

1. **Avalanche:** a fall or slide of a large amount of snow or ice down a mountainside.
2. **Boomtown:** a town having a sudden rise in population that grew along the railroad's building path. Many people lived in tents or shacks.
3. **Custom:** A practice followed by a particular group.
4. **Central Pacific Railroad Company:** a group of railroad workers that laid tracks from California to Utah while building the transcontinental railroad. Workers consisted of former slaves, former Civil War soldiers, some Native Americans, Chinese immigrants and common folk.
5. **Ground breaking:** the act of breaking ground to begin a construction project.
6. **Immigrant:** a person who leaves their own country to settle permanently in another country.
7. **Reservation:** an area of land set aside by the government for a special purpose.
8. **Snow shed:** temporary roofs built over railroad tracks to protect the work area from snow. These allowed railroad workers to continue to lay track during the harsh winter months.
9. **Transcontinental:** crossing a continent.
10. **Union Pacific Railroad Company:** a group of railroad workers that laid tracks from Nebraska to Utah while building the Transcontinental Railroad. Workers consisted of former slaves, former Civil War soldiers, German, Swedish and Irish immigrants, and common folk.
11. **The "Work Train":** a group of railcars used by the Union Pacific Railroad while building the Transcontinental Railroad. It was a train set that housed about a dozen railcars. They were each used for a particular job. For example: a boxcar was used as a blacksmith's workshop, a passenger car that was used as a kitchen/dining car, etc.