



Westward Expansion

BANDANA – Large handkerchief worn by cowboys tied around the neck.

BOOMTOWN – Rapidly growing town.

BRONCO – A wild or half-tamed horse.

CATTLE DRIVE – Moving a herd of cattle from one place to another.

COWBOY – Person who tends the cattle on a ranch.

DANIEL BOONE – American folk hero, pioneer, explorer, and frontiersman.

FRONTIER – The extreme limit of settled land beyond which lies wilderness.

GHOST TOWN – Deserted town with few or no remaining inhabitants.

GOLD RUSH – Rapid movement of migrants to California, starting in 1848 after gold was found.

GUNSLINGER – Man who carries a gun and shoots well.

HOMESTEAD – Piece of free land acquired from the government in exchange for living and working on it.

LAND RUSH – When lands were opened to sale and people would race to claim a plot.

LEWIS AND CLARK – Explorers dispatched by Thomas Jefferson to map and explore the uncharted West.

LOG CABIN – Small house made from tree trunks

LOUISIANA PURCHASE – Purchase of a large expanse of land by the US from France in 1803.



MANIFEST DESTINY – Belief that the expansion of the US across the American continent was inevitable.

NORTHWEST TERRITORY – A historical region of the US that extended from the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the Great Lakes.

OREGON TRAIL – A wagon trail that stretched from the Missouri River to the Far West.

PIONEERS – The first people to explore and settle the West.

PONY EXPRESS – Mail service on horseback that operated from Missouri to California.

RANCH – A large animal (usually cattle) farm in the western US.

RESERVATIONS – Land set aside for Native American Indians.

STAMPEDE – Sudden panicked rush of cattle or bison.

TELEGRAPH – System for transmitting messages along a wire.

TRANSCONTINENTAL (Railroad) – The railroad system that connected the US east coast to the west coast.

WAGON TRAIN – Convoy of covered wagons transporting settlers westward.