#### Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

#### A Document Based Exercise

#### **Introductory Note for Teachers**

As the population of the United States grew and the demand for greater trade and resources increased, Americans began to look westward. The expansion of territory to the Pacific Ocean was achieved through negotiation with Great Britain, war with Mexico, and passage through Native American lands. While success and prosperity was achieved, there were negative consequences of these actions. In this DBQ, students are asked to examine Manifest

Destiny with a critical eye. As with each of the document based exercises in this series, teachers have the option of using a shorter and easier version of student materials or a somewhat longer and more complex version. Each student version contains a background essay, a document list, and the documents themselves. The teacher materials that follow provide direction and support for both versions.

#### **Table of Contents**

#### **Manifest Destiny – Longer Version (LV)**

#### Teacher Material

DBQ Summary Sheet	pages 2-3
Manifest Destiny Lesson Plan	page 4
Cover Sheet	page 5
Hook Activity	page 6
Teacher Document List	page 7
Teacher Document Notes	pages 8-13

#### **Student Materials**

Student Guide Sheet	page 14
Manifest Destiny Background Essay	pages 15-16

Document Set (15) – clean & scaffold pages 17-31 and 33-47

#### **Manifest Destiny – Shorter Version (SV)**

#### Teacher Materials

Cover Sheet	page 48
Manifest Destiny Lesson Plan	page 49
DBQ Summary Sheet	page 50-51
Hook Activity	page 52
Teacher Document List	page 53
Teacher Document Notes	pages 54-57

#### Student Materials

Student Guide Sheet	page 58
Manifest Destiny Background Essay	pages 59-60

Document Set (10)—clean & scaffold pages 61-70 & 72-81

### Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

A Unit Adapted From "The DBQ Project- Mexican-American War Mini Q"

Brief Description		eyond the Mississippi River during the 1840s. The chieved great successes in the west. However, there environmentally. Did the great benefits of Manifest
Document GPS Correlations	Doc A— President Polk's Mexican- American War Message to Congress (SSUSH- 7b & 8d) Doc B— Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War (SSUSH- 7b & 8d) Doc C- Congressional Debates Over Mexican-American War (SSUSH- 7b & 8d) Doc D— Newspaper Article Regarding Advantages of War (SSUSH- 7b & 8d) Doc E— President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California (SSUSH- 7b) Doc F— Newspaper Article Concerning the Problems of the Gold Rush (SSUSH- 7b) Doc G— Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs (SSUSH- 7b, 11a, 11b, 14a) Doc H— Maps of Rates of Travel 1830 and 1857 (SSUSH- 7b, 11a, 11b) Doc I— Buffalo Hide Yard Photograph and Quote (SSUSH- 7b) Doc J— Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River (SSUSH- 7b & 12c) Doc K— Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment (SSUSH- 7b & 12c) Doc L— Pioneer Diary Entry on the Lure of Gold (SSUSH- 7b) Doc M— Overview of Mormon Trail Experience (SSUSH- 7b) Doc N— William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West (SSUSH- 7b, 8a, 8b, 8d) Doc O— Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso (SSUSH- 7b, 8b, 8d)	
Common Core Standards Correlations	The DBQ Project integrates reading and writing skills with historical content. Common Core Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening are embedded in the lessons naturally. The following 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Common Core Standards are specifically addressed:	
	Reading in History Standards:  RH1 RH6  RH2 RH7  RH3 RH8  RH4 RH9  RH5 RH10	Writing in History Standards:  WHST1 WHST6  WHST2 WHST7  WHST3 WHST8  WHST4 WHST9  WHST5 WHST10
Pacing	Traditional  Day 1:      Hook Exercise(10 min)     Background Essay (5 min)         ○ Emphasizes     Document Organization (5 min)     Begin Document Analysis (30 min)  Day 2:     Complete Document Analysis (15 min)     Discuss docs and categorize —(10 min)     Writing Guidelines (10-30 min. based on class level & DBQ experience)  Day 3:     Essay Written in Class (45 min)     "Did the benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?"	Block  Day 1:  Hook Exercise (10 min) Background Essay (5 min) Emphasize Document Organization (5 min) Document Analysis (45 min) Discuss docs and categorize (10 min)  Day 2:  Writing Guidelines (10-30 min based on class level & DBQ experience) Essay written in class (45 min) "Did the benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?"

