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Kansas History Through Story and Song

ANSWERS for Worksheet 1: Kansas Land

Kansas Land

Early Kansas settlers wrote many verses to the song *Kansas Land*. Each verse told a story of life at the time. Some verses were happy ones, and some were not so happy. Read the verses in the left-hand column carefully. Then read the right-hand column rewritten in story form and fill in the blanks. Can you tell what life was like for this settler? Why do you think they moved to Kansas?

The Song

*I've reached the land of corn and beans,
At first the crop looked fine and green,
But the grasshoppers and the **drouth**-
We'd better pull up and go south.*

Chorus:

*Oh Kansas sun, hot Kansas sun,
As to the highest **knoll** I run,
I look away across the plains,
And wonder why it never rains.
And as I look upon my corn,
I think but little of my farm.*

*If we are poor, we're not to blame
We'll go back East and sell the claim,
And if we succeed in getting tin,
We'll drive a herd of cattle in.*

*My **hoss** is poor; I cannot plow
But I can trade it for a cow.
My wheat is thin, but let it pass,
The cow can feed on **buffalo grass**.*

Vocabulary:

Drouth – a period with little or no rainfall,
very dry conditions
Buffalo grass – a hearty variety of grass
Tin – slang for money

The Story

*I came to Kansas to farm. At first it was ok, but then the **grasshoppers** ate my **crop** and we had no rain. I thought I should leave Kansas.*

*Kansas weather has not been good for farming. We do not get enough **rain**.*

*If we don't make enough money this year, we may have to **sell** the land and return to our home in the East. If we manage to make a little money, we will buy some cattle.*

*Since my **horse** is not strong enough to pull a plow, I will buy a **cow** instead. I won't have to buy feed because he can eat **buffalo grass**.*

Knoll – a small hill
Hoss – slang for horse

