

The Transcontinental Railroad Readers Theatre Script
Developed by Ms. Alicia Smitherman's Class with Dr. Rosalind M. Flynn
Byrd Elementary School Selma, Alabama

1	Gold! [gesture]	6	started building,
2	Gold! [gesture]	7	using picks,
All	Gold! [gesture]	All	[gesture] [sound effect]
3	Did someone say gold?	8	shovels,
4	I want to find gold!	All	[gesture] [sound effect]
5	I will be rich!	9	and wheelbarrows
All	Chi-ching! [gesture]	All	[gesture]
6	Gold was discovered in 1848 in California.	10	to make a
7	I've got to get to California!	All	smooth [gesture]
8	Me, too.	1	road bed.
9	We could go out west by stagecoach	2	Squared-off logs called ties were laid
10	or by wagon train.	3	along the roadbed.
All	That will take forever! [gesture]	3	Iron rails were set on the ties and held
7-9	And it could be dangerous.	All	in place by large nails called
1	There's got to be a better way!	All	Spikes.! [Hum song – <i>I've Been Working on the Railroad</i>]
2	I wish someone could build something faster!	4	Five miles of tracks could be laid in a
1-7	Zoom! [gesture]	5	day on the flat country.
8-16	Zoom! [gesture]	5	It wasn't always that easy.
17-25	Zoom! [gesture]	All	Nope. Problems kept popping up.
1	I wish someone could build a	[gesture]	
4-6	Transcontinental railroad!	6	Backaches!
All	Choo! Choo! [gesture] [sound effect]	All	Oh my back! [gesture]
2-3	It would stretch all the way across the continent	7	Workers left to find gold. [gesture]
1-5	from the west coast [gesture]	8	Mountains!
6-10	to the east coast. [gesture]	All	Mountains were a huge problem!
All	Whoa! That's a long way! [gesture]	9	The Rocky Mountains and
3	It can't be done!	10	The Sierra Nevada Mountains
4	It's impossible!	1	wouldn't get out of the way.
5	No way!	All	So what were they to do? [gesture]
6	That's ridiculous!	1-3	Go around it? [gesture]
7	It would have to cross two thousand miles of land and desert,	4-6	Go over it? [gesture]
8	and not one, but two rugged mountains!	7-9	Go through it? [gesture]
All	Was it really possible? [gesture]	10	Something like that.
9	Well, in 1862 Congress passed the Pacific Railroad Act	1	They used blasting powder
10	This act gave land and money to railroad companies to lay tracks.	All	Phew! [gesture]
1	So it was time to get	2	to carve roadbeds on the slopes around
All	Busy! [gesture]	3	the mountains
2	The Union Pacific Railroad	4	and to go over the mountains.
3	led by Grenville Dodge	4	Some mountains could not be crossed.
4	and the Central Pacific Railroad	5	They had to make tunnels right
5	led by Charles Crocker	5	through those jokers.
		All	Think of all that work! Shew!
		[gesture]	
		6	The Central Pacific
		7	Built going east [1/2 of group look
		right and hold position]	
		8	The Union Pacific

9 Built going west. [other 1/2 of group
look right and hold position]
10 joined up at
All Promontory Point
1 in Utah.
2 A great ceremony was held there to
celebrate
All “The Wedding of the Rails” [gesture]
[sound effect] [*The Wedding Song*]
1-5 In 1869, the dream of
All The Transcontinental Railroad
6-10 had come true.
All [sound effect—Cheer!]
1 In the next 25 years,
2 More transcontinental railroads
3 Crossed the west.
All Choo! Choo! [sound effect] [gesture]