

Stark County Teaching American History Grant

Stark County Educational Service Center
2100 38th Street NW
Canton, Ohio 44709



New Lands / Old Problems: How the Mexican American War Fed the Civil War

Grade Level: 8th

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Duration: 3 Days

Overview

This lesson provides the student the opportunity to examine the actions of the Mexican American War as it pertained to the belief of Manifest Destiny which helped fuel the debate over the expansion of slavery. Students will examine art pertaining to Manifest Destiny, maps showing the expansion of US territory, and a map of the expansion of slavery. Students will also use a Question and Answer forum on the schools Moodle site.

By the end of this lesson students will be able to show a basic understanding of how the expansion of US territory fueled the debate over the expansion of slavery. This will be shown through the creation of political cartoons.

Laptops with internet access or a computer lab will be needed for this lesson.

Ohio Academic Content Standards

#10 – Westward expansion contributed to economic and industrial development, debates over sectional issues, war with Mexico and the displacement of American Indians.

Historical Background

Sectional issues between Northern and Southern states grew more pronounced in the 1800s. In the South, Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton made cotton production – and slavery – more profitable, and led to the expansion of both in the deep South. At the same time, northern states grew with industry and immigrants. Some southern leaders, began to feel threatened by the uneven distribution of power in the Federal government. As per the Constitution, slaves counted as 3/5 of a person for purposes of apportionment in the House of Representatives, but northern population growth outpaced that of whites and slaves in the South. While there was nothing that could be done to stop the northern expansion of power in the House of Representatives, an equal representation between north (free) and southern (slave) states in the Senate would help to block any legislation banning slavery. Leaders in Congress went to great lengths to keep this balance of power in the Senate which is most easily seen in the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which balanced the admission of slave state Missouri with free state Maine.

The balance of power between free and slave again came into question when Texas gained its independence from Mexico in 1836, and subsequently requested statehood as a slave state. Although it seemed to be a forgone conclusion that Texas would eventually join the Union, this was postponed until 1845 when President Tyler not only helped push through Texas's admission but Florida's as well. This created two problems. First this disrupted the balance of power in the Senate by providing the slave states with four more Senators than free state Senators. More importantly though, with Texas now part of the United States Texas' had an ongoing border dispute with Mexico now was between the United States and Mexico.

President Polk believed firmly in keeping Texas as a state and gaining more territory from Mexico in the West and Southwest. To increase pressure on Mexico to sell California and New Mexico, in January 1846 Polk sent troops under command of Zachary Taylor to what the United States considered the border between Texas and Mexico. In May, Taylor crossed the Rio Grande and occupied Matamoras; meanwhile, Mexican troops entered into disputed territory in Texas and killed 11 Americans. This began the popular war hawk slogan, "American Blood Spilled on American Soil," and the U.S. declared war on Mexico in May 1846. ."

After two years of fighting, Mexico and the United States signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ending the war. The treaty added 1.2 million square miles of territory to the United States in today's Southwest and Mexico agreed to the Rio Grande as the border between both nations.

With the addition of this new land, the issue of slavery rose to the top again. Should this new land be slave or free? The Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas Nebraska Acts were attempts to deal with this issue.

Ultimately, the Civil War answered the question of slavery. Many of the military leaders for both sides in the Civil War saw action in the Mexican American War. Thus the Mexican American War became practice for the much larger, costlier, and deadlier Civil War.

Enduring Understandings/ Essential Questions

Understandings:

- National expansion can contribute to economic and industrial development, debates over sectional issues, possible wars, and displacement of peoples.

Questions:

- How does national expansion contribute to economic and industrial development, debate over sectional issues, war and displacement of peoples?
-

Instructional Strategies

Day 1:

Analyze John Gast's 1872 painting *American Progress* (Appendix 1) or the App *Manifest Destiny* from the Autry National Center which helps explain Gast's painting.

Analysis of *American Progress*:

The goddess in the center is Columbia and represents the United States.

-As she moves from right (east) to left (west) she spreads the light (goodness) of the US.

-She is stringing the Telegraph line = technology of communication

All moving objects in the painting are moving from east to west.

As you look from west toward east in the painting the modes of transportation become more advanced.

