

Social Science Department
United States History I
May 11-15

Content Standard:

Topic 2. Democratization and expansion [USI.T2]; Analyze the causes and long and short-term consequences of America's westward expansion from 1800 to 1854

Practice Standard(s):

3. Organize information and data from multiple primary or secondary sources
6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence



Weekly Learning Opportunities:

1. Manifest Destiny and Expansionism Examples and Visual Representation
2. Manifest Destiny and Expansionism Source Analysis
3. Oregon Trail Media Activities
4. Newsela Text Set: Manifest Destiny and Expansionism

Long Term Opportunities:

1. Manifest Destiny and Expansionism DBQ
2. Historical Film Review

Additional Resources:

- **Discovering Lewis & Clark:** <http://lewis-clark.org/>
- **The Explorer's Podcast:** [Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery](#)
- **Netflix:** Lewis & Clark: 1803-1806

Note to students: Your Social Science teacher will contact you with specifics regarding the above assignments in addition to strategies and recommendations for completion. Please email your teacher with specific questions and/or contact during office hours.

Manifest Destiny Part I
Assignment 1

Manifest Destiny was a term coined by John O’Sullivan in 1845. The concept came to represent the mindset that it was America’s “destiny” to control the continent. The idea of Westward expansion and conquering the continent arrived on the continent with the first Europeans, as they saw it as their Christian right to dominate and exploit the landscape socially, politically, and economically as they moved across the land. In reality, the concept of Manifest Destiny inspired America to ‘lie, steal, cheat, and kill’ our way across the continent. As you can see, prior to O’Sullivan mentioning Manifest Destiny, this was a belief that had existed in the United States in some way shape or form since our ancestor's arrival.

Task: Use the internet and other materials to analyze and evaluate examples of how America exhibited Manifest Destiny as we claimed our way across the continent between 1800-1860.

Supplies: Pen/Pencil, Piece of Paper, Internet

Examples:

Adams-Onis Treaty, Louisiana Purchase, Mexican American War, Oregon Treaty, Annexation of Texas, Bear Flag Revolt, Gadsden Purchase

On a blank piece of paper create the following chart (appropriate level) to complete the assignment:

Example	Description	Connection to Manifest Destiny
Adams-Onis Treaty		

CP students should select 3 to analyze; CPA students should select 5 to analyze; Honors students should analyze all 7

Manifest Destiny

Assignment 2

Expansion westward seemed perfectly natural to many Americans in the mid-nineteenth century. Like the Massachusetts Puritans who hoped to build a "city upon a hill," courageous pioneers believed that America had a divine obligation to stretch the boundaries of their noble republic to the Pacific Ocean. Independence had been won in the Revolution and reaffirmed in the War of 1812. The spirit of nationalism that swept the nation in the next two decades demanded more territory. The "every man is equal" mentality of the Jacksonian Era fueled this optimism. Now, with territory up to the Mississippi River claimed and settled and the Louisiana Purchase explored, Americans headed west in droves. Newspaper editor John O'Sullivan coined the term "Manifest Destiny" in 1845 to describe the essence of this mindset.

The religious fervor spawned by the Second Great Awakening created another incentive for the drive west. Indeed, many settlers believed that God himself blessed the growth of the American nation. The Native Americans were considered heathens. By Christianizing the tribes, American missionaries believed they could save souls and they became among the first to cross the Mississippi River.

Economic motives were paramount for others. The fur trade had been dominated by European trading companies since colonial times. German immigrant John Jacob Astor was one of the first American entrepreneurs to challenge the Europeans. He became a millionaire in the process. The desire for more land brought aspiring homesteaders to the frontier. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the number of migrants increased even more.

At the heart of manifest destiny was the pervasive belief in American cultural and racial superiority. Native Americans had long been perceived as inferior, and efforts to "civilize" them had been widespread since the days of John Smith and Miles Standish. The Hispanics who ruled Texas and the lucrative ports of California were also seen as "backward."

Expanding the boundaries of the United States was in many ways a cultural war as well. The desire of southerners to find more lands suitable for cotton cultivation would eventually spread slavery to these regions. North of the Mason-Dixon line, many citizens were deeply concerned about adding any more slave states. Manifest destiny touched on issues of religion, money, race, patriotism, and morality. These clashed in the 1840s as a truly great drama of regional conflict began to unfold.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences below your chart from above:

- 1. How did Nationalism contribute to westward expansion?**
- 2. What is "Manifest Destiny?" Who coined the term?**
- 3. What role did religion play in Manifest Destiny?**
- 4. What other factors contributed to the desire to head West?**
- 5. Why was Manifest Destiny also a cultural conflict? Explain.**

Manifest Destiny

Assignment 3

Task: Create a visual that represents the concept of “Manifest Destiny.” Be as creative as you would like – and try to let the visual do the “explaining” for you.

