

# How Barbed Wire Changed the West

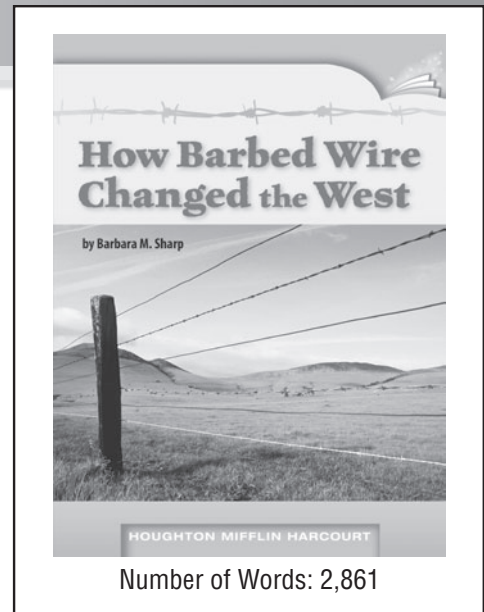
by Barbara M. Sharp

Fountas-Pinnell Level V

Informational Text

## Selection Summary

How could one simple idea—fencing—create such controversy? Yet, barbed wire emerged as the champion of change. While it closed the open range of the cattle ranchers and Native Americans, it opened the Great Plains to farming and settlement. Perhaps no single invention changed the American West more significantly than barbed wire.



## Characteristics of the Text

<b>Genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational text</li> </ul>
<b>Text Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third-person narrative</li> <li>• Chapter headings sequence development of barbed wire in America's West</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues associated with westward expansion</li> <li>• The invention process</li> <li>• Different kinds of barbed wire</li> </ul>
<b>Themes and Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change that helps some may hurt others.</li> <li>• Sometimes people disagree about what is best.</li> <li>• Sometimes ideas produce unexpected or unwanted results.</li> </ul>
<b>Language and Literary Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal language is tempered with the casual language of anecdotes.</li> <li>• Exaggeration and period terms</li> </ul>
<b>Sentence Complexity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mix of simple, complex, and infrequent compound sentences</li> <li>• Rhetorical questions and direct and indirect quotes</li> <li>• Dashes and exclamations</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary Words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many frontier and settler terms: <i>homesteader, plains, rangelands, rustlers</i></li> <li>• Multisyllable words: <i>vulcanized, ingenuity, accustomed, contagious, journalist</i></li> </ul>
<b>Illustrations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos, map, and drawings support the text.</li> </ul>
<b>Book and Print Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifteen pages of text, chapter headings, and inset text features</li> <li>• Table of contents, introduction, and conclusion</li> </ul>

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# How Barbed Wire Changed the West

by Barbara M. Sharp

## Build Background

Help students use their knowledge of farming and ranching to visualize the selection. Build interest by asking questions such as the following: *Where have you seen barbed wire fencing? What makes it different from other kinds of fencing?* Read the title and author and talk about the cover illustration. Note the chapter heads. Tell students that this selection is informational text, so it will give facts and examples about a topic.

## Introduce the Text

Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

**Pages 3–4:** Explain that the setting of this selection is America’s Great Plains. Point out the map and caption on page 4. **Suggested language:** *Turn to page 3. In the 1860s, land belonging to Native Americans was given to white settlers. Read the first two sentences in the third paragraph on page 3: Ranchers relied on the open range to graze their cattle. Once farmers began to fence their land, conflict broke out. Study the picture on the bottom of page 3. Why might some ranchers object to fencing, and especially to barbed wire?*

**Page 5:** Explain that Congress passed the Homestead Act, offering people 160 acres of free land in the West if they lived on and improved it for five years. *Why do you think a homesteader used sod to build the house in the picture?*

**Pages 6–7:** Explain that Joseph Glidden and others invented a kind of barbed wire. *Glidden got a patent on his invention. What does it mean to have a patent?*

**Page 8:** Look at the illustration and read the caption. *What did Isaac Ellwood do? What does it mean to manufacture something?*

**Page 9:** Read the chapter heading. *What do you think people were fighting about in a Patent War?*

*Now go back to the beginning of the selection and read to find out how barbed wire changed life in the western states.*

## Expand Your Vocabulary

**boundaries** – things that indicate borders, p. 12

**homesteaders** – settlers or squatters who claim land on which to build homes, p. 3

**manufacturers** – companies that make a finished product from raw material, p. 8


**patent** – the legal right to make or sell a product, p. 7

**sod** – blocks of soil with grass and plant roots, p. 5

**windmill** – a machine that runs on energy generated by a wheel of blades or slats rotated by the wind, p. 14

# Read

Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their understanding of the text as needed.

Remind students to use the Summarize Strategy  **TARGET STRATEGY** to briefly tell the important parts of the text in their own words.

## Discuss and Revisit the Text

### Personal Response

Invite students to share their personal responses to the selection.

**Suggested language:** *What do you think is positive about barbed wire fences? What is negative about that kind of fence?*

### Ways of Thinking

As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

Thinking Within the Text	Thinking Beyond the Text	Thinking About the Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Several inventors designed wire fencing, but Glidden was first to patent, manufacture, and sell the wire that is still in use today.</li><li>• Though effective, barbed wire fencing stirred up controversy between farmers and ranchers.</li><li>• Improvements to the wire and the recognition that the West was changing helped resolve the conflict over barbed wire.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One invention can change the way people live.</li><li>• Sometimes a good idea may turn out to have unexpected negative effects.</li><li>• Inventors want to be given credit for their innovations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Images of barbed wire help the reader visualize the impact of barbs on animals.</li><li>• The selection incorporates historical context to help the reader follow the selection.</li><li>• The author includes lots of details about the negative and positive effects of barbed wire to show the pros and cons of this invention.</li></ul>

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### Choices for Further Support

- **Fluency** Invite students to choral read a passage from the text. Remind them to use commas to break long sentences into meaningful parts.
- **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the students' reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.
- **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Remind students that many English words are formed from Latin roots and affixes. For example, the root of the vocabulary word *manufacturers* (p. 8) is the verb *manufacture*, which is based on the Latin words *manus*, or "hand," and *facere*, which means "to perform."

