On Christmas Eve, 1842, engineer William F. Adair boarded the locomotive, named Florida, and left Marthasville (now known as Atlanta) on a long trip to Marietta that would take almost two hours. It was the first of many trains that would come to Marietta and probably the largest machine ever seen by people in this part of Georgia.

The trip would have to cross the Chattahoochee River bridge. Those that made the trip were so afraid of crossing the river that they had the engineer stop at the bridge so they could get off. They walked across the bridge, and then the train crossed to the other side and the passengers got back on.

When the train arrived in Marietta, many of those who witnessed the event were amazed at the amount of noise produced by the train. They were frightened by it and called it the iron monster. The locals were not sure the rails would hold up under the pressure of such a large amount of weight, so the train was stopped just south of Marietta, and a team of mules were hitched to the locomotive to pull it into town. The event was celebrated with a party that included picnics and bands. Regular passenger service on trains would not begin until three years later.

Let’s Review

1. When did the first train come to Marietta? _______________________________

2. What did the passengers do at the Chattahoochee River crossing? _______________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

3. What happened when the train was south of Marietta? _______________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

4. Why were people afraid of the train? _______________________________