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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/453/2021_2022__E4_B8_8A_E5_A4_96_E7_89_88_E5_c83_453647.htm Unit 9 Text In 1976 ,

during Americas bicentennial celebration , a family decided to travel to the American West instead of joining the majority of people that were celebrating on the East Coast. They wanted to follow the trails that the pioneers had made when they began to settle the West. The family was looking forward to making their own discoveries.

JOURNEY WEST Jim Doherty We began our trip out West on June 19 , 1976 , a time when millions of other American families were preparing to crowd into the Bicentennial shrines of the East. We sized up Americas 200th birthday celebration a bit differently.

Although the Republic may have been born in the East , it had spent most of its time and energies since then moving west. So we resolved to head in the same direction in 1976 , following the old pioneer trails and the famous rivers. Concentrating primarily on Wyoming and Montana , we would explore such legendary mountain ranges as the Big Horns , the Bitterroots and the Swan. There was one problem though , I was sure our four kids educated about the West through the movies would be disappointed. As an environmental editor , I knew that strip mining was tearing up many scenic areas and that clear-cutting was causing widespread damage in the mountains. I was well aware that draining and damming were making a mess of many rivers and wetlands. The grasslands were overgrazed and coal-burning power were befouling

the air. Wildlife was on the run everywhere and tourists were burning the national parks into slums. I was prepared for the worst. But how to prepare the kids ? The answer , we decided , was to undertake our journey not just as tourists on a holiday , but as reporters on the trail of "the real West." So all of us , from my kids to my wife , pledged to do our homework before we left and to record on the way everything we did , saw , hear , felt or thought. Predictably , we did not uncover any new truths about the West in three short weeks. But there were plenty of surprises on that 5 , 200-mile journey and the biggest one was this : I had been wrong. Some of the troubles we saw were every bit as bad as I had dreaded. But by and large , the country was as glorious , as vast and as overwhelmingly spectacular as those know-nothing kids had expected ! Half the fun of going west is discovering , along the way , how much the past is still with us. Old wivestales. Little old farm towns shaded from the summer heat by enormous maple trees on streets. White-haired folks reading the paper on their farmhouse porches at sunset. Worn-out windmills standing alone in pasture... All in all , we did not see much evidence that small-town America is vanishing as we traveled through rural Wisconsin , Minnesota and South Dakota. Its true that many new homes are rising in many old cornfields. But for the most part , life in vast areas of the American heartland remains pretty much the same as it was 30 and 40 years ago. In the hilly farmlands of southern Wisconsin and Minnesota , we found the fields and forests green and the creeks still flowing. The farms , with their "eggs for sale" signs and enormous "grandmas gardens" in the

front yards , looked prosperous and secure. Not much further north , though , a drought was threatening the land. In South Dakota , the situation was far worse. "Havent seen anything like this since the dirty thirties , " one farmer told us. Even in normal times , most of South Dakota is dry. Now it was being burned to a crisp. The water holes were dried up and we saw dead cattle lying here and there on the treeless , rolling range. Some farmers were hauling water out to their thirsty stock daily ; others were trying to drill deep wells. We saw two distinctly different Wyomings. We crossed the first Wyoming between the Black Hills and the Big Horns. Wide-open grassland , fenced and colorless , with red rocks and sweet-smelling shrubs scattered about , it was typical of a hard-used land. Cattle grazed on it. Oil rigs pumped on it and power lines zigzagged all over it. Freight trains labored across it , hauling coal from strip mine to power plant , hauling uranium and other minerals to refineries. This Wyoming , clearly , was booming.

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