Manifest Destiny Part II: Source Analysis

Assignment 1

As America experienced Manifest Destiny, thousands of American made their way west looking for new beginnings and opportunities to capitalize on. Two of the most famous exoduses occurred during the Gold Rush and settlers heading to Oregon Territory along the Oregon Trail. Read the following excerpts and answer the questions in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

Resources needed: Pen/Pencil, Paper, Internet/Laptop

Task: Gold Rush

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill set off a very large and extremely rapid migration of young men to California. In fact, few other mass migrations rival the one of these young men to the West in search of gold. Following President Polk's announcement, the newspapers played up California's unfolding gold story with florid phrases and excited rhetoric. "Here, the streams are paved with gold" they teased. Gold fever had struck, and it was afflicting the vast majority of young American men. There was gold, lots of it, and the only thing between these men and the gold was distance. For many, this distance entailed thousands of miles of rugged terrain previously untouched by white Americans. The journey was long and arduous, but tens of thousands felt the rewards outweighed the risks. These early pioneers had two options: the overland route, or travel by sea.

The overland route was typically chosen by young men in the company of other young men, usually family and friends from their hometowns. The number of migrants traveling over land from 1848-1850 is estimated to be at least 101,000, but there were likely more. The trip was not only difficult, but expensive, too. In fact, it was more expensive than it was to travel from Western Europe to the United States at that time. Traveling by land to California could cost anywhere from \$100 to \$300, while traveling from Western Europe to America cost between \$17 and \$25. Regardless, the overland route was the less expensive choice, although it was much more rigorous and took longer, usually four to six months.

Travel by sea was physically less demanding and could be somewhat shorter. There were two major routes: around Cape Horn, or through the Isthmus of Panama. The first seemed the easiest and safest way, but entailed nearly 14,000 miles that took between five and eight months on average. The latter was much shorter, four to six weeks. But, it was also considered more dangerous, as it involved some travel by foot. The cape route was initially the favorite, since the direct journey allowed the future miners to bring along bulky mining gear and even trading goods with ease. The number of migrants who arrived by sea is thought to be over 75,000.

The trip to California was dangerous by any route, but there are many common misconceptions as to why. Many pioneers traveling the overland route feared the Indians, but there were relatively few deaths associated with Indian conflicts. In fact, many Indians actually helped the settlers when given the

opportunity. The pioneers had much more to fear in other potential problems, such as cholera, the invisible, most feared companion. Overall, migrants on both routes probably experienced higher mortality both en route and once in California than they would have had they stayed home. Those who made the decision to head west ultimately decided that California's potential was worth the risks and difficulties the journey encompassed. As one young gold-seeker remarked in a letter to his family back home, "You never saw anything but a small hill compared to what I have crossed over, and it is said the worst is yet to come. But never mind. Gold lies ahead."

Resources needed: Pen/Pencil, Paper, Internet/Laptop

- 1. What started the California gold rush?**
- 2. How did the newspapers advertise the opportunity to would be settlers? (quote)**
- 3. What two options did the future miners have?**
- 4. Describe the overland journey - (quote) 2-3 sentences**
- 5. Describe the sea option - (quote) 2-3 sentences**
- 6. How many migrants were estimated to have arrived by sea?**
- 7. Which route would you have chosen? Why? Be specific 2-3 sentences**

Manifest Destiny Part II

Assignment 2

Oregon Trail

Task: The following excerpts are from the journal of Willa Porter on her journey to Oregon.

- CP students analyze and evaluate 2 of the journal entries by answering the questions
- CPA students analyze and evaluate 3 of the journal entries by answering the questions
- Honors students analyze and evaluate all 5 of the journal entries by answering the questions

May 1, 1846

The camp smells like dung. Oxen and cattle are filthy things. So are people.

I have decided to take up smoking because it gets Aunt Horseface's goat every time Uncle Barkface lights up one of his twiggy cigars. If I cannot become a scandal in the next month I will consider this new life a failure.

What do you think dung is?

Based on her description, what do you think the people and camp smelled like?

May 2

I was thinking of Mama and Papa because a couple at the edge of the camp caught my attention. The woman was frying bacon. She wore a blue checked dress like something Mama would wear. The man shuffled through a stack of papers. I wondered if he was a lawyer like Papa. I almost warned him to avoid DISGRACE at all costs if he doesn't want his wife to have such a bad case of nerves that their daughter will have to go west with some horsey aunt and barky uncle and pinchy cousin, but I refrained.

Gazing across the camp, it seemed like we were too many. Too many people, too many wagons. The Willamette Valley (no relation to me) must be a big place if we're all going to homestead there. The sun was setting when I got back to our wagon because I was held up again and again by the unyoked oxen and badly behaved cattle of the easterners, which convinced me once and for all that we were too many. I said as much to Barkface, who looked at me funny, chewing the inside of his cheek, before answering that by the time we reach the banks of the Columbia River, we will no doubt be too few.

Who is Willa traveling west with? How can you tell?

Where is Willa heading? How can you tell?

What do you think Barkface meant by they will "no doubt be too few" by the time they reach the Columbia River? Explain.

May 3

Counted one hundred and forty-three graves at the edge of town, passing time as we stalled while everyone tried to leave in a great all-together rush. Horseface refused to look in their direction. Being stupid, she has a powerful fear of omens. I do not see how she and Mama can be sisters. At Christmas, when our family joins Aunt Martha Horseface's, they barely speak. It is uncomfortable to huddle together, sharing the book of *Christmas Carols Ancient & Modern*—purchased in London, as Barkface never fails to remind us. The evening is always the same: we harmonize badly and my cousin has a fit.