The natives in the lower left are fleeing representing peoples that cannot handle change.

The city in the upper right represents the more industrial east with the wide Mississippi river next it showing where the west begins.

The people along the bottom of the painting represent miners and farmers moving west.

Visit Dictionary.com and view the definitions of Manifest Destiny.

Questions for assessment on Manifest Destiny:

What was Manifest Destiny?

What are the benefits? – More resources (land, timber, furs, gold, ect.), spread Christianity, and spread democracy.

What are the drawbacks? – Led to war with Mexico and more questions about the expansion of slavery.

Predict how each of the following groups liked or disliked the concept of Manifest Destiny and explain why? Mexicans, Native Americans, & Europeans

Day 2:

Assign students the reading in their textbook that deals with Manifest Destiny and the Mexican American War.

Pages 354 – 360 in Holt McDougal's United States History Beginnings to 1877 (2012)

Inclusion Classes – Read the passage out loud as a class.

OR

View the video at:

<http://www.educations.com/lesson/view/conflict-with-mexico-1820-1848/4804724/>

Have students answer the following question: (possible homework)

What are the benefits of Manifest Destiny? – More resources (land, timber, furs, gold, ect.), spread Christianity, and spread democracy.

What are the drawbacks? – Led to war with Mexico and more questions about the expansion of slavery.

Would you have recommended going to war or maintaining peace? Explain yourself.

What was the outcome of the Mexican American War?

Option 1 - Have students log onto the class Moodle site and go to the Q&A Forum about the Manifest Destiny. (A Q&A Forum requires the student to answer the original question before seeing or responding to other students answers. This ensure the student is giving a genuine response to the original question.)

Forum Question – Did the benefits of the belief in Manifest Destiny outweigh the drawbacks? Be sure to explain yourself.

Moodle is a free educational site often provided by your local ESC. It allows you to create online courses or lessons. Teachers can show and hide lessons as they wish. Students can access the site, log on and complete only lessons the teachers has chosen to show.

Option 2 – Provide students with post it notes. Label one board, “Yes the benefits outweighed the drawbacks.” and another board, “No the benefits didn’t outweigh the drawbacks.” Explain that the students are to pick a statement from the board and explain why they agree with it. They should write their reasoning on the post it note and place it on the correct board.

Day 3:

In small groups examine and compare the maps of the United States in 1830 and 1850. (Appendixes 2 & 3)

Color the territory gained from 1830 – 1850.

What differences do you see?

What caused these differences?

-List at least three of each and report out to the class.

As a class examine the map “Areas of Freedom and Slavery in 1854” (Appendix 4).

What has happened with the expansion of slavery?

Option 1 – Have students log onto the schools Moodle site and give thoughtful replies to at least two messages posted in the Q&A forum from Day 2.

Option 2 – If you are not using Moodle have students compare their answers to the forum question from day 2 with two other students. Have the students in groups of three create one new answer to the forum question that includes points from all of their individual answers.

Assessment – Students are to draw a poster, comic strip, billboard (something visual) either supporting or against Manifest Destiny. Share the rubric with the students so they know the requirements.

Classroom Materials

- Laptops or Lab with internet access
- Blank Paper
- Colored Pencils, Crayons, Markers
- Post-it-notes

Resources

Primary Sources:

Adams, Charles Kendall, *Freedom and Slavery in 1854. A History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1909) <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> (Accessed 21 Feb. 2013).

Fox, Dixon Ryan, *The United States, 1830, Harper's Atlas of American History* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920) <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> (Accessed 21 Feb. 2013).

Gast, John. *American Progress*, Painting, (1872), Autry National Center, Museum of the American West, Online Collections, http://collections.theautry.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=image;hex=92_126_1.jpg (Accessed 21 Feb. 2013).

Gast, John, *American Progress*. Chromolithograph Print. (Pub. By George A. Crofutt, ca. 1873.), Library of Congress, Print and Photograph Division, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97507547/> (accessed April 4, 2013).

Hart, Albert Bushnell, L.L.D., *United States in 1850. The American Nation Vol. 18* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1907) <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> (Accessed 21 Feb. 2013).

