Tracks 11-13

Special Delivery!

Have you ever gotten a letter? How long did it take to get to you? In the 8 mid-1800s, a letter could take 18 many months to get from east to 24 west. All of that changed on 31 April 3, 1860 with the **birth** of 38 the Pony Express. 45 The Pony Express was a mail 46 service from St. Joseph, Missouri, to 52 Sacramento, California. The mail carriers 58 were young men brave enough to make the trip. The owners 63 considered the job so dangerous that they preferred to hire 74 orphans. 84 The Pony Express riders traveled the nearly 1,900-mile route at 85 about ten miles per hour. Every ten to 20 miles the rider would stop 96 at a relay station, mount a fresh horse, and be on his way in less 110 than two minutes. After riding for 75 to 100 miles, the rider stopped 125 at a larger station and handed the mail **pouch** to another rider. 138 The Pony Express was only in business for a year and a half. In 150 that time, Pony Express riders made 308 trips. They traveled a total 164 of over 600,000 miles. They lost only one mail pouch. 176 In October of 1861, the transcontinental telegraph was 186 completed. Now messages could travel from east to west instantly. 194 People no longer needed the Pony Express, but they would always 204 remember it. 215 217 words read - errors

= score

Quick Quiz

- 13. What is the main idea of *Special Delivery*!?
 - p. Being a Pony Express mail carrier was a dangerous job.
 - q. Letters get from east to west more quickly today.
 - r. The Pony Express was an important mail service used long ago.
- 14. Where did the Pony Express mail carriers carry the letters?
 - a. from Missouri to California
 - b. from Massachusetts to California
 - c. from Missouri to Oregon
- 15. What does **pouch** mean in this story?
 - l. a bag or sack
 - m. a part of some animals
 - n. a purse for holding money
- 16. Why didn't people need the Pony Express after October of 1861?
 - t. People did not need to send letters after they got telephones.
 - u. The transcontinental telegraph was a faster way to send messages.
 - v. The United States Postal Service delivered letters.

Talk about what you learned

How has sending messages in the United States changed since the days of the Pony Express?