What has Willa come across? What does that reveal about the journey west?

Willa mentioned that they were stalled while everyone was trying to pass, why do you think they traveled in such large groups? Explain.

May 8

Already I could swear that walking is all I have ever done in my sixteen years of life. Pinchface complains all the time that her feet hurt. Her mosquito voice makes me want to clamp my mouth shut and bear any kind of pain that comes my way so as not to sound like her—even though my feet feel like they are being stabbed every time I take a step.

Before we boarded the steamship in St. Louis I had imagined riding and bedding down in the wagon, but it is cluttered with possessions. Hardly any are my possessions, of course.

How is Willa getting to Oregon? How can you tell?

What type of toll do you think this took on all their bodies? Why?

Do you think you could have walked as much as they did? Why?

May 10

It turns out that I love tobacco. First it is harsh on the throat and feels like dry spiced air in the lungs and then and then AND THEN! The dizziness takes me on a little journey. I feel content and relaxed but not weary. I will not say who gave me the cheroot in case someone reads this, as I do not want him to catch the wrath of the council that has emerged to take charge and make the men feel like they're doing more than just following a well-worn trail across wide-open flatlands. Barkface is on it, of course.

Is it surprising that Willa loved tobacco?

What is the trail like by this point in her journey? How can you tell?

Manifest Destiny Part II

Assignment 3

Final Reflection:

Questions for all to answer:

Due to the enormous undertaking this journey was, what type of planning do you think went into it?

Why do you think the journey was so difficult? What are some obstacles that you think would need to have been overcome?

Do you think that if you were alive in the 1840s you would have made the journey? If so, do you think you would have survived?

Oregon Trail Assignments Part III

Thousands of Americans went west in search of new opportunities and the hope of a better life for future generations. The untold riches that people heard about in the gold fields from Colorado to California along with the endless land in the Oregon Territory unleashed a mass exodus of wagon trains west.

View the video clip on the Oregon Trail and play the game (an old classic) to see what the true experience was like for thousands of Americans as they tried to conquer the continent.

Task 1: View the below video clip on the Oregon Trail:

[Oregon Trail](#)

Task 2: Play the old classic Oregon Trail game. Answer the below questions:

[Oregon Trail Game](#)

Where did the trail start?

What type of planning went into the journey? Explain. (Be specific – at least 3 things)

What obstacles did the pioneers experience on their journey? Be specific. (at least 3 things)

What type of diseases and other ailments did the pioneers have to deal with on their journey? Be specific. (at least 3 things)

What were some of the things that happened to your party on your journey? Be specific. (at least 3 things)

How far did you make it? Would you consider this a success? Y/N?

How do you think you would have fared on the journey if you migrated west in one of these wagon train caravans? Explain.

Task 3: After viewing the clip and playing the game – try to make a connection to migration today:

Do you think there is a modern day “Oregon Trail?” Explain

Can you make any connections to similar journey’s made throughout history? What connects them?

Think about the future – could humanity experience an “Oregon Trail” as we set out to further explore space as our ancestor set out to explore and settle the continent? Explain.

Time Machine (1845): Manifest Destiny and annexing California and Texas

By John O'Sullivan, United States Magazine and Democratic Review, adapted by Newsela staff on 05.05.16

Word Count **1,057**

Level **1220L**



The 1872 painting by John Gast "Spirit of the Frontier" shows "Manifest Destiny," the belief that the United States should expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. It portrayed settlers moving west, guided by Columbia who symbolizes America and is dressed in a Roman toga to represent classical republicanism and aided by technology like railways and the telegraph. John Gast

Newsela Editor's Note: This essay appeared in the July-August 1845 edition of the United States Magazine and Democratic Review under the title "Annexation." The editor, John O'Sullivan, coined the term "Manifest Destiny." That phrase supported the U.S. taking of western land. It was also in partly responsible for the removal of Native Americans from those lands. Its use of language is typical of newspapers of the time.

It is now time for the opposition to the Annexation of Texas to cease. All further agitation of the waters of bitterness and strife, at least in connection with this question, must stop. We know it may perhaps be required of us as a necessary condition of the freedom of our democratic institutions, that we must live on forever in a state of unpausing struggle and excitement upon some subject of party division or other. But, in regard to Texas, the parties have been given enough. It is time for the common duty of patriotism to the country to succeed; or if this claim will

not be recognized, it is at least time for common sense to submit with decent grace to the unavoidable and the unchangeable.

Texas is now ours. Already, before these words are written, her convention has undoubtedly ratified the acceptance, by her Congress, of our invitation into the Union, and made the necessary changes in her already republican form of constitution to adapt it to its future federal relations with our central government. Her star and her stripe may already be said to have taken their place in the glorious display of our common nationality; and the sweep of our eagle's wing already includes within its circuit the wide extent of her fair and fertile land. She is no longer to us a mere geographical space - a certain combination of coast, plain, mountain, valley, forest and stream. She is no longer to us a mere country on the map. She comes within the dear and sacred designation of our country.

