

Handbill Recruiting Railroad Workers



ABOUT THE READING A handbill is a printed advertisement that is distributed by hand. This handbill was posted in New York in 1853. It was particularly targeted toward recent immigrants who were looking for employment.

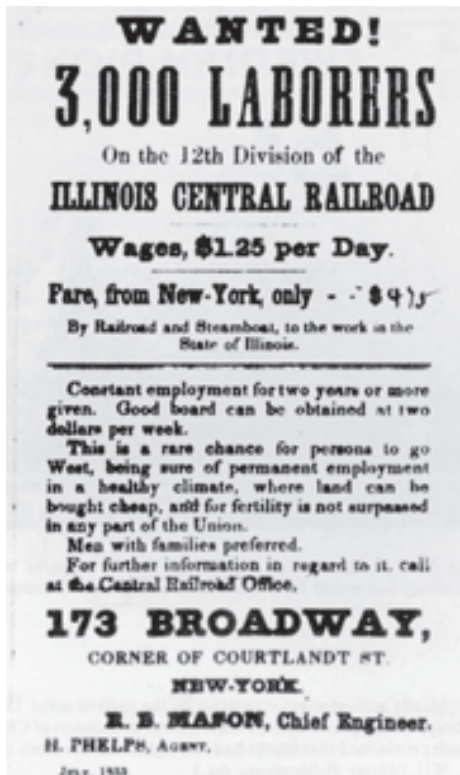
VOCABULARY

board compensation, usually with meals and lodging

fertility the ability to produce crops



As you read pay attention to the incentives offered. What does the handbill say about the actual work to be performed? What does the writer of the handbill expect workers to do after they have finished working for the railroad?



National Park Service: Statue of Liberty National Monument

Two dollars in 1853 was equal to approximately \$42 in 2003.

Source: *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* by Roger Daniels. Copyright © 1990 by Visual Education Corporation, HarperCollins Publishers, New York

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WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

1. Based on the handbill, what sort of incentives were offered to immigrants who accepted a job with the Illinois Central Railroad?

2. Why do you think the Illinois Central Railroad preferred to hire men with families?
