

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

## A Remarkable Road Trip

- 1 On the evening of May 19, 1903, Dr. Horatio Nelson Jackson accepted a challenge to do something that nobody had done before. The terms of this challenge included driving from San Francisco, California, to New York City in 90 days. If he succeeded, he would win \$50.
- 2 Although today it is not unusual to drive across the country in just a few days, this was not always the case. The automobile was a new product in 1903, and cars were not as advanced as today's vehicles. In 1903 many people believed that cars were a luxury and a source of entertainment rather than a useful means of transportation. Horse-drawn carriages were considered more dependable. Jackson, however, wanted to prove that cars could be just as useful and reliable.

### Preparing for the Trip

- 3 Jackson hired mechanic Sewall K. Crocker to join him on the cross-country drive. Crocker suggested that Jackson buy a Winton touring car for the journey. Jackson took Crocker's suggestion under advisement and bought the car used from a banker in San Francisco.
- 4 Because gas stations did not exist in those days, Jackson decided to carry tanks of gasoline, which would be refilled at general stores along the way. Jackson also bought other supplies and equipment for the journey. To make room for supplies, Crocker removed the car's backseat.

### Some of Jackson's Supplies

- Cooking equipment
- Sleeping bags
- A car cover
- Warm clothing
- Tools
- Rope
- A camera
- A spare tire

### A Difficult Journey

- 5 On May 23, 1903, in the early afternoon, Jackson and Crocker left San Francisco. They had driven only 15 miles when a rear tire became flat. Luckily, they were able to use the spare tire for the rest of that day's journey.
- 6 Another problem Jackson and Crocker encountered was getting accurate directions. In 1903 there were no road maps, and travel guidebooks were published for only certain parts of the country.

Advice from strangers, a compass, and landmarks such as railroad tracks and mountains helped guide the men. Sometimes the directions they received were incorrect, and they had to turn around and locate the correct route. At other times Jackson was forced to change course to avoid flooded or snow-covered land.

- 7 In addition, in 1903 there were only about 150 miles of paved roads across the country. Most roads were dirt paths that had been used mainly for horse-drawn carriages. In remote areas where roads did not exist at all, Jackson drove through muddy cow pastures and even over mountains. The bumpy ride sometimes jarred equipment loose and caused it to fall off the car. They also experienced many flat tires and dead batteries.
- 8 Finding tires and other car parts for repairs was difficult. In 1903 there were only 850 Winton vehicles in the country. Replacement parts had to be ordered directly from the Winton car factory and delivered by stagecoach or train. Jackson wisely ordered new car parts ahead of time so that they would be waiting for him when he arrived in the next town. Then he would have to find a blacksmith to install parts. Some generously worked overnight to help the men.

### The Positive Side

- 9 Jackson and Crocker's journey was not entirely filled with difficulties. One thing that kept the trip enjoyable was Bud, a bulldog Jackson had bought in California. Bud became the team's mascot, traveling with the men wherever they went. Jackson even put goggles on Bud to keep the dust out of his eyes. The dog was a source of joy to Jackson and Crocker, who would gaze over and see a happy Bud riding alongside them. By the journey's end Bud was a celebrity.



Transportation Collection, Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

- 10 Local newspapers reported on the team's progress as they passed through each town, and neighboring towns became aware of the team's upcoming arrival. Residents came to see the men and their Winton, greeting them with cheers. The event was especially exciting since many people had never before seen a car.



### **Mission Complete**

- 11 Jackson, Crocker, and Bud reached New York City on July 26, 1903. The team completed the journey in 63 days, 12 hours, and 30 minutes.
- 12 It is estimated that the team had driven more than 5,600 miles. Although Jackson won \$50, he spent a total of \$8,000 on the trip.
- 13 Was it worth the cost? Jackson believed so. Jackson and Crocker's success changed American driving forever. The idea that people could travel long distances in a vehicle became a reality. Jackson was able to see many beautiful parts of the country and dreamed that one day others would be able to experience America's landscape just as he had. Today Jackson's Winton is displayed in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., taking its rightful place in history.