Time To Be Welcoming To Texas

It is time then that all should cease to treat her as alien, and even adverse - cease to denounce and vilify all and everything connected with her accession. Cease to thwart and oppose the remaining steps for its consummation; or where such efforts are felt to be unavailing, at least to embitter the hour of reception by all the most ungracious frowns of opposition and words of unwelcome. There has been enough of all this. It has had its fitting day during the period when, in common with every other possible question of practical policy that can arise, it unfortunately became one of the leading topics of party division, of presidential electioneering. But that period has passed, and with it let its prejudices and its passions, its discords and its denunciations, pass away too.

The next session of Congress will see the representatives of the new young state in their places in both our halls of national legislation. They will be side by side with those of the old Thirteen. Let their reception into "the family" be frank, kindly, and cheerful, as befits such an occasion.

Other nations have undertaken to intrude themselves into our discussions about Texas; between us and the proper parties to the case, in a spirit of hostile interference against us. Their avowed objective has been thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by God for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions of people. This we have seen done by England, our old rival and enemy, and by France, strangely coupled with her against us.

It is wholly untrue, and unjust to ourselves, the pretense that the annexation was at the expense of justice. The independence of Texas was complete and absolute. It was an independence, not only in fact, but of right. No obligation of duty toward Mexico tended in the least degree to restrain our right to effect the desired recovery of the fair province once our own. If Texas became peopled with an American population, it was by no contrivance of our government but on the express invitation of that of Mexico herself.

Making The Case That California Will Follow

California probably, will be the next to fall away from the loose adhesion which, in such a country as Mexico, holds a remote province in a slight uncertain kind of dependence on the metropolis. Imbecile and distracted, Mexico never can exert any real governmental authority over such a country. The impotence of Mexico's government and its distance from California, must make the relation one of near independence, unless, by stunting the province of all natural growth, and

forbidding that immigration which can alone develop its capabilities and fulfill the purposes of its creation, tyranny may retain a military dominion. This is no government in the legitimate sense of the term.

In the case of California this is now impossible. The Anglo-Saxon foot is already on its borders. Already the advance guard of the irresistible army of Anglo-Saxon emigration has begun to pour down upon it, armed with the plough and the rifle, and marking its trail with schools and colleges, courts and representative halls, mills and meeting-houses. A population will soon be in actual occupation of California, over which it will be idle for Mexico to dream of dominion. They will necessarily become independent.

Continental Power Balance

Away, then, with all idle French talk of balances of power on the American Continent. There is no growth in Spanish America! Whatever progress of population there may be in the British Canadas, is only for their own early breaking off of their present colonial relation to the little island 3,000 miles across the Atlantic; soon to be followed by annexation, and destined to swell the still accumulating energy of our progress.

And whosoever may hold the balance, though they should cast into the opposite scale all the bayonets and cannons, not only of France and England, but of Europe entire, how would it kick the beam against the simple, solid weight of the 250 or 300 millions - and American millions - destined to gather beneath the flutter of the stripes and stars, in the fast hastening year of the Lord 1945!

An Overview of U.S. Westward Expansion

By History.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.28.17

Word Count **947**

Level **1140L**



The first Fort Laramie as it looked before 1840. A painting from memory by Alfred Jacob Miller in 1858-60. Fort Laramie lay at the crossroads of an old north-south Native American trail and what became known as the Oregon Trail. It was called Fort Laramie because of the nearby Laramie Mountains. Originally established as a private fur trading fort in 1834, Fort Laramie became the largest military post on the Northern Plains before its abandonment in 1890. It witnessed the entire saga of America's western expansion and Native American resistance to expansion into their territories.

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson purchased the territory of Louisiana from France for \$15 million. The Louisiana Purchase stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from Canada to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. Altogether, this massive new territory doubled the size of the United States.

To Jefferson, westward expansion — incorporating new land to the west of the original eastern and southern states — was the key to the nation's health. He believed that a republic depended on an independent citizenry for its survival. For Jefferson, what made independence possible was land ownership, especially the ownership of small farms. The United States would have to continue to expand to provide enough land for its citizens.

Westward expansion is one of the defining themes of 19th-century American history. However, it is not just the story of Jefferson's expanding "empire of liberty." On the contrary, in the six

decades after the Louisiana Purchase, westward expansion very nearly destroyed the United States.



Manifest Destiny

By 1840, nearly 7 million Americans — 40 percent of the nation's population — lived in the West. Most had left their homes in the East in search of economic opportunity. Like Thomas Jefferson, many of these pioneers associated westward migration, land ownership and farming with freedom. In Europe, large numbers of factory workers formed a dependent and seemingly permanent working class. By contrast, in the United States, the western frontier offered the possibility of independence and the chance to make enough money to move up to a higher social class.

In 1845, journalist John O'Sullivan put a name to the idea that helped pull many pioneers toward the western frontier. Westward migration was an essential part of the project of America as a nation, he argued, and it was Americans' "manifest destiny" — their clear and obvious destiny — to carry the "great experiment of liberty" to the edge of the continent. The survival of American freedom depended on it.

Westward expansion and slavery

Meanwhile, the question of whether slavery would be allowed in the new western states shadowed every conversation about the frontier. In 1820, the Missouri Compromise attempted to resolve this question. It had admitted Missouri to the union as a slave state and Maine as a free state. More importantly, it declared that in the future, slavery would be prohibited in all parts of the Louisiana Purchase north of the southern boundary of Missouri.

