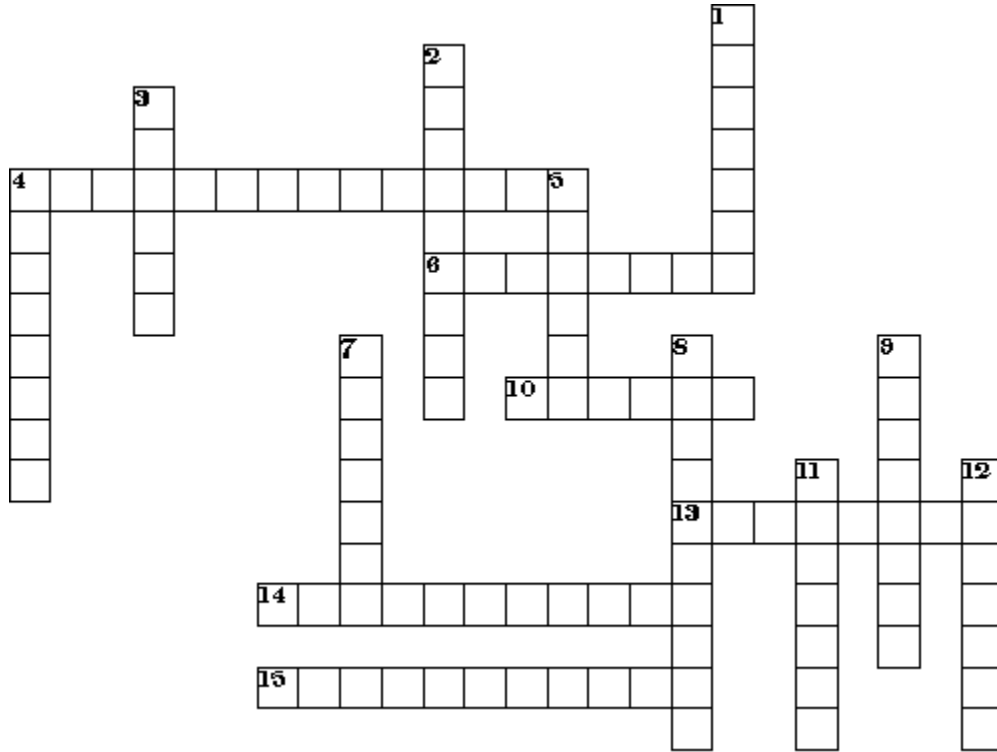# Railroad Workers

Building a railroad took a lot of work and many different skills.   Workers worked long hours on tedious jobs which were often dangerous.   They also had to remain healthy despite the long hard days.   If workers became sick they could lose their jobs without pay for the month.   Use the clues to match the workers with the type of work they did.

Across
4. build bridges over rivers and canyons
6. measures the distance between the surveyor and the rodman
10. uses picks, dynamite and shovels to smooth the roadbed
13. drives the train
14. bounces on shovel handles to pry up ties to make the rails level
15. hauls supplies to the construction site

Down
1. sends messages between the surveyor and the rodman by waving a flag
2. takes tickets, solves problems and relays information to the engineer
3. holds a pole so the surveyor can measure the slope of the land
4. connects and disconnects the cars and sets the brakes
5. drives the spikes into the ties to hold the tracks in place
7. feeds the firebox with wood or coal
8. carry gallons of tea to the Chinese workers in empty powder kegs
9. charts the flattest, safest route for the tracks
11. cuts trees in the mountains for railroad ties
12. carries and lowers 560 pound rails

Word List

Surveyor
Rodman
Flagman
Chainman
Grader
Bridge builders
Tie-hack
Mule-whacker
Iron-man
Spiker
Gandy-dancer
Tea-bearers
Conductor
Brakeman
Fireman
Engineer

Activity: Answer the following questions about working on the railroad.

· **Which work would you have liked?**

· **Why did you choose that work?**

· **After a twelve hour day earning only a dollar, would you still choose that work?**

· **Every job on the railroad had some dangers associated with it.   Choose three different types of work and list three dangers the job may have involved.   Use your thinking caps.   (Hint.   Think about where the workers were working: in large or small groups?   Are they isolated from the others?   What were they doing?   What tools or materials did they use?)**