines [D] lack of a transcontinental railroad

2. The building of the first transcontinental system [A] brought about a rapid growth of industry and farming in the west _____. [B] attracted many visitors to the construction sites [C] attracted labourers from Europe [D] encouraged people to travel all over the country

3. The best title for this passage would be _____. [A] Settlements Spread Westward [B] The Coast-to-Coast Railroad: A Vital Link [C] American Railroad History [D] The Importance of Railroads in the American Economy

4. The construction of the transcontinental railroad took _____. [A] 9years [B] 7years [C] 4years [D] 3yeras

5. What most likely made people think about a transcontinental railroad _____. [A] The possibility of government support for such a task. [B] The need to explore Utah. [C] The need to connect the east coast with the west. [D] The need to develop the railroad industry in the west.

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