However, the Missouri Compromise did not apply to new territories that were not part of the Louisiana Purchase and so the issue of slavery continued to fester. Meanwhile, Southern farmers grew more and more dependent on slave labor. Northern farmers grew increasingly resentful, as many felt slaves gave Southerners an unfair advantage that made it harder for them to earn a living.

Westward expansion and the Mexican War

Despite the conflict over slavery, Americans kept migrating West in the years after the Missouri Compromise was adopted. Thousands crossed the Rockies to the Oregon Territory, which belonged to Great Britain, and thousands more moved into the Mexican territories of California, New Mexico and Texas. In 1837, American settlers in Texas joined with Texans of Spanish origin — known as Tejanos — and won independence from Mexico. They petitioned to join the United States as a slave state.

Texas' request was not immediately granted for fear it would upset the careful balance the Missouri Compromise had achieved. Then in 1844, Southern cotton planter James K. Polk was elected president. Thanks to the maneuvering of Polk and his allies, Texas joined the union as a slave state in February 1846.

That same month, Polk declared war against Mexico, claiming — falsely — that the Mexican army had "invaded our territory and shed American blood on American soil." The war proved to be relatively unpopular. Partly because many Northerners objected to what they saw as a war to expand the "slaveocracy."

Westward expansion and the Compromise of 1850

In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican War and added more than 1 million square miles, an area larger than the Louisiana Purchase, to the United States. The addition of this land reopened the question the Missouri Compromise had seemingly settled: Would slavery be allowed in newly acquired American territories?

After two years of increasingly heated debate, Kentucky Senator Henry Clay proposed another compromise: California would enter the Union as a free state. However, in the rest of the Mexican territory, the people who lived there would decide whether slavery would be allowed.

Bleeding Kansas

In 1854, Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas proposed that two new states, Kansas and Nebraska, be established within the Louisiana Purchase territory. Under the terms of the Missouri Compromise, slavery would not be permitted in either state because both were north of Missouri. However, Douglas' proposal allowed the settlers to decide for themselves whether their states would be slave or free.

Northerners were outraged. Douglas, in their view, had caved to the demands of the "slaveocracy," and at their expense. "Free-soil" settlers established a rival government against slave-owning settlers, and soon Kansas spiraled into civil war. Hundreds of people died in the fighting that ensued, known as "Bleeding Kansas."

A decade later, the civil war in Kansas over slavery was followed by the nation's Civil War over the same issue. The question of slavery in the West — a place that seemed to symbolize American freedom — ended up nearly tearing the United States apart.

African-American Pioneers Played a Big Role in Settling the West

By Phil Taylor, adapted by Newsela staff on 05.31.17

Word Count **980**

Level **1230L**



"Buffalo Soldiers" of the 25th Infantry, some wearing buffalo robes, in Keogh, Montana, in 1890. Photo from Library of Congress

African-American pioneers played a major role in the settling of the western territories of the United States, but they have often been overlooked by historians.

Black explorers and settlers were a significant part of the westward migration before and after the Civil War.

Attempts at new frontier cities

In the late 1700s, black settlers began to migrate west in larger numbers and eventually established new cities. The Illinois town New Philadelphia was one of the first cities registered by an African-American prior to the Civil War, in 1836. Its founder was a former slave from Kentucky, Frank McWhorter, who managed to accumulate enough money to purchase freedom for himself and his family and buy 42 acres in southwest Illinois. The town was a safe stop on the Underground Railroad for escaped slaves, but after the Civil War, residents began to move on, the

railroads bypassed the town and New Philadelphia faded away. The ground on which it stood was named a national landmark in 2009.

Though they were free men and women, African-American pioneers still faced discrimination as they attempted to settle in the West. In the 1840s, a young black man in St. Joseph, Missouri, named George Washington agreed to sell some of his property in a small sawmill to a white man, Jeremiah Coyle. But Coyle refused to pay for the property, claiming that Washington had no property rights in the state of Missouri even though he was a free black man.

Washington was later forced to leave the state of Illinois. He could not afford to pay a \$6,000 "behavioral tax" that the state demanded of black people, supposedly so that they would behave appropriately. Angered by this treatment, Washington set out "to find a place in this world, if there was any, where a Negro would be treated like a man." In 1853 he purchased 640 acres in Kansas, which eventually became the town of Centralia.

