

PRODUCE THE PODCAST: TELL US HISTORY

Lesson Plan

Lesson 14

WEEKLY WORK:

Length: One or two approximately 5-10 -minute asynchronous video with virtual instructor each week, homework will be assigned for the rest of the week. The video will drop on Sunday nights.

LESSON 14: 1840 – 1850: Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny

Weekly Homework:

- Read about this time-period.
- Review the videos/materials
- Worksheet: Podcast Episode: 1840-1850 Manifest Destiny

Watch the Weekly Video:

- <https://logcabinschoolhouse.com/course-catalog>

Materials:

- Your own curriculum (everyone should have chosen their own US History curriculum to read throughout the year by now.)
- Lesson Plan
- Worksheet: Podcast Episode: 1840-1850: Manifest Destiny

Lesson Script

Hey, Trailblazers!

Ready for an adventure? This week, we're packing our wagons, saying goodbye to the East Coast, and venturing into the wild, untamed West. That's right—it's time to talk about Manifest Destiny, the Oregon Trail, and the rollercoaster that was the annexation of Texas.

Picture this: It's the 1840s, and America is growing faster than a teenager outgrowing their favorite pair of jeans. But Americans didn't just want to grow *bigger*; they believed it was their destiny—yes, capital "D"—to spread democracy and civilization all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

Journalist John O'Sullivan coined the term Manifest Destiny, which basically means: "It's our *divine right* to expand westward. So, let's get to it!" Some thought this was a bold and exciting idea. Others (like Native Americans and Mexico) were, understandably, less thrilled.

Now, let's talk about the Oregon Trail, not just the computer game you might've played, but the *actual* route thousands of pioneers took to claim a better life out west.

Imagine this: You're leaving everything you know behind to travel 2,000 miles in a covered wagon. It's 1843, and the trail is packed with families chasing dreams of free land in Oregon Territory. But along the way, you're dodging rattlesnakes, crossing raging rivers, and trying not to catch cholera. It was less "family road trip" and more "survival of the fittest."

By the way, how much stuff do you think you can fit in a wagon? Not much! Pioneers had to make tough choices—Grandma's rocking chair? Leave it. Extra flour for biscuits? Bring it.

Now let's mosey on down to Texas, where things were getting *spicy*. In 1836, Texas won independence from Mexico, calling itself the Lone Star Republic. For nine years, it was like that one kid at school who doesn't sit at any table—neither part of the U.S. nor fully recognized by Mexico.

Fast-forward to 1845: President James K. Polk, a die-hard fan of Manifest Destiny, decided it was high time to bring Texas into the fold. Mexico wasn't thrilled about this annexation, and spoiler alert: it's one of the sparks that led to the Mexican-American War.

While westward expansion brought opportunities for many Americans, it also came at a huge cost. Native American tribes were forcibly removed from their lands, Mexican territories were seized, and the question of whether slavery would expand westward tore the country apart.

So here's something to chew on, Trailblazers: Do you think the idea of Manifest Destiny was about fulfilling a noble mission, or was it just an excuse for conquest?

Until next time, Trailblazers, keep asking questions and digging into history. The West may have been won, but the debates about it are still going strong. See you on the next adventure!

Things to Think About: Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny (1840–1850)

Part 1: The Ideology of Manifest Destiny

1. **The Idea of Manifest Destiny**
 - How did the belief in Manifest Destiny influence American attitudes about westward expansion?
 - Who benefited from the idea of Manifest Destiny, and who was harmed by it?
2. **Divine Right or Just an Excuse?**
 - What arguments did supporters use to justify the expansion of U.S. territory?
 - How might critics of Manifest Destiny have responded to the idea of a "divine right" to expand?

Part 2: The Oregon Trail

1. **Dreams and Challenges of the Journey**
 - What motivated families to risk the dangers of the Oregon Trail in search of a better life?
 - How did the harsh conditions of the trail shape the experience of westward expansion?
2. **Choices on the Trail**
 - If you were a pioneer, what supplies would you prioritize for a 2,000-mile journey?
 - How might the decisions made on the trail reveal the values and challenges of the time?

Part 3: The Annexation of Texas

1. **The Lone Star Republic**
 - Why did Texas declare its independence from Mexico in 1836?
 - What were the arguments for and against annexing Texas into the United States?
2. **Consequences of Annexation**
 - How did the annexation of Texas contribute to tensions with Mexico?
 - What role did Manifest Destiny play in shaping U.S. actions during this time?