	On-Level	<u>Honors</u>
Course Plan	SV Background Essay	LV Background Essay
&	SV Documents (Short Version)	LV Documents (Long Version)
Resources	• 10 Documents  O Territory O Trade O Pioneers O Politics  Categories	• 15 Documents  O Territory O Trade O Pioneers O Politics  Categories
	SV Scaffolding Questions	LV Scaffolding Questions
	Use varies with DBQ experience	Use varies with DBQ experience
Supporting Materials	To be created by teachers using the lesson	

#### Manifest Destiny DBQ Lesson Plan - Longer Version and Short Version

DAY 1

НООК	Complete the Hook Exercise on John Gast's <i>American Progress</i> painting.	
BACKGROUND ESSAY	Have students read the Background Essay. Be sure they are clear on the events surrounding the transfer of property in the west between Spain, Mexico, and the United States. The essay addresses the events leading to US expansion as well as the general benefits and negative consequences faced as a result of the Mexican cession of land.	
DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION	After handing out the document packets, ask students to skim each of the documents. Ask what images or ideas stand out. Next, ask students if there are any documents that can be grouped together. Explain that these groupings can be called analytical categories. Ask students to read through the documents and finalize their analytical categories. They should then place each document in the appropriate category. Explain to students that by doing this they are really formulating a simple outline.	

DAY 2

DISCUSSION	Drawing on student outlines formed from Document Organization, create an outline on the board that approaches the outline in the Teacher Document List
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	Using an overhead projector, examine one or more documents together as a class. On a transparency, model the kind of notation you expect for each document. Then, in pairs or in groups of three, have students analyze the documents, making their notations either in the margins or on their Document Analysis Sheets.  Students should complete document analysis for all the documents in the set.
DISCUSSION	When students have finished their analytical notes, conduct a full class discussion. Have transparencies of selected documents available for reference. Individuals or groups might come forward to describe a document or cluster of documents. They should assess the degree to which Manifest Destiny was helpful or costly to the United States in each of the several analytical categories. Use the content Notes and Teaching Tips in the Teacher Document Notes to guide your discussion.

DAY 3

ESSAY	Depending on the skill level of the class, a one-day writing workshop is suggested. See the Teachers' Toolkit for ideas.
	Write essay.

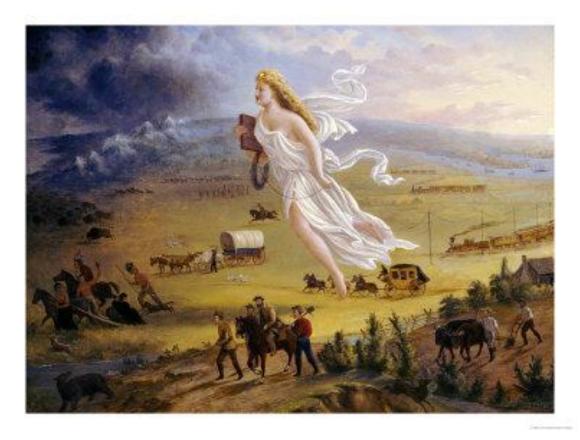
\*\*\* For Block Schedule- Modify the time for completion to 2 days instead of 3.

# Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?



A Document Based Question (DBQ) - Longer Version

#### Manifest Destiny DBQ – Hook Activity John Gast-American Progress



- 1. Divide the painting above into 4 equal parts.
- 2. Analyze each quadrant independently in order to adequately interpret this famous painting. List the people, activities, and means of transportation shown in each using the chart below. Use this analysis to develop a definition for the term "Manifest Destiny."

Manifest Destiny is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

#### **TEACHER DOCUMENT LIST (Longer Version)**

There are 15 documents in the Longer Version of this DBQ. The documents are grouped into four analytical categories. Each category contains documents that show the benefits enjoyed by the United States from westward expansion while others highlight the negative consequences that resulted. An uncategorized list of documents accompanies the student materials. An important part of student analysis is to develop categories that may or may not be the same as those below.

#### Manifest Destiny and the Acquisition of New Lands in the West

Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War

Document C: Congressional Debates Concerning the Mexican-American War

Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding Advantages of War

#### Manifest Destiny, Trade, and Resources

Document E: President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California

Document F: Newspaper Article Concerning the Problems of the Gold Rush

Document G: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs

Document H: Maps of Rates of Travel 1830 and 1857

Document I: Buffalo Hide Yard Photograph and Quote

#### **Manifest Destiny and the Pioneers**

Document J: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

Document K: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

Document L: Pioneer Diary Entry on the Lure of Gold

Document M: Overview of Mormon Trail Experience

#### **Manifest Destiny and Politics in the United States**

Document N: William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West

Document O: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to the Wilmot Proviso