Notable pioneers

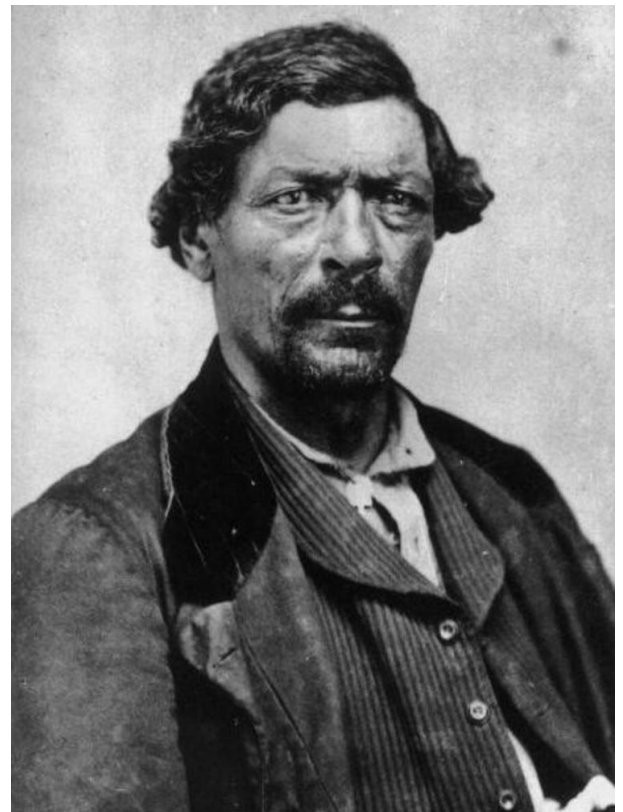
Later, other pioneers of African descent were leaders of the westward movement. In 1850, freed slave James Beckwourth discovered an important route through the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California that came to be known as the Beckwourth Pass.

Beckwourth, whose mother was a slave, was fathered by a slave owner who freed him when he was in his 20s. He joined an expedition to explore the Rockies and became a well-known trapper and mountain man, as well as a storyteller who spun tales about his adventures. Eventually, Beckwourth became close with the Crow Indian tribe and for several years he lived with them and rose in their society from warrior to high-ranking war chief.

Beckwourth also volunteered for the U.S. Army during the Second Seminole War in Florida in the 1830s. After that, he started a trading company in Pueblo, Colorado, before moving to Northern California at the start of the Gold Rush and opening a store in Sonoma, close to the gold mines. He eventually moved on to Sacramento, where he made a living as a card player.

It was while he was living in Northern California that Beckwourth discovered time-saving routes through the Sierras. He helped carve out what became known as the Beckwourth Trail, which was originally a Native American path through the mountains. The trail climbed to the pass that was named after him and spared settlers and gold seekers from traveling about 150 miles and navigating several steep grades and dangerous passes.

Eventually, Beckwourth owned a ranch, trading post and hotel that served as the starting of the settlement of Beckwourth, California, in the Sierra Valley.



In 1994 the U.S. Postal Service issued a commemorative stamp in Beckwourth's honor. Two years later the city of Marysville, one of the towns through which the Beckwourth Trail traveled, renamed its largest park Beckwourth Riverfront Park.

Beckwourth was just one of many African-American pioneers whose stories contribute to the rich history of the settling of the West. Bose Ikards, born into slavery in Tennessee, was sent to a cattle ranch in Texas. He grew up, gained his freedom and became a cattle rancher himself, and he later had a cattle trail in Texas named after him.

Amos Harris, nicknamed "Big Amos" because he was 6-foot-3 and nearly 300 pounds, spoke five languages and was said to have been Nebraska's first black cowboy. Barney Ford was a prospector during the California Gold Rush. When he and his team struck gold in 1860, white vigilantes drove them off the land to seize their gold, but the vigilantes never found any. Legend has it that Ford outsmarted them by burying the gold somewhere on the land, but despite many attempts, no gold was ever found.

Post-Civil War migration

All of the pre-Civil War black pioneers helped to blaze a trail for other African-Americans who headed west after the war. Many of them were soldiers who had served in the war, including the "Buffalo Soldiers," who became a regular African-American regiment in the U.S. Army. By the late 1800s, there were thousands of black and Hispanic cowboys working in the Great Plains, many of them using the skills they had learned working on farms in the South years before.

Other African-Americans found work on the railroads that headed west. The "front end" jobs of engineer, fireman and administrator were taken by Caucasians, while the "rear end" occupations of cook, porter and conductor were often left for men and women of color. Later, many of these workers would establish related businesses such as laundries, food preparation and maid services.

All of the black pioneers were part of a westward migration that was difficult, dangerous and often subjected them to unfair treatment. But it also allowed them to establish their independence and play an essential part in the building of America.

Manifest Destiny: The idea behind America's westward expansion

By History.com, adapted by Newsela staff on 10.28.19

Word Count **997**

Level **1240L**



Image 1. A family pose with their wagon in Loup Valley, Nebraska, on their way west to a new homestead. Photo: MPI/Getty Images

Manifest Destiny was a phrase coined in 1845. It expressed the philosophy that helped drive 19th-century U.S. territorial expansion. Manifest Destiny held that the United States was destined — by God, its advocates believed — to expand its control and spread democracy and capitalism across the entire North American continent.

Louisiana Purchase

Thanks to a high birth rate and brisk immigration, the U.S. population exploded in the first half of the 19th century. It more than quadrupled from about 5 million people in 1800 to more than 23 million by 1850. Such rapid growth drove millions of Americans westward in search of new land. The desire for new opportunities also was intensified by two economic depressions in 1819 and 1839.

President Thomas Jefferson accelerated the country's westward expansion in 1803 with the Louisiana Purchase. This land deal with France added some 828,000 square miles to American

territory, potentially doubling the size of the United States. Jefferson also sponsored the western expedition of Lewis and Clark in 1805-07, an exploratory mission that gave the U.S. government a better understanding of what and who lay west of the Mississippi River.