Part 4: Conflict and Impact on Society

1. **Native Americans and Westward Expansion**
 - How were Native American tribes impacted by westward expansion and Manifest Destiny?
 - What strategies did Native Americans use to resist displacement?
2. **Economic and Social Shifts**
 - How did westward expansion create new opportunities for farmers, entrepreneurs, and settlers?
 - How did these changes deepen divisions between different regions and social groups in the U.S.?

Part 5: Reflection and Modern Connections

1. Legacy of Manifest Destiny

- How does the idea of Manifest Destiny continue to shape American identity and policies today?
- In what ways can we learn from the successes and failures of this period to address issues of expansion and inclusion in modern society?

2. A Nation Divided

- How did debates over westward expansion contribute to the growing divide between the North and South?
- How might the conflicts of this era foreshadow the Civil War?

Part 6: In-Person Discussion Activities

1. Debate: Manifest Destiny – Visionary or Conquest?

- Argue whether Manifest Destiny was a noble vision for America or a justification for expansion at others' expense.

2. Role-Playing: Perspectives on Expansion

- Act as a settler on the Oregon Trail, a Native American leader, or a Mexican official. Share perspectives on how westward expansion affected your life.

3. Gallery Walk: Visualizing Westward Expansion

- Display maps of the Oregon Trail, depictions of Manifest Destiny, and images of Texas independence. Reflect on how these visuals represent the ideals and conflicts of the time.

4. Simulation: Charting a New Frontier

- Imagine you're a pioneer planning a journey west. What goals would guide your decisions, and how would you navigate challenges like limited supplies or potential conflicts?

Socratic Discussion Questions: Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny (1840–1850)

1. **Was Manifest Destiny a justified policy for the United States to pursue?**
 - **Pro:** It spread democracy and created economic opportunities for settlers.
 - **Con:** It led to the displacement and suffering of Native Americans and other groups.
2. **Did the annexation of Texas benefit the United States overall?**
 - **Pro:** It expanded U.S. territory, increased resources, and strengthened national influence.
 - **Con:** It heightened tensions with Mexico and deepened divisions over slavery.
3. **Was the U.S. government fair in its treatment of Native American tribes during this period?**
 - **Pro:** Some argue relocation was intended to protect tribes from settler conflicts.
 - **Con:** It was unjust and violated treaties, causing immense suffering and loss of life.
4. **Did westward expansion strengthen the United States as a whole?**
 - **Pro:** It unified the country under a shared vision of growth and opportunity.
 - **Con:** It increased sectional tensions and exacerbated conflicts over slavery.
5. **Were pioneers on the Oregon Trail brave adventurers or reckless risk-takers?**
 - **Pro:** They were courageous individuals willing to endure hardships for a better future.
 - **Con:** They risked their lives and the lives of others, often underprepared for the journey.
6. **Was the Mexican-American War an inevitable result of Manifest Destiny?**
 - **Pro:** The U.S. was determined to expand, and tensions with Mexico were bound to escalate.
 - **Con:** Diplomatic solutions could have avoided war, but U.S. aggression made conflict unavoidable.
7. **Did Manifest Destiny promote democracy or imperialism?**
 - **Pro:** It spread democratic ideals to new territories and empowered citizens.
 - **Con:** It was an imperialistic policy that disregarded the rights of indigenous peoples and other nations.
8. **Should settlers have been held accountable for the impact of westward expansion on Native Americans?**
 - **Pro:** Settlers directly participated in displacing Native Americans and were complicit in injustices.
 - **Con:** Settlers were following government policies and seeking better lives for their families.
9. **Was President James K. Polk’s expansionist agenda good for the nation?**
 - **Pro:** His leadership secured valuable territories like Oregon, Texas, and California.
 - **Con:** His aggressive policies caused war and worsened national divisions over slavery.
10. **Did the benefits of westward expansion outweigh the costs?**

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- **Pro:** The expansion provided economic growth, increased land ownership, and fulfilled national aspirations.
- **Con:** The costs included war, loss of life, destruction of cultures, and long-lasting inequalities.

CCSS:

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) do not have specific standards for U.S. History alone. However, U.S. History can be taught within the framework of the **Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies** for grades 6-12. These standards focus on developing students' abilities to read, analyze, and write about historical texts.