Secondary Sources:

Deverell, W. & White, D.G., *United States History Beginnings to 1877*(Holt McDougal). Orlando, FL. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2012

Autry National Center. *Manifest Destiny*. Computer software. Apple App Store. Vers. 1.0. Autry National Center, 7 Dec. 2011. Web. <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/manifest-destiny/id485413652?mt=8> (accessed March 5, 2013).

Sandweiss, Martha A. "John Gast, *American Progress*, 1872," The Graduate Center, City University of New York, Picturing U.S. History, http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/item.php?item_id=180 (accessed April 4, 2013).

Stewart, Matthew. "Conflict With Mexico 1820-1848." Educreations. 11 Feb. 2013. Web. <http://www.educreations.com/lesson/view/conflict-with-mexico-1820-1848/4804724/> (accessed March 5, 2013)

Summative Assessment (or Question)

Political Cartoon:

Students will create a political cartoon that either supports or argues against the spread of slavery into the western territories including the lands gained by the Mexican American War.

Assessment or Answer Key

See Rubric

Assessment Rubric

See appendix E.

Appendices

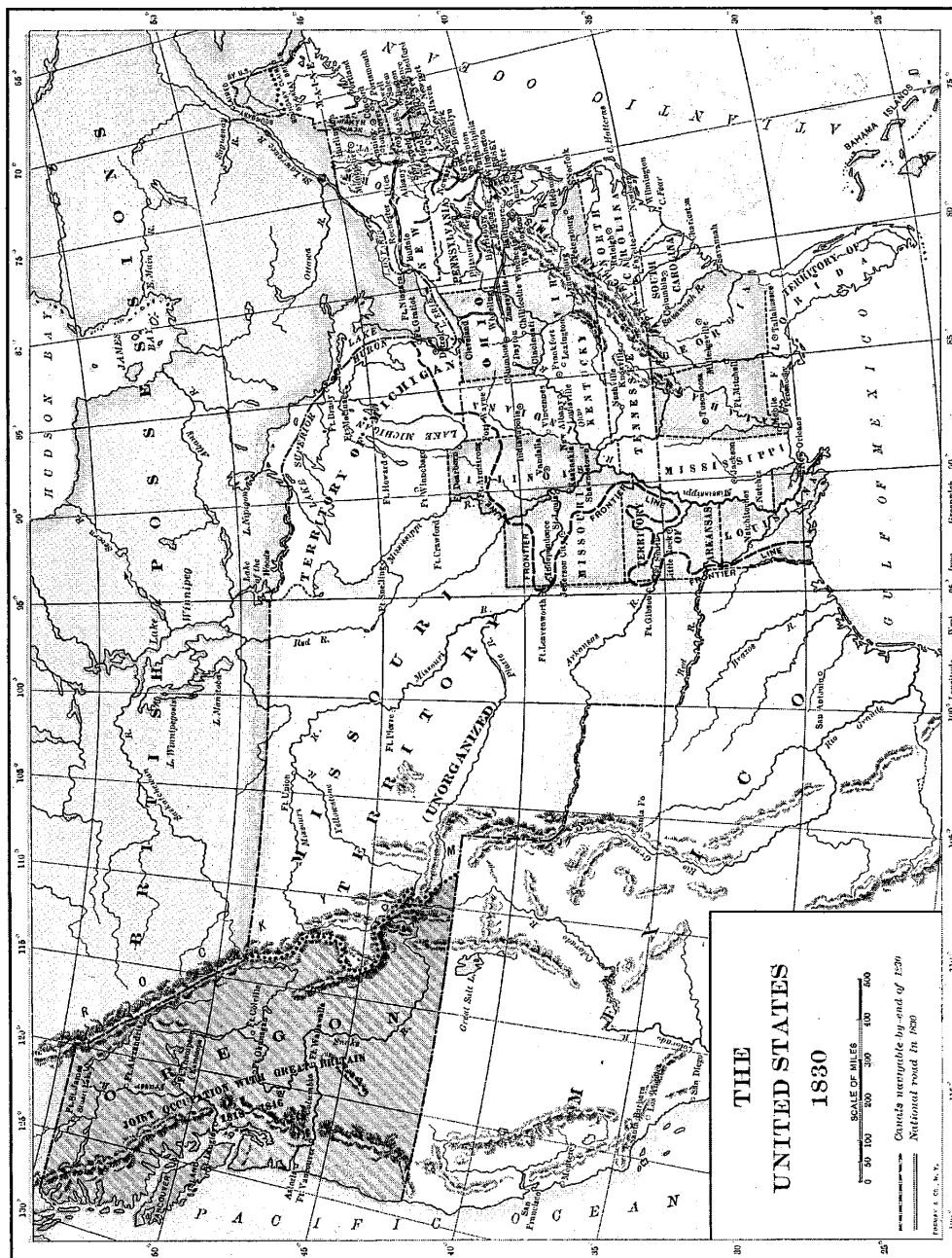
- A – Painting – American Progress by John Gast
- B – Map – The United States 1830
- C – Map – The United States 1850
- D – Map – Freedom and Slavery in 1854
- E – Handout – Questions from Day 1 and Day 2
- F - Rubric – Visual Project Rubric