Jefferson also set his sights on obtaining Spanish Florida, a process that was finally concluded in 1819 under President James Monroe. Critics of that treaty, though, faulted Monroe and his secretary of state, John Quincy Adams. They claimed American negotiators ceded to Spain what they considered legitimate claims on Texas, where a small but growing number of Americans were settling.

Texas Independence

Cries for the "re-annexation" of Texas increased after Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821. Fearing a takeover by American settlers, the Mexican government passed a law that suspended U.S. immigration into Texas nine years later.

Nonetheless, there were still fewer Hispanic settlers in Texas than "Anglos" — white Americans. In 1836, after Texas won its own independence, its new leaders sought to join the United States. The administrations of both Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren resisted such calls. They feared both war with Mexico and opposition from anti-slavery groups who believed calls for annexation were linked with the determination to expand slavery in the southwest.

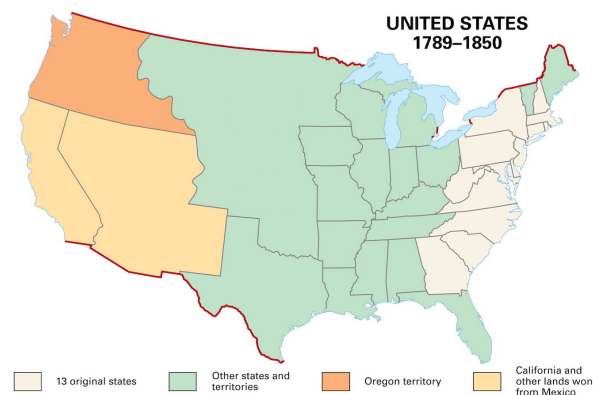
Having won the presidency in 1840, John Tyler was determined to proceed with the annexation. An agreement concluded in April 1844 made Texas eligible for admission as a U.S. territory, and possibly later as one or more states. Despite opposition to this agreement in Congress, the pro-annexation candidate James K. Polk won the 1844 election. Tyler then was able to push the bill through Congress and sign it before his presidential term ended.

The Coining of "Manifest Destiny"

Texas was admitted to the Union as a state in December 1845. By that time, the idea had taken hold that the United States should control the continent at least all the way to the Pacific Ocean. A majority of Americans from different regions, classes and political convictions now accepted such westward expansion as inevitable.

"Manifest Destiny" emerged as the best-known expression of this mindset. The phrase first appeared in an editorial published in the July-August 1845 issue of the Democratic Review. The writer criticized the opposition that still argued against the annexation of Texas. The article urged national unity on behalf of "the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."

The phrase also appeared in a nearly identical context in a July 1845 article in the New York Morning News, written by John O'Sullivan. He was the editor of both the Democratic Review and the Morning News at the time. That December, another Morning News article mentioned "manifest destiny" in reference to the Oregon Territory, another new frontier over which the United States was eager to assert its control.



Oregon Territory

An 1842 treaty between Great Britain and the United States partially resolved the question of where to draw the Canadian border. However, it left open the question of the Oregon Territory, which stretched from the Pacific Coast to the Rocky Mountains. It encompassed an area that included what is now Oregon, Idaho, Washington State and most of Canada's British Columbia.

Polk, an ardent proponent of Manifest Destiny, had won the 1844 election with the slogan "54° 40' or fight!" (That latitude — 54° 40' — was a reference to the potential northern boundary of Oregon.) Polk had called U.S. claims to Oregon "clear and unquestionable" in his inaugural address.

As president, though, Polk wanted to get the issue resolved so the United States could move on to acquiring California from Mexico. In mid-1846, his administration agreed to a compromise whereby Oregon would be split along the 49th parallel, narrowly avoiding a crisis with Britain.

Impact of Manifest Destiny

American designs on Mexican territory were a different story. By the time the Oregon question was settled, the United States had entered into all-out war with Mexico, driven by the spirit of Manifest Destiny and territorial expansion. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War in 1848, added an additional 525,000 square miles of U.S. territory. It included all or parts of what is now California, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.