# Writing about Reading


## Critical Thinking

Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 23.9.

## Responding

Have students complete the activities at the back of the book, using their journals. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

## Target Comprehension Skill

**Text and Graphic Features**  **TARGET SKILL** Remind students that text and graphic features help to make the information in a text clearer. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a “Think Aloud” like the one below:

### Think Aloud

*I ask myself why the author included the diagrams on page 9. These diagrams show the two kinds of barbed wire the author is writing about. They help me to see how the two types are alike and how they are different. I'll add those details to the chart.*

## Practice the Skill

Have students share an example of another book in which text and graphics work together to help the reader understand the topic.

## Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students write a response to the prompt on Teacher's Guide page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

## Assessment Prompts

- What is the meaning of the word **boundaries** on page 12?
- What can the reader conclude about the relationship between Native Americans and the U.S. government in the mid-1800s?
- The selection is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.

# English Language Development

**Reading Support** Make sure the text matches the student’s reading level. Language and content should be accessible with regular teaching support. Remind students that barb wire changed the West.

**Idioms** The text includes many idioms that might be unfamiliar. Explain the meaning of expressions such as *gave up* (p. 8), *sided with* and *set off* (p. 10), *catching on* (p. 14).

## Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students’ English proficiency. **Speaker 1** is the teacher. **Speaker 2** is the student.

Beginning/Early Intermediate	Intermediate	Early Advanced/Advanced
<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What is the text about?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> how barbed wire changed the West</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Who is the Father of Barbed Wire?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Joseph Glidden</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Why did Great Plains farmers want to build fences?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Farmers wanted to fence in their land to protect their crops from animals and thieves.</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Why did ranchers object to fences at first?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Ranchers objected because their cattle needed an open range to graze and find water.</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What caused “the big die-up”?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> A blizzard caused Kansas cattle to travel 1,000 miles in search of food and warmth. When they reached Texas, barbed wire fences stopped them from traveling farther. Huddled together for warmth against the fencing, the animals froze to death.</p>

### Responding

**TARGET SKILL** Text and Graphic Features

What does the graphic feature on page 9 help you to understand? Copy and complete the chart shown below. Then add one other text or graphic feature and its purpose.

Text or Graphic	Location and Purpose
diagram of two types of barbed wire	?
?	?

**Write About It**

**Text to Self** Barbed wire was important to the cattle-ranching industry. Think of a tool or device that is important to your life. Then write a few paragraphs giving your opinion about why it is important.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 23**  
 BLACKLINE MASTER 23.3

### Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

- Think within the text** What was the consequence of the Homestead Act of 1862?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think within the text** Which two men applied for patents on barbed wire?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think beyond the text** What do you think the West would have been like if barbed wire had not been invented?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think about the text** What is the author’s purpose in writing the piece?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Making Connections** What invention do you think has been the most important in your life? Explain your answer.

**Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.**

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Lesson 23: How Barbed Wire Changed the West

## ***How Barbed Wire Changed the West***

### **Thinking Beyond the Text**

Think about the questions below. Then write your answer in two or three paragraphs.

Remember that when you think beyond the text, you use your personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

Are there fences in the neighborhoods where you live or go to school? Describe the purposes served by different kinds of fences in different places. Summarize what the selection tells about purposes served by barbed wire fencing in the West of the 1800s. Did people put up barbed wire fencing on the western plains for some of the same reasons people put up fences today? Use details from the text to support your answer.



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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical Thinking

**How Barbed Wire  
Changed the West**  
Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

**1. Think within the text** What was the consequence of the Homestead Act of 1862?

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**2. Think within the text** Which two men applied for patents on barbed wire?

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**3. Think beyond the text** What do you think the West would have been like if barbed wire had not been invented?

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**4. Think about the text** What is the author's purpose in writing the piece?

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**Making Connections** What invention do you think has been the most important in your life? Explain your answer.

**Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.**

# How Barbed Wire Changed the West • LEVEL V

**How Barbed Wire Changed the West**  
Running Record Form

page	Selection Text	Errors	Self-Corrections
11	<p>It took some time before barbed wire fencing dominated the Great Plains. At first, many ranchers objected to it. They were accustomed to grazing their cattle on the open range. The animals roamed freely in search of food and water. Each year after round-up, cowboys drove cattle across the range to the railroad towns of Kansas. Many followed the Chisholm Trail that extended north from Texas to Abilene, Kansas. From there, the cattle were shipped to slaughterhouses. No fences blocked the cowboys' routes. So ranchers feared that barbed wire fences would greatly interfere with their ranching business.</p>		
	Comments:	<b>Accuracy Rate</b> (# words read correctly/98 × 100) _____ %	<b>Total Self-Corrections</b> _____

Behavior	Code	Error
Read word correctly	✓ cat	0
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase	@ cat	0
Omission	̄ cat	1

Behavior	Code	Error
Substitution	cut cat	1
Self-corrects	cut <sup>SC</sup> cat	0
Insertion	the _cat	1
Word told	Ⓢ cat	1