Here's a breakdown of the relevant Common Core Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies for grades 6-12:

Grades 6-8:

1. Key Ideas and Details

- **RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **RH.6-8.3:** Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes a law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

2. Craft and Structure

- **RH.6-8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **RH.6-8.5:** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **RH.6-8.6:** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- **RH.6-8.7:** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **RH.6-8.8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **RH.6-8.9:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

4. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- **RH.6-8.10:** By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Grades 9-10:

1. Key Ideas and Details

- **RH.9-10.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

- **RH.9-10.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **RH.9-10.3:** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
2. **Craft and Structure**
- **RH.9-10.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.
 - **RH.9-10.5:** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
 - **RH.9-10.6:** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
3. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**
- **RH.9-10.7:** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **RH.9-10.8:** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
 - **RH.9-10.9:** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
4. **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**
- **RH.9-10.10:** By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Grades 11-12:

1. **Key Ideas and Details**
- **RH.11-12.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
 - **RH.11-12.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
 - **RH.11-12.3:** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
2. **Craft and Structure**
- **RH.11-12.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.
 - **RH.11-12.5:** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.
 - **RH.11-12.6:** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

3. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

- **RH.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **RH.11-12.8:** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **RH.11-12.9:** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

4. **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

- **RH.11-12.10:** By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

These literacy standards help guide the integration of U.S. History content within the Common Core framework by ensuring students develop critical reading, writing, and analytical skills relevant to understanding historical texts and contexts.

AP US History by the College Board:

Yes, there are standards for Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History (APUSH). However, these standards are developed by the College Board, not the Common Core State Standards. The AP U.S. History course framework outlines the skills and knowledge students should acquire to be successful on the AP exam and in future college-level history courses.

AP U.S. History Course Framework:

The APUSH framework is organized into nine historical periods, each with key concepts, themes, and historical thinking skills:

1. **Historical Thinking Skills:**

- **Analyzing Evidence:** Ability to analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.
- **Argument Development:** Crafting coherent historical arguments using evidence.
- **Contextualization:** Placing historical events within a broader context to understand their significance.
- **Comparison:** Comparing historical developments across time, geography, and cultures.
- **Causation:** Understanding cause-and-effect relationships in history.
- **Continuity and Change Over Time:** Identifying patterns of continuity and change over time.
- **Synthesis:** Connecting insights from different historical events or processes to develop new understandings.

2. **Thematic Learning Objectives:** APUSH is structured around seven themes that help students make connections between different historical periods:

- **American and National Identity (NAT)**
- **Work, Exchange, and Technology (WXT)**

- **Geography and the Environment (GEO)**
 - **Migration and Settlement (MIG)**
 - **Politics and Power (PCE)**
 - **America in the World (WOR)**
 - **American and Regional Culture (ARC)**
 - **Social Structures (SOC)**
3. **Key Concepts by Period:**
- **Period 1 (1491-1607):** The development of indigenous societies in North America before European contact and early European exploration and colonization.
 - **Period 2 (1607-1754):** European colonization, regional differences, and conflicts with indigenous peoples.
 - **Period 3 (1754-1800):** The American Revolution, the creation of the U.S. Constitution, and the early Republic.
 - **Period 4 (1800-1848):** The rise of American democracy, market economy, and social reforms.
 - **Period 5 (1844-1877):** Manifest Destiny, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.
 - **Period 6 (1865-1898):** Industrialization, urbanization, and the Gilded Age.
 - **Period 7 (1890-1945):** The Progressive Era, World Wars, and the Great Depression.
 - **Period 8 (1945-1980):** The Cold War, civil rights movements, and postwar prosperity.
 - **Period 9 (1980-present):** Contemporary U.S. history, including globalization, technological change, and shifts in social and political dynamics.

AP U.S. History Exam Format:

The APUSH exam assesses students' understanding of these periods, their ability to think critically, and their skills in analyzing historical evidence. The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, a document-based question (DBQ), and a long essay question (LEQ).

APUSH Skills and Practices:

- **Practice 1:** Analyzing and interpreting primary and secondary sources.
- **Practice 2:** Making historical arguments.
- **Practice 3:** Using historical evidence.
- **Practice 4:** Contextualization.
- **Practice 5:** Making connections across periods, regions, and themes.

These standards ensure that AP U.S. History students are prepared to engage in college-level historical analysis and develop a deep understanding of U.S. history across different periods and themes.