#### **Manifest Destiny Document Content & Teaching Notes**

#### Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

#### **Content Notes:**

- President Polk was an expansionist who believed the United States needed to acquire California. Polk
  had sent former Louisiana Representative John Slidell to Mexico to negotiate a deal with the newly
  formed Mexican government. He proposed to pay off the Mexican government's debt to Texans and
  was prepared to offer up to \$40 million for the purchase of California and New Mexico.
- Mexico refused to sell the land and the resulting standoff at the Rio Grande (as shown in the map depicted in the Background Essay) led to the Declaration of War presented in Document A

#### **Teaching Notes:**

- What was the response of Congress to Polk's war message?
  - Overwhelming support as evidenced by the vote results listed at the bottom of the Document.
- Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

#### Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War

#### **Content Notes:**

• From Mexico's point of view, Texas was not able to secede from them much less go to the United States for annexation. This is a similar idea to the southern United States seceding to begin the Civil War. There were many American leaders who believed the union of states was unbreakable. Mexicans and their government had a very different perspective of the events that led to the outbreak of the Mexican-American War.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

- According to the author, why did a Mexican force attack Zachary Taylor's troops when they arrived at the Rio Grande River?
- Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

#### **Document C: Congressional Debates Concerning the Mexican-American War**

#### **Content Notes:**

- Although the vote for war was overwhelmingly supportive on May 13, 1846, there was great
  concern among many people about what they referred to as "Mr. Polk's War." There were
  questions about the legitimacy of the claims made regarding the initial attack on Zachary Taylor.
- This document presents the argument held by some that the United States must fight in order to protect the southwestern border of the United States from Great Britain. It was feared by many that Great Britain was the greater threat if they were to gain control of Texas.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• Why did Congressman Gilmer fear Great Britain?

#### Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding the Advantages of War

#### **Content Notes:**

• This perspective of the war shows yet another consideration. The great successes of the United States military in Mexico were actually projecting a dominant image to the rest of the world. This would serve as a deterrent to other countries having designs on American land. This was also seen as propelling the United States into larger world markets for economic prosperity.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• Was this war about land, wealth, or prestige? Was it a combination of these?

#### Document E: President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California

#### **Content Notes:**

- The Gold Rush began in 1848 with discovery at Sutter's Mill outside of San Francisco. This started a flood of people going to California to stake their claim. There were over 300,000 people who would move to the territory that was recently acquired from Mexico.
- The conflict between native peoples, the Mexicans, Americans who moved there, and the many immigrants from South America who went in search of wealth was monumental.
- Polk's Address to Congress served to fuel the rush of people to California in 1849.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• What did Polk report about the changes that California was experiencing at the time of the speech?

#### **Document F: Newspaper Article Concerning the Problems of the Gold Rush**

#### **Content Notes:**

- Because California was not yet a state, there was uncertainty about laws and authority in the
  territory. With so many people entering the territory for purposes founded in greed, there was
  considerable violence and lawlessness that prevailed.
- Californians wanted to become a state as quickly as possible. As part of the Compromise of 1850,
   California entered the United States as a free state.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How did Californians lose influence in their own lands?

#### **Document G: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs**

#### **Content Notes:**

- The Transcontinental Railroad was completed in May of 1869. This monumental achievement saw the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads connect the Pacific Ocean with the east via railroad. There was considerable Chinese labor used to complete the railroad.
- The Chinese immigrants of this time period faced significant discrimination and prejudice.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• The photos on the bottom of the page clearly show Chinese workers actually completing the last rail of the project. The top photo is the famous image of the completion ceremony. There are no Chinese laborers visible in the photograph.

#### **Document H: Maps of Rates of Travel**

#### **Content Notes:**

- The map lines show how far a person in the year depicted could travel in 1 day. Each successive
  line indicates an additional day or week needed to reach that point from the starting point of New
  York.
- By comparing the two maps from 1830 and 1857, one can see how drastically the technology of the time had helped connect the areas of the United States. This was due to steamboats and railroads.
- The amount of train track in the US increased significantly during this time period accounting for the differences between maps. Between 1838 and 1850, the amount of rail in the US increased from 3,000 miles of track to 9,000 miles of track. By 1860 that number increased even more to 30,000 miles of track.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How would a Rate of Travel Map similar in design to Document H look for 1870?

#### Document I: Buffalo Hide Yard Photograph and Quote

#### **Content Notes:**

- As buffalo robes became a popular commodity among Americans and Europeans, the hunt became
  even more intense. It is estimated that before the 1840s the Plains Indians were killing 500,000
  per year for sustenance. That total went to over 600,000 per year as they began trading with
  whites.
- As whites began to get involved in buffalo hunting, their totals are estimated at 4 million killed.
- The herds could not reproduce in order to sustain this mass depletion.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How did economics play a key role in the depletion of the buffalo herd?

