“Boss of the Plains”

1. What types of hats did settlers and travelers wear? Why was a hat important protection for settlers and travelers in the American West? (pg. 220-221)

2. When does the story take place? (p. 222)

3. What do we know about the main character, John Batterson Stetson? (p. 222)

4. The Stetsons made hats the same way hatters had done it for years: by pressing felt, made from wet fur and wool, over a wooden form to shape it. What does the word form mean? (p. 223)

5. What makes John decide to head West himself? (p. 224)
6. What is felt made out of? What are the reasons felt is better than a piece of cloth? (p. 228-229)

7. How did John help his fellow travelers at Pikes Peak, Colorado with the problem they faced? (p. 229)

8. When John was in Pikes Peak, Colorado digging for gold, why did he decide to make a better hat for himself? In what ways was the hat he made useful? (p. 230)

9. In what ways did his new hat help the cowboys of the West? (p. 236-238)

10. What are some characteristics of John Stetson? How do they contribute to his success?