Appendix A: *American Progress* by John Gast



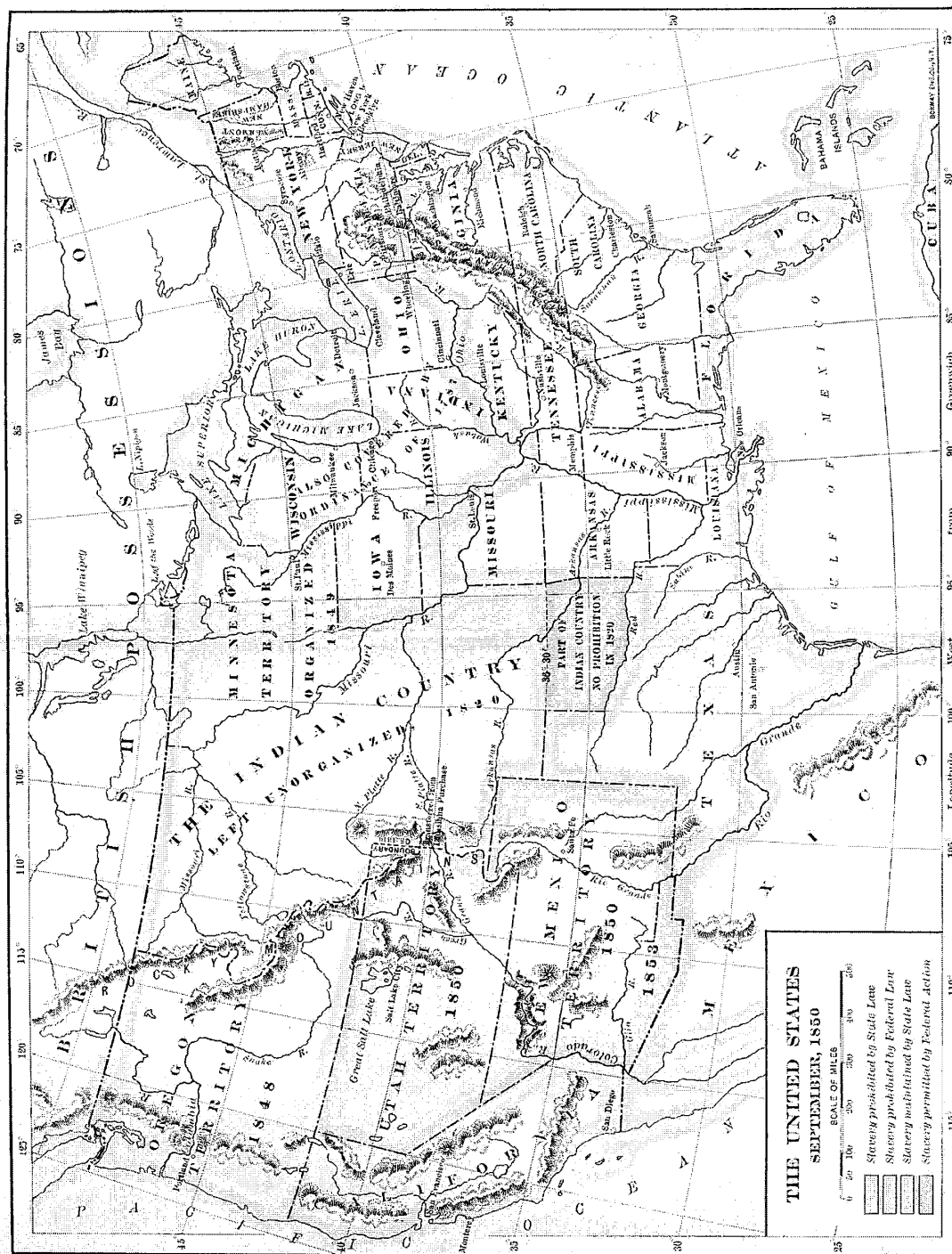
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Appendix B: Map – The United States 1830