#### Document J: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

#### **Content Notes:**

- The initial contact between white mountain men and Indians was mutually beneficial and relied on
  the barter system. The Rendezvous was an annual meeting that lasted a week allowing for trade of
  goods desired by both parties to be exchanged.
- The Wyoming Rendezvous on the Green River began in 1825 and lasted until 1840 when trading posts became more widespread.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

 What was the relationship and attitudes between whites and natives who attended the Rendezvous?

#### Document K: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

#### **Content Notes:**

- By the 1860s the relationship between whites and natives had become contentious.
- The Fort Laramie Treaty had been signed in 1851 in an attempt to promote peace for the settlers who were rapidly moving west and encroaching on native lands.
- A subsequent Fort Laramie Treaty was signed in 1868. Both were aimed at preventing warfare between the natives and white settlers. Neither treaty was very successful due to the requirement that native tribes give up their free-range lifestyle for settled life on reservations.
- The warfare escalated during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How had the west changed between the 1830s and the 1860s?

#### **Document L: Pioneer Diary Entry on the Lure of Gold**

#### **Content Notes:**

- Pioneers set out for the west in search of gold and wealth. The trip to California was long and difficult and the pioneers traveled on well-defined routes and in groups.
- The economic hardships faced by many in the east at the end of the 1840s made the search for gold an alternative to consider. Many pioneers intended to go west, make enough money to return to the east, and pay their debts.
- The provisions for travel to the west were expensive so many worked on the wagon trains to fund the trip.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• Did the declining economy of the east make the Gold Rush in California more popular?

#### **Document M: Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience**

#### **Content Notes:**

- The Mormon followers had faced opposition originally in New York and then again in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. When their leader Joseph Smith was murdered in Illinois, the new leadership of Brigham Young encouraged them to move to Utah and settle in what they referred to as New Zion.
- The Mormons first arrived in the Utah territory in 1847. Utah did not become a state until 1896.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• Why was Utah attractive to Brigham Young as a place for the Mormons to settle in 1847?

#### Document N: William Lloyd Garrison Condemning Slavery in the West

#### **Content Notes:**

- William Lloyd Garrison was an abolitionist whose newspaper, *The Liberator*, went into publication in 1831.
- The questions regarding slavery expanding into the newly acquired lands from Mexico were significant. The Wilmot Proviso was proposed to prevent slavery from the lands acquired from Mexico.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

Could this statement by William Lloyd Garrison be biased in any way?

#### **Document O: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso**

#### **Content Notes:**

- Robert Toombs was a Representative and Senator from Georgia. He eventually would become one of the founders of the Confederacy. He served as Secretary of State for the Confederacy.
- The Wilmot Proviso was a piece of legislation proposed to block the spread of slavery in the western lands.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How did the conflicting opinions over the expansion of slavery into the newly acquired territories create greater tension between the northern and southern states in the 1840s?

#### STUDENT GUIDE SHEET

#### Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

**Directions:** In the 1840s the United States increased its territory to stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. This land was acquired through treaty, war, and negotiation. The opportunities this large area of land offered in terms of resources and trade were great. There were, however, negative consequences that also arose from the expansion of the United States. Did the benefits of populating these lands outweigh the negative consequences that also emerged?

#### Follow these steps as you grapple with this historical question:

- 1. Read the Background Essay. It provides an overview of Manifest Destiny and the expansion of the United States to the west.
- 2. Quickly skim the 15 documents to get a sense of what they are about.
- 3. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the events that led to the acquisition of new lands formerly belonging to Mexico before you analyze the documents.
- 4. Read the documents slowly. For each document use the margins or a Document Analysis Sheet to record:
  - ~ What or who is the source?
  - ~ What is the issue being discussed? (land, resources, etc...)
  - ~ Summarize in your own words the main argument or idea being presented in each document.
- 5. Clarify for yourself the different issues addressed by the 15 documents. Make a judgment as to which aspect of westward expansion is the most significant- the benefits or the negative consequences?
- 6. Make a final summary judgment of Manifest Destiny. Overall were the benefits more significant than the negative consequences? Is it reasonable that arguments could be made supporting both? Is it even possible that some of the greatest benefits could also create the greatest negative consequences?

