

1. Title / Content Area:	Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Cars
2. Historic Site:	Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Cars (Gallopig Goose) #2 and #5
3. Episode:	https://www.pbs.org/video/gallopig-goose-8exwzz/
4. Developed by:	Michelle Pearson and Sally Purath
5. Grade Level and Standards:	<p><i>Grade Level:</i> 6th – HS <i>Grade Level:</i> 6th - HS <i>Standards:</i> Colorado Social Studies Standards 1-4 <i>Prepared Graduate Competencies:</i> Content in this Document Based Question (DBQ) link to Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Colorado Academic Standards 6th: PGC 1-5, 7, 8 7th: PGC 1-5, 7 8th: PGC 1-5, 7 HS: PGC 1-5, 7, 8</p>
6. Assessment Question:	Why are the Rio Grande and Southern Railroad Motor Cars significant in the history of Colorado?
7. Contextual Paragraph	<p>Built by the Rio Grande and Southern Railroad the fleet of Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Cars (each one known affectionately as a Gallopig Goose) are legendary to many railroad enthusiasts in Colorado and across the nation. The seven railcars that still exist today had a very specific purpose which included the delivery of mail, small freight items, and sometimes passengers. Built for this purpose they were actively used from 1931 – 1949 and were the only scheduled train daily in the region.</p> <p>The San Juan mountains are some of the most rugged mountains in Colorado, and have traditionally made it difficult for miners and other settlers to get goods in and out of the small towns, such as Ouray and Silverton, which are tucked in the hills. The narrow gauge railroad lines provided a solution to this challenge and were able to get into the narrow crevices in the mountains and allowed needed supplies and</p>



mail to reach these towns more efficiently.

After the silver collapse, the Rio Grande Southern suffered since the mines were collapsing and closing entirely. By the 1930's it was too expensive to run the railroad in the region, and the Rio Grande Southern was close to abandoning the tracks entirely. In the 1930's the Galloping Goose was created in Dolores, Colorado by Jack Odenbaugh who was hired by the railroad to build a motor car from a Buick he purchased locally. By the 16th of June of 1931 the first motor car (later known as a Galloping Goose) cost about \$850 to build and was put into service between Dolores and Telluride. Later, six more were constructed in different forms as necessity later dictated a larger size. The motor cars were more efficient to run and could be operated by one or two men instead of the normal five it would take for a standard steam engine. In 1952, the Rio Grande Southern closed and ceased operation. In 2005, the Colorado Railroad Museum received their first State Historical Fund grant to preserve the three railcars at the museum and since then several other museums and community organizations in possession of Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Cars have done so as well.

8. Connection to Historic Preservation

Three of the Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Cars (each one was later referred to as a Galloping Goose) were listed in the National Register of Historic places in 1997. This included Motor #2, Motor #6, and Motor #7. Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Car #5 was listed in the State Register of Historic Properties in 1994.

The Rio Grande Southern Railroad cars are significant for two main reasons including Criterion A in the National Register of Historic places for the role it played in the railroad service to the southwestern portion of the state, and for Criterion C for the engineering significance of the motor car which was created to meet the needs of the railroad during a time period of economic depression but substantial regional need for services.

The preservation of the “geese” has been completed in partnership with a variety of entities across Colorado depending on where each of the remaining motor cars are located. These partners include the Ridgeway Railroad Museum, the Telluride

	<p>Volunteer Fire Department, the Colorado Railroad Museum, community volunteers, and the History Colorado State Historical Fund. Currently the museum volunteers are working with outstanding local mechanics in the area to restore and preserve the “geese” which reflects a solid community partnership that showcases the work of experts who will ensure that the story of the geese is documented as completely as possible.</p>	
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Document Based Question (DBQ)

Document Set

The "Galloping Goose" rail car outside the Rio Grande Southern Railroad depot, built in 1923 in Dolores, a true railroad town in Montezuma County in far-southwest Colorado (#5)



<https://www.loc.gov/item/2015632628/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. What are the different components which make up the Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Car #5 shown in the picture?
2. Why would the railroad need the front portion of the Galloping Goose attached to the back portion?
3. What would be transported in this vehicle? How do you know?
4. Why would this type of vehicle be needed in the mountains of Colorado?

National Register Nomination Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Car #2 Historic Photo A



<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/520d7b67-01c3-47fa-9be5-d63be755b273/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. What are the different parts of Rio Grande Southern Railroad Motor Car #2 shown in the image?
2. How is this car different than the one on Motor Car #5?
3. Why do you suppose the cars are different?
4. Why would the front component of this vehicle be important when it travelled in the mountains?

National Register Nomination Rio Grande Southern
Railroad Motor Car #2 Historic Photo B

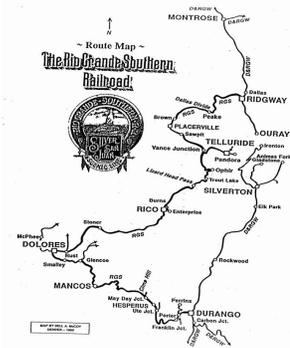


<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/520d7b67-01c3-47fa-9be5-d63be755b273/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. Examine this image (Photo B) from the National Register Nomination. What are some of the things on the motor car that need to be repaired?
2. Compare this image to the image of this motor car on the railroad tracks (Photo A). What is different? What is the same?
3. Why would historic preservationists want the car to look as close to the original version as possible?
4. Why is this important?
5. How can a preserved Galloping Goose vehicle help people understand the engineering mechanisms and science techniques used to build a car such as this?
6. How does restoration of a Railroad motor car help people understand how it was constructed?

Rio Grande and Southern Railroad Map



<http://www.gallopinggoose5.org/route-map/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. Compare this map to the map from the Library of Congress in this collection. What are the differences? What are the similarities?
2. Based on this map, and information you know about the geography of this region, why would these routes be important?
3. How would a motor car be a positive asset in this region?

Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Map



<https://www.loc.gov/item/98688650/>

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

1. Examine the map. How did the Denver Rio Grande Railroad meet the basic needs of rail service to this region?
2. Why would it be important to have a smaller railroad operating in the southwest portion of Colorado?
3. What would be the challenges of maintaining two railroads in this region?
4. How would the economy affect the use of the railroad in this region?

Assessment Question

Why are the Rio Grande and Southern Railroad Motor Cars (the fleet of Galloping Goose cars) significant in the history of Colorado?

Response