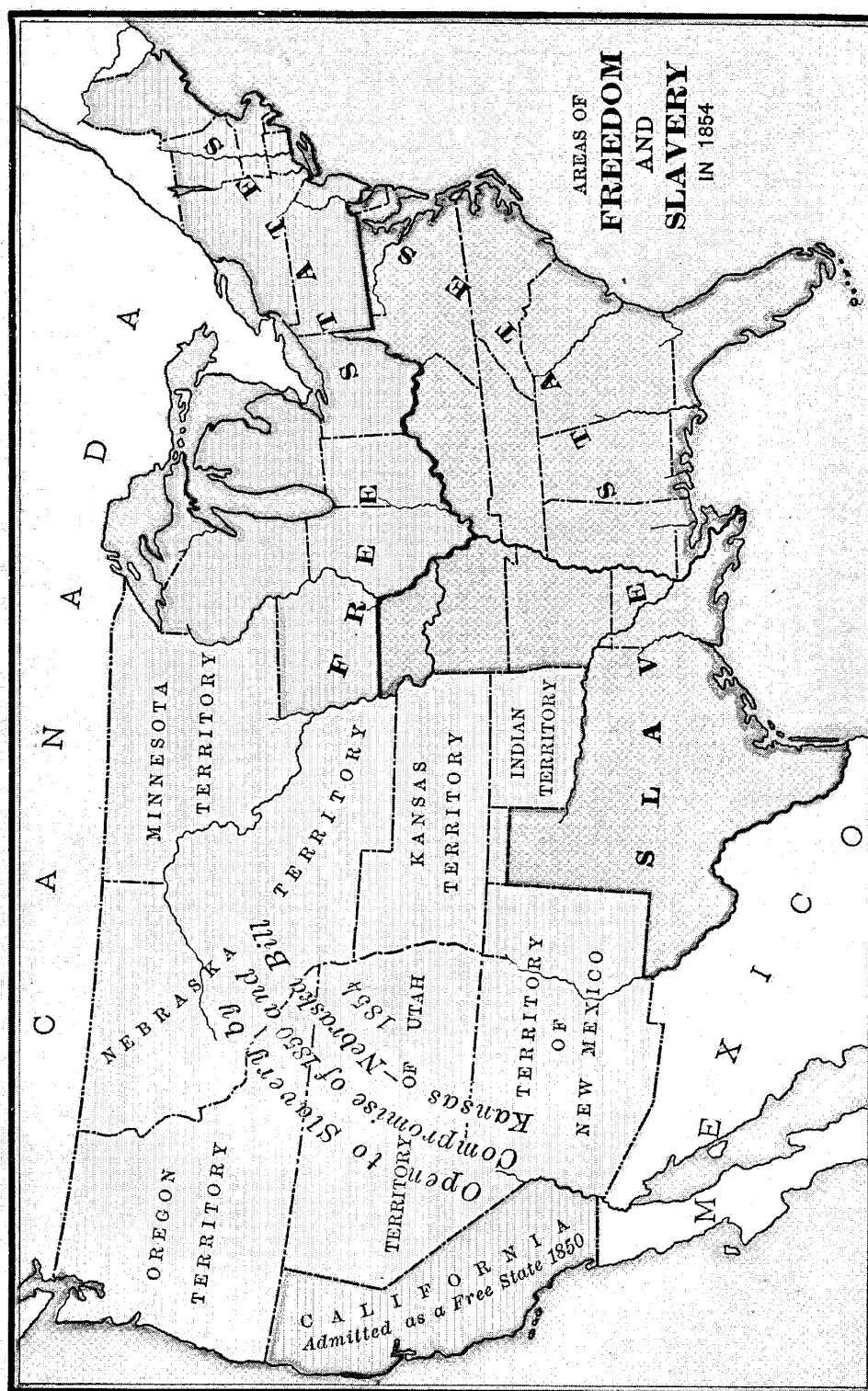
The United States, 1830
 Dixon Ryan Fox, *Harper's Atlas of American History* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920) 38
 Downloaded from Maps ETC, on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> [map #3303]

