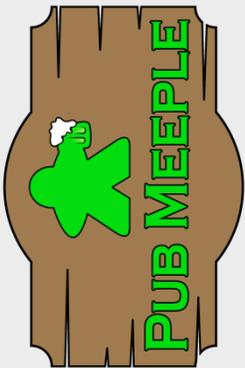


A game resource by



Game: **Great Western Trail**

Publisher: **Stronghold Games (2016)**

File Version: **1.0**

Author: **Bryan Beech**

You can find all of our other game resources, reviews, and articles at: www.pubmeeple.com

Pub Meeple resources are meant for personal use only. We do not benefit financially from these resources nor do we claim any rights to the material within. Artwork from the original game is copyrighted by the publisher and used without permission. This PDF may not be sold.



TEACHING GUIDE

Stop! This teaching guide is not intended as a Summary of Rules nor a replacement for knowing the rules. As the player teaching the game, you should first be familiar with the rule book and major concepts of the game.

1. Set the entire game up for the appropriate number of players.
2. As the teacher, take the first turn of the game and start everyone with a turn through **Kansas City**.
 - a. Take steps 1 - 3 of **Kansas City**: at this point, the first three steps of **Kansas City** are simple and repetitive.
 - b. Draw 4 cards and take step 4 of **Kansas City**: we have delayed in drawing cards to limit our interaction with unknowns, but now it's time.
 - c. Explain step 5 of **Kansas City**, but don't do it: unfortunately there is no way to perform step 5 of **Kansas City** at this point without hamstringing everyone's entire game. However, that does not keep you from demonstrating it and having players demonstrate it back during their turn.
 - d. Refill the foresight spaces below the first 3 steps of **Kansas City** and have each other player repeat the **Kansas City** steps, explaining step 5 back to you.
3. Your first trail run and the top row of the player board:
 - a. Everyone draws 4 cards. It's tempting to show them phase C on their player board, I usually wait until we get to a phase C.
 - b. Phase A - Movement: Demonstrate movement up to 3 spaces.
 - c. Phase B - Take Actions: Ideally, you should be able to explain and take a neutral building's actions.
 - d. Phase C - Draw Cards: Draw up or at least go over the drawing step represented by this box.
 - e. Everyone else plays through their first turn.
 - f. Before taking a second turn, stop and explain the axillary actions on the left side of the player mat.
4. Around the time someone is about to start their second trail-run, take a moment to detail some aspects that have not been highlighted:
 - a. Even if it has happened already, take this time to explain station master spaces and the benefits to both the upgrade and the station master bonuses.
 - b. Go over starting objective cards as well as the risk/reward of acquiring more.
 - c. In addition to the benefit an employee brings, there are spaces on a player board that provide their own 1-time bonus or end game points when they are filled.
 - d. Victory condition is the most points. There are some games I feel this needs to be said first and some that I like to delay that piece. Use your discretion but regardless, use this time to explain (or remind) where to find points - objective cards, cattle cards, player mats, and on the board.
5. Some players need a little more direction than others. If you feel like it would help, give players some action goals for their second trail-run that they haven't performed. Here are some examples:
 - a. Hire a cowboy
 - b. Add cattle to a herd
 - c. Build a building that will generate income
 - d. Permanently remove a Jersey cow from your deck
 - e. Move your engine

Check out our other resources to Great Western Trail on our website: www.pubmeeples.com

Detailed walkthrough of the above process:

1. Set the entire game up for the appropriate number of players: There are a lot of moving pieces to Great Western Trial. This is definitely a game that benefits from an unrolling explanation of rules rather than getting bogged down with pre-game explanations.
2. As the teacher, take the first turn of the game and start everyone with a turn through Kansas City. I realize this changes the opening conditions of the game, but keep in mind this is for a learner game only. Future plays should adhere to the rulebook instructions for first turns.
 - a. Take steps 1 - 3 of Kansas City: at this point, the first three steps of Kansas City are simple and repetitive.
 - i. As hazards and teepee tiles come up, explain the 4 different regions with their appropriate tiles and demonstrate proper placement of the lowest value.
 - ii. As a worker tile is placed, it's important to demonstrate their proper placement on the job market (left to right). Without getting into details of what the different tiles do, you can explain where they end up on the player boards once their purchased, their purchasing costs, and the unavailability of any worker tile that shares a row with the job market token.
 - b. Draw 4 cards and take step 4 of Kansas City: we have delayed in drawing cards to limit our interaction with unknowns, but now it's time.
 - i. This hand is pure luck-of-the-draw, but it's not going to break our learning game. Reveal your hand and show everyone how you figure your total breeding value of unique cards. (Optionally you may bring up certificates but this can also wait until the actions for certificates comes up).
 - ii. Go ahead and take the money for this first set of cows. We've never found this to be a problem for first games and alleviates some of the missed opportunities to explaining upcoming actions.
 - iii. Discard your hand. Now that you have demonstrated how you get paid, it's important to take a moment to explain that most of your trail run throughout the game will be managing this hand of cards through draw, discard, and culling actions, so that when you finally make it to Kansas City, you have the best hand possible. Everyone can then look through their starting deck to get an idea of what their starting deck constitutes.
 - c. Explain step 5 of Kansas City, but don't do it: unfortunately there is no way to perform step 5 of Kansas City at this point without hamstringing everyone's entire game. However, that does not keep you from demonstrating it and having players demonstrate it back during their turn.
 - i. The goal for selecting a city concerns disc placement (both for player mat upgrades and bonuses provided by the city combinations). This is a good time to bring up victory points as many city combinations provides positive or negative victory points.
 - ii. Players are restricted to selling at cities with a value equal to or lower than the breeding value from step 4 of Kansas City (the value you were just paid).
 - iii. Players will pay a coin for every railroad crossing between the destination city and their locomotive's current position.
 - d. Refill the foresight spaces below the first 3 steps of Kansas City and have each other player repeat the Kansas City steps, explaining step 5 back to you.

