

AN ILLINOIS WINTER

FILM SUMMARY

Answer the questions below as the film progresses.

Migration and Settlement

1. Briefly describe the prairie setting.
2. Why were people hesitant about settling in the prairie?
3. In regards to heating homes, how do the people of the early 1800s differ in thinking from today?
4. What is the difference in the distribution of rural dwellings between the 1800s and today?

Calm before the Storm

1. What were the winter's like before the winter of 1830-31?
2. What was so unique about the soils of the prairie?
3. Besides the usual crops planted in the prairie region, what other crop was pondered? What was the reason?
4. What is referred as "Little Egypt?" What is unique about this?
5. What is the risk of a harsh winter with regards to agriculture?

The Winter that defines Illinois

1. What is so unique to the cultural history of Illinois in the 1800s?
2. If the weather kept inhabitants indoors, what were the fears?
3. What is the primary difference between those before us and today's people with regards to comfort and the elements? How did they cope?

The Winter of the Deep Snow: 1830-31

1. What particular facts give us evidence that the temperatures dropped quickly?
2. What was the reason why there was so much snow in the central Illinois region?

Overall Summary

1. How does this particular event differ in events in the present day?
2. How do you compare life in the early 1800s and life in the present?
3. Do you think people today are as dependent on the weather as they were in the past? Justify your answer.
4. Why is it important for us to learn about living in the early 1800s and understand what the weather was like?