

Quiz B: RI.6.2

Read the passage. Then answer the question.

A Rider on the Pony Express

1 Early in the year 1860, many young men in San Francisco passed the following poster:

2

Men Wanted: *The undersigned wishes to hire ten or a dozen men, familiar with the management of horses, as hostlers, or riders on the Overland Express Route via Salt Lake City. Wages \$50 per month. I may be found at the St. George Hotel during Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday.*

—William W. Finney.

3 Imagine a young, strapping lad named Jody Carson, who was one of the applicants. Here's what his journal might look like.

January 18, 1860

4 Fifty dollars a month! That would be plenty of money to get a good piece of land out here in the west. Best of all, they want men who are good with horses, and I'm just about the fastest rider I know. I bet they can't find two men who know the route overland to Platte.

5 Carrying mail that far by horse—can't be that hard work. Stagecoaches and wagons been shot before but by Indians and Mormons 'fraid for their land. I can ride around them.

January 22, 1860

6 Signed me up. When I got to that hotel on Sunday morning, the place were stuffed to the gills with boys and men. All kinds of men were there, and a few loud women, some I'd be afraid of. Sheriff Hill stood on a chair and shot his gun into the ceiling to get order. He picked twenty-five men out from the crowd, and I was one of them.

7 All signed riders had to repeat an oath before the rest. Mine went like this: "I, Jody Carson, do hereby swear, before the Great and Living God, that during my engagement, and while I am an employee of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, I will, under no circumstances, use profane language, that I will drink no intoxicating liquors, that I will not quarrel or fight with any other employee of the firm, and that in every respect I will conduct myself honestly, be faithful to my duties, and so direct all my acts as to win the confidence of my employers, so help me God."

8 I swore it. For fifty dollars, I aim to take this job serious.

