

LESSON
2.2**Interdisciplinary Application***For use with the lesson "Solve One-Step Equations"***Pony Express**

History In the 1850s, the only way the merchants and bankers on the West Coast could receive information from the East Coast was by ship or by stagecoach, which often took months. To meet the need for transcontinental communication, William Russell, William Waddell, and Alexander Majors founded the Pony Express.

On April 3, 1860, the Pony Express completed the 1966-mile journey from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California in just 10 days, which became the standard delivery time. Eighty riders were hired at a wage of \$100 per month (4 weeks) to race between 190 stations along the trail that goes through the present day states of Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California. Riders switched horses approximately every 10 miles and averaged 75 miles per run. The riders continued day and night no matter the weather, establishing the first high-speed link between the two coasts. Financially, the Pony Express was far from a success. Although the delivery charge was around \$5 per ounce, it did not come close to covering the actual expenses.

In 1861, on the brink of the Civil War, President Lincoln's Inaugural Address was telegraphed from Washington to St. Joseph and then delivered to Sacramento by the Pony Express. This was the fastest trip ever made by the Pony Express, for the riders covered about 255 miles per day.

On October 24, 1861, the transcontinental telegraph was finally completed and the Pony Express became obsolete overnight. Even though it existed for only 18 short months, the Pony Express will always be a legend of the American West.

In Exercises 1–4, use the information above to write and solve an equation to answer the question.

1. How many miles per day did the riders usually travel on the journey from St. Joseph to Sacramento?
2. How long did it take the riders to make the delivery of Lincoln's Inaugural Address?
3. How much did it cost to send a 9-ounce package with the Pony Express?
4. How much would a rider earn delivering for the Pony Express for 30 weeks?