Why run through Kansas City first?

The most beneficial aspect to this approach gives new players an understanding of what their goals are during their trail runs. But we've also stumbled upon some unexpected benefits. Individual money values are higher which makes for more teaching moments during the first trail run. The job market has more starting options, giving more opportunities for new players to capitalize on this. And the round tracker is further along which shortens the learning game a bit, maybe making up for the longer game seen with most first-time plays.

3. Your first trail run and the top row of the player board:
 - a. Everyone draws 4 cards. It's tempting to show them phase C on their player board, I usually wait until we get to a phase C.
 - b. Phase A - Movement:
 - i. Moving from left to right along the top of the player mat, start with movement.
 - ii. Every cardboard token along the trail is a space, and you get to start by moving up to 3 spaces. Demonstrate this and even if it's not your best option, move 3 spaces to demonstrate the process (paying for any hazard spaces as you go).
 - iii. Everyone should go ahead and peak under their movement discs and pay attention to the cost and disc corner-colors necessary to upgrade movement.
 - c. Phase B - Take Actions:
 - i. Ideally, you'll be on a neutral building and you can explain and take the actions. Regardless, take actions even if they are auxiliary actions on hazard spaces. It's important players start "seeing" the mechanics at play.
 - ii. The phase B box is crammed full of icons. Everyone has already performed the bottom row's Kansas City scenario. The top row is likely what they will be performing this turn unless they end on a hazard (which is very unlikely).
 - iii. Wait to explain the auxiliary actions until it comes up on a player's turn or until after every player finishes their first turn.
 - d. Phase C - Draw Cards:
 - i. It may not happen that you actually get to draw cards this first turn, but players should be aware of this phase's box and that it triggers at the end of a turn.
 - ii. As you explain something as simple as drawing up to a hand limit, players should go ahead and peak under their upgrade discs and pay attention to the cost and disc corner-colors necessary for these upgrades.
 - e. Now everyone else play through their first turn.
 - i. Regardless of the path you took, encourage players to end on a different neutral building space and perform the actions. This is where we have trouble avoiding some rule dump, but by now it should be a smoother task. Check out our Teaching Aid for some iconography summaries.
 - ii. Reinforce details you've already explained.
 1. If they move a locomotive, take the opportunity to explain the benefit for moving the trail along the train tracks.
 2. If they discard a card, take the opportunity to remind them that cycling through their deck is good and they'll replenish their hand at the end of their turn.
 3. If they move a certificate, you can reinforce the herd value of a hand and how to augment that value.

- iii. In the off-chance someone could have moved their train engine into a station master position, go ahead and explain that part, otherwise wait a few rounds. Maybe before someone begins their second trail run.
 - f. Before everyone takes their second turn, stop and explain the axillary actions on the left side of the player mat. Players should be aware of when they can take these actions and what the actions are. Upgrades to these actions provide bonuses but only for spaces that allow for double-usage.
4. Around the time someone is about to start their second trail-run, take a moment to detail some aspects that have not been highlighted.
 - a. Even if it has happened already, take this time to explain station master spaces and the benefits to both the upgrade and the station master bonuses.
 - b. Go over starting objective cards as well as the risk/reward of acquiring more.
 - c. In addition to the benefit an employee brings, there are spaces on a player board that provide their own 1-time bonus or end game points when they are filled.
 - d. Victory condition is the most points. There are some games I feel this needs to be said first and some that I like to delay that piece. Use your discretion but regardless, use this time to explain (or remind) where to find points - objective cards, cattle cards, player mats, and on the board.
5. Some players need a little more direction than others. If you feel like it would help, give players some action goals for their second trail-run that they haven't performed. Here are some examples:
 - a. Hire a cowboy
 - b. Add cattle to a herd
 - c. Build a building that will generate income
 - d. Permanently remove a Jersey cow from your deck
 - e. Move your engine