

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## Primary Source Document Collection

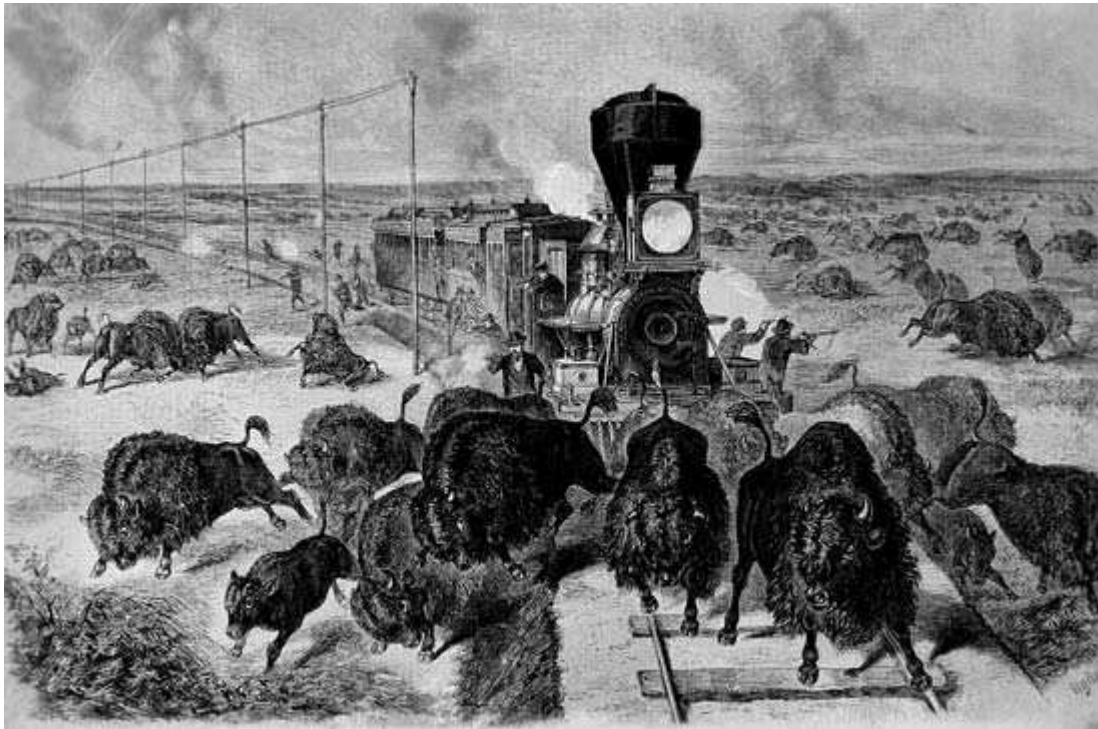
### MISSION 3: "A Cheyenne Odyssey"

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#### **Buffalo hunting from a train: *On the Kansas-Pacific Railroad* print**

*While the Federal government never officially sanctioned a policy regarding deliberate destruction of buffalo, there were many who noted that the elimination of the buffalo would also eliminate the "Indian problem." In 1874, the Secretary of the Interior stated, "The buffalo are disappearing rapidly, but not faster than I desire. I regard the destruction of such game as Indians subsist upon as facilitating the policy of the government, of destroying their hunting habits, coercing them on reservations, and compelling them to begin to adopt the habits of civilization." The railroads encouraged the slaughter of the buffalo as a way to force the Plains Indians onto reservations and allow the expansion of railroad lines. In the 1870s and 1880s as many as sixty million buffalo were killed, reducing their population to approximately 1,000 by 1889.*



Source: *On the Kansas-Pacific Railroad*, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, June 3, 1871, Library of Congress.