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## O'PIONEERS

**1992 Jessica Lange, David Strathairn 99Min. PG**

Although confused by a complex tale of personal tragedy and triumph, this story, set in late 19th century Nebraska can be useful in the United States history classroom to provide background for consideration of two important socio-economic themes: the mechanization of agriculture and consequent transition from subsistence to commercial farming, and the growing grievances of farmers caught in a free market economy which went beyond their control.

<p><b>Hanover, Nebraska 1883</b>  <b>Alexandra assumes responsibility for the farm</b></p> <p><b>13:00</b>  <b>Two years later tough sustenance farming</b></p> <p><b>18:30</b>  <b>Carl Lindstrom leaves for St. Louis. Alexandra dedicates her life to the farm and the future of her little brother Emile.</b></p> <p><b>22:00</b>  <b>Decision to stay and buy more land</b></p> <p><b>26:00</b>  <b>15 years later homestead becomes big commercial farm</b></p> <p><b>39:00</b>  <b>Carl Lindstrom returns. Tension with Alexandra's brothers.</b></p> <p><b>47:00</b>  <b>Personal character development. Pressures of the prairie.</b></p> <p><b>1:05:00</b>  <b>Carl Lindstrom goes to Alaska</b></p> <p><b>1:10:00</b>  <b>Emile returns</b></p> <p><b>1:33:30</b>  <b>Carl Lindstrom returns</b></p>	<p><b>Segment 1 00:00 - 47:00</b>  The first part of the film is sufficient to provide the visual support for the hearing of reports and for the seminar questioning sequence. Although the film does not deal with these themes directly it does create a sense of the vastness and enormous economic potential of the Great Plains and documents the rapid change which occurred between the Civil War and the turn of the 20th Century. The following report topics can provide support for the seminar questions on the theme of the mechanization of agriculture:  <b>Seminar Questioning Sequence</b>  In what ways did the nature of the land in the American Midwest and Plains areas lend itself to mechanized agriculture?  What impact did the relatively high cost of labor have on the development of mechanized agriculture?  What impact did the rapid rise in the population of the United States have on the growth of agriculture? Why then did the number of farmers decline rapidly in the late 19th century?  The following report topics can provide support for the seminar questions on the theme of the grievances of farmers in the late 19th Century:  <b>Seminar Questioning Sequence:</b>  How did the rise of mechanized agriculture increase the farmer's need for greater amounts of capital investment?  How did the change to commercial farming necessitate a greater need for commercial credit?  In what ways was the free market system out of the farmer's control? On whom was the farmer dependant?</p>	<p><b>John Deere plow</b>  <b>Cyrus McCormick</b>  <b>Reaper Thresher</b>  <b>Harvester</b>  <b>Scientific</b>  <b>Agriculture</b>  <b>Land Grant</b>  <b>Colleges</b>  <b>Morril Land-</b>  <b>Grant Act</b>  <b>Grain Binder</b>  <b>Steel tooth</b>  <b>cultivator</b>  <b>Homestead Act of</b>  <b>1862</b>  <b>U. S. Department</b>  <b>of Agriculture</b>  <b>Gang plows</b>  <b>Seed drills</b>  <b>Combines</b>  <b>Cattle Kingdom</b>  <b>Barbed Wire</b>  <b>Anthrax</b>  <b>Texas fever</b>  <b>Luther Burbank</b></p> <p><b>Granger laws</b>  <b>Wabash v. Illinois</b>  <b>Farmer's</b>  <b>Cooperatives</b>  <b>Interstate</b>  <b>Commerce Act of</b>  <b>1887</b>  <b>Bimetallism</b>  <b>Bland-Allison Act</b>  <b>Sherman Silver</b>  <b>Purchase Act</b>  <b>Farmer's Alliances</b></p>
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	<p>Why did farm prices drop after the Civil War?</p> <p>Why did they rise after the turn of the 20th Century?</p> <p>Why was the problem of inflation/deflation so important to farmers?</p> <p>Why did they want the government to coin silver?</p>	<p><b>Populist Party</b></p> <p><b>William Jennings Bryan</b></p> <p><b>Gold Standard Act of 1900</b></p> <p><b>Grain storage companies</b></p> <p><b>Meat packing companies</b></p> <p><b>Railroads</b></p> <p><b>Insurance companies</b></p> <p><b>Food distributors</b></p>
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