

Westward Expansion

Grade 5 • SOCIAL-STUDIES • Students explain major routes, territorial growth, motivations, and consequences associated with westward expansion in the United States. • Standards: D2.His.2.3-5, D2.His.14.3-5

Answer each question about westward expansion in the United States. Write your answers in complete sentences when appropriate.

1. In 1803, the United States purchased a large territory from France that doubled the country's size. What was this land purchase called?
2. Many families traveled west in covered wagons along a famous route that went from Missouri to the Pacific Northwest. What was this route called?
3. Name one reason why American settlers wanted to move west in the 1800s.
4. In 1848, the United States gained a large amount of land in the Southwest after a war with which country?
5. When American settlers moved west, Native American nations already lived on those lands. Describe one negative consequence that westward expansion had on Native American communities.
6. The belief that the United States was meant to expand across the entire continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean had a special name. What was this belief called?
7. Many Chinese immigrants came to the western United States in the mid-1800s. Name one type of work that Chinese immigrants often performed in the West.
8. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced thousands of Native Americans to leave their homelands in the Southeast and move west. Explain why this journey was called the Trail of Tears.
9. Compare one opportunity that westward expansion provided to American settlers with one harmful consequence it caused for people already living in the West.

10. By 1848, the United States had expanded from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. Explain how this territorial growth affected at least two different groups of people in different ways.

Answer Key — Westward Expansion

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

- 1.** The Louisiana Purchase
- 2.** The Oregon Trail
- 3.** Any one of: to find farmland, to find gold, to start a new life, for economic opportunities, for religious freedom
- 4.** Mexico
- 5.** Any one of: Native Americans lost their lands, were forced to move to reservations, experienced violence, lost access to traditional hunting grounds, faced broken treaties, experienced disease
- 6.** Manifest Destiny
- 7.** Any one of: building railroads, mining, farming, laundry work, cooking
- 8.** It was called the Trail of Tears because thousands of Native Americans died during the forced journey and it caused great suffering and sadness.
- 9.** Answers should include one opportunity (such as land ownership, economic opportunities, or new beginnings) and one harmful consequence (such as Native Americans losing land, violence against Indigenous peoples, or discrimination against Mexican residents).
- 10.** Answers should describe effects on at least two groups, such as: American settlers gained land and opportunities; Native Americans lost their lands and were forced onto reservations; Mexican citizens living in acquired territories faced discrimination; enslaved people were brought to new territories; Chinese immigrants faced hard labor and discrimination.