Appendix C: Map – The United States 1850



United States in 1850, 1850
 Albert Bushnell Hart, L.L.D., *The American Nation* Vol. 18 (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1907)
 Downloaded from Maps ETC, on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> [map #02906]

Appendix D: Map – Freedom and Slavery in 1854



Freedom and Slavery in 1854, 1854
 Charles Kendall Adams, A History of the United States (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1909)
 Downloaded from Maps ETC, on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> [map #00808]

E: Handout – Questions from Day 1 and Day 2

Day 1 Questions **What was Manifest Destiny?**

What are the benefits of Manifest Destiny?

What are the drawbacks of Manifest Destiny?

Predict how each of the following groups liked or disliked the concept of Manifest Destiny and explain why?

Mexicans –

Native Americans –

Europeans –

Day 2 Questions

Would you have recommended going to war or maintaining peace? Explain yourself.

What was the outcome of the Mexican American War?

Appendix F: Rubric – Visual Project Rubric

Name _____

Visual Project Rubric

Directions: Create a poster, comic strip, billboard (visual) that clearly takes a side of for or against Manifest Destiny. Stick figures, photo-shopped art, and copy & paste art will not count. Your visual should take up one entire side of an unlined 8.5 in. by 11 in. piece of paper. Take your time and plan what you want your visual to look like. I understand not everyone is an artist, but try your best and make it neat.

Self-Assessment

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Inadequate
Taking an opinion. Points _____	Clearly takes and explains an opinion on Manifest Destiny complete with supporting evidence. 20 – 17 Points	Clearly takes and explains an opinion on Manifest Destiny but lacks supporting evidence. 16 – 14 Points	Opinion on Manifest Destiny but is not clear. 13 – 12 Points	There is no apparent opinion on Manifest Destiny. 11 – 10 Points
Understanding of the topic. Points _____	Clearly shows understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 20 – 17 Points	Shows understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 16 – 14 Points	Shows some understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 13 – 12 Points	Lacks understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 11 – 10 Points
Presentation Points _____	Text and graphics are clearly legible and presented well. 10 – 9 Points	Text and graphics are legible. 8 Points	Text and graphics are somewhat legible. 7 Points	Text and graphics are illegible. 6 – 5 Points

Total Points ____/50

Appendix F: Rubric – Visual Project Rubric

Teacher Assessment

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Inadequate
<p>Taking an opinion.</p> <p>Points _____</p>	<p>Clearly takes and explains an opinion on Manifest Destiny complete with supporting evidence. 20 – 17 Points</p>	<p>Clearly takes and explains an opinion on Manifest Destiny but lacks supporting evidence. 16 – 14 Points</p>	<p>Opinion on Manifest Destiny is not clear. 13 – 12 Points</p>	<p>There is no apparent opinion on Manifest Destiny. 11 – 10 Points</p>
<p>Understanding of the topic.</p> <p>Points _____</p>	<p>Clearly shows understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 20 – 17 Points</p>	<p>Shows understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 16 – 14 Points</p>	<p>Shows some understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 13 – 12 Points</p>	<p>Lacks understanding of the issues surrounding Manifest Destiny. 11 – 10 Points</p>
<p>Presentation</p> <p>Points _____</p>	<p>Text and graphics are clearly legible and presented well. 10 – 9 Points</p>	<p>Text and graphics are legible. 8 Points</p>	<p>Text and graphics are somewhat legible. 7 Points</p>	<p>Text and graphics are illegible. 6 – 5 Points</p>

Total Points ____/50