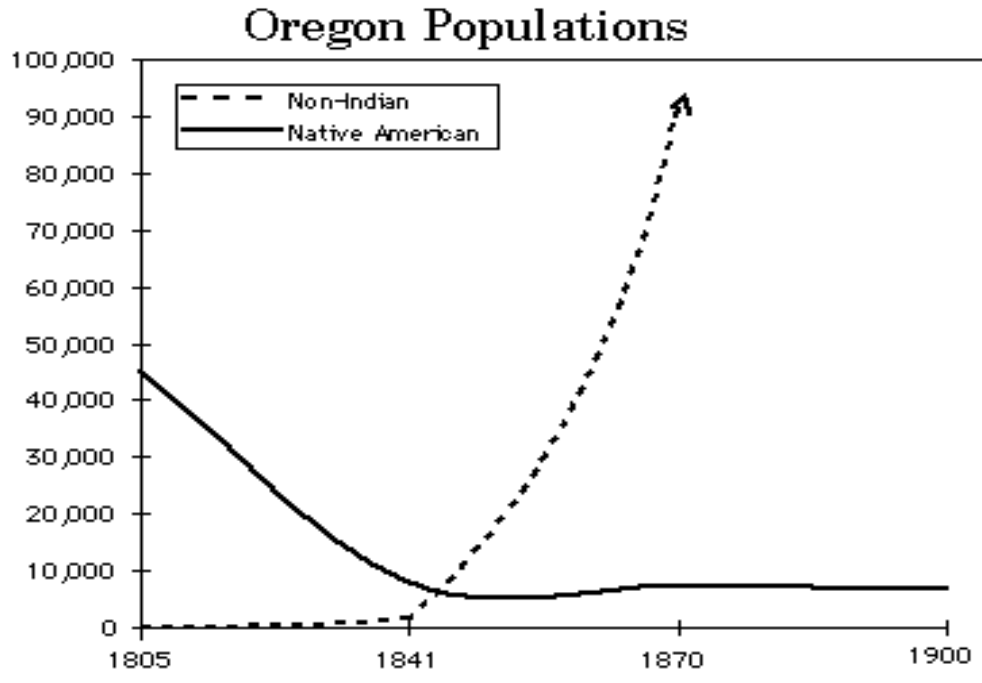
For many Americans, Manifest Destiny described a lofty ideal. However, the people who stood in the path of rapid westward expansion over the first half of the 19th century paid a high price. American territorial ambitions resulted not only in war with Mexico, but in the dislocation and brutal mistreatment of Native American, Hispanic and other non-European occupants of those lands.

U.S. expansion also fueled the growing debate over slavery. It raised the pressing question of whether new states being admitted to the Union would allow slavery or not — a conflict that would eventually lead to the bloodiest conflict in U.S. history — the Civil War.

Westward Expansion / Manifest Destiny DBQ

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

Document 1:



1. What happened to the population of non-Native American settlers from 1805 to 1900?

2. What happened to the Native American population from 1805 to 1900?

Document 2:

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View on the Big Eye, before Families and Emigrants, representing Valley and Rolling Prairie Land in Nebraska.

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FREE ROOMS for those who want themselves are granted at Burlington and Lincoln.

1. According to the poster, what did the West offer new settlers?
2. What economic incentives were given to draw settlers to the West?
3. Who offered the land for sale to the settlers?

The term Manifest Destiny refers to the idea that Americans not only had the right to expand across the continent to the Pacific coast, but that they had a responsibility to do so, since it was considered to be "God's will." This passionate desire to expand had an enormous impact on the relations between the government of the United States and the native people of North America, as well as its relations with Mexico and the other countries of the Americas.

Document 3:

"The American claim is by right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and our democratic government entrusted to us. It is a right such as that of the tree to the space of air and earth suitable for the full expansion of its principle and destiny of growth. It is in our future far more than in our past or in the past history of Spanish exploration...that our true title is found."

- John O'Sullivan - reporter for the Morning News

1. What does O'Sullivan suggest Americans should be able to possess by right of Manifest Destiny?

2. What reasons does he give?

Document 4:

Two Oregon trail pioneers describing life on the trail:

"Counted 150 dead oxen. It is difficult to find a camping ground without carcasses."

- J.G. Bruff, 1849

"Looked starvation in the face. I have seen men passing an animal that has starved to death on the plains, stop and cut out a steak, roast and eat it and call it delicious."

- Clark Thompson, 1850

1. Based on the above quotes, what evidence is there that the Oregon trail pioneers faced hunger on the plains?

Document 5:

"It is my duty to assert and maintain by all constitutional means the right of the United States to that portion of our territory which lies beyond the Rocky Mountains. The word sees the peaceful triumphs of the hard work of our emigrants. To the US Government belongs the duty of protecting them adequately wherever they may be upon our soil. The protection of our laws and the benefits of our democratic government should be extended over them in the distant regions which they have selected for their homes."

- James Polk - President of the U.S. 1845-1849

1. According to Document 5, why does President Polk think the U.S. should extend its borders?

2. Would he support or oppose the Manifest Destiny? Why?

Document 6:

A U.S. governor, speaking about the possible consequences of the Mexican War:
"Oh Mr. President, if hell itself could yawn and vomit up its insides it would plunge the north and the south of the United States into a civil war. Shall we not pause before it is too late? Let us abandon all ideas of gaining further territory and cease at once this war. Let us call home our armies. Let us wash Mexican blood from our hands, and swear to preserve honorable peace with all the world and eternal brotherhood with each other."

1. According to document 6, why does this governor want to avoid war with Mexico?
2. Would he support or oppose Manifest Destiny? Why?

Document 7:

Look at the picture called "American Progress" by John Gast (1872) below and answer the questions:



1. How does this painting represent Manifest Destiny?
2. What are 4 images in the picture that indicate Westward Expansion?
3. Who do you think the young woman in the painting represents?

Tying it all together....

Using the information from the documents you just analyzed, use the rest of this sheet to write about the relationship between the concept of Manifest Destiny and the Westward growth of the nation. Why did people support Manifest Destiny? How did it lead to the growth of the West? What were some political, economic and social reasons for Manifest Destiny? How did Manifest Destiny affect different groups of people? (Must be at least 5 sentences long)