#### **The Documents:**

Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War

Document C: Congressional Debates Concerning the Mexican-American War

Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding Advantages of War

Document E: President Polk's Address to Congress Concerning Gold in California

Document F: Newspaper Article Regarding the Problems of the Gold Rush

Document G: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs

Document H: Maps of Rates of Travel 1830 and 1857

Document I: Buffalo Hide Yard Photograph and Quote

Document J: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

Document K: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

Document L: Pioneer Diary Entry on the Lure of Gold

Document M: Overview of Mormon Trail Experience

Document N: William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West

Document O: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso

#### **Background Essay**

#### Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

Americans sought territory, resources, and refuge beyond the Mississippi River during the 1840s. The pioneers, military expeditions, and entrepreneurs achieved great successes in the west. However, there were detrimental consequences politically, diplomatically, and environmentally. Did the great benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?

Mexico had won its independence from Spain in the early 1820s and the new Mexican leadership knew they needed to increase their population in the northern lands. With the promise of cheap land, many Americans went to the Mexican territory of Texas in search of success.

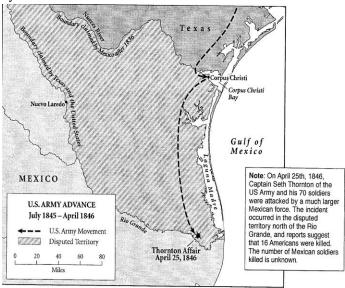


It did not take long before conflict erupted as the settlers did little to adhere to the provisions mandated by the Mexican government for settlement-Catholicism, no slavery, and Mexican citizenship. Texans won their independence from Mexico in 1836 and promptly asked the US for annexation. Controversy grew over Texas, its annexation, and its boundaries. Not all Congressmen wanted to add Texas to the US as fear of a potentially large slave territory threatened the balance of Congress.

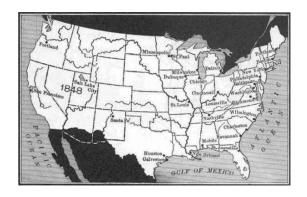
In 1844 the new president, James K. Polk believed in the idea of Manifest Destiny and took action. The term was coined by John O'Sullivan in a July 1845 magazine article. He stated concerning annexation of Texas, "It is time for opposition to the Annexation of Texas to cease.... Texas is now ours.... Let their reception into the 'family' be frank, kindly, and cheerful.... Other nations have undertaken...hostile interference against us,

...hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence (God) for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."

Not only did Polk want to annex Texas, he also was seeking California as a way to span the borders of the US across the continent. War did indeed begin between the US and Mexico, triggered by a debatable conflict on the Rio Grande River.



The war was a resounding victory for the United States and resulted in the addition of not only Texas, but also the California territory and other western land. The Oregon territory had also been acquired through negotiation with Great Britain. Thus the Manifest Destiny of the United States land acquisition was complete to the Pacific Ocean.



Indeed this acquisition of new territory brought great opportunity for the United States in terms of resources, population expansion, and trade. The census data from 1830 and 1840 show a staggeringly rapid population increase of 32.7%. This increase in population within the confines of the eastern states presented the "need" for expansion. The new western lands provided opportunity for the increasing population of the east to find their own land and prosperity in developing these new areas.

The advances made in trade through the pioneer trails to Oregon, Santa Fe, and California brought economic prosperity to many. As gold was discovered in California, it became a great destination in 1849 for those looking for opportunity and wealth. The technology and improvements in transportation made the west even more accessible for trade and immigration. Still others went west seeking religious freedom in the 1840s.

While these benefits of expansion were certainly great, there were also negative consequences to the expansion of the United States into western lands. There were conflicts created with Native Americans as the buffalo population was depleted and their lands were encroached upon. In areas where the population swelled seemingly overnight, there were questions regarding statehood and laws in the region. And finally, the underlying question of the period was whether slavery would extend into these newly acquired lands. Congress wrestled with the Wilmot Proviso proposed by Pennsylvania Democratic David Wilmot to eliminate the expansion of slavery into the territories acquired from Mexico. The proviso was proposed and passed by the House but was always voted down in the Senate. The sectional and political tension created by Wilmot's Proviso and slavery's uncertainty was a small taste of what was to come in the 1850s leading up to the outbreak of Civil War.

Manifest Destiny and westward expansion provided the United States with great opportunity and economic prosperity. At the same time, there were negative consequences to these actions. Examine the documents that follow to determine the answer to the question .... Manifest Destiny: Did the benefits outweigh the negative consequences?

John Gast's American Progress, 1872



#### Establishing Context from Background Essay

- 1. From which country did Mexico become independent?
- 2. From which country and when did Texas become independent?
- 3. How could the census data reflect a justification for westward expansion?
- 4. In general, what types of benefits did the United States gain from expansion?
- 5. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico in 1846? How might this same event be viewed differently in Mexico?
- 6. In general, what negative consequences did the United States deal with from western expansion

#### **Document A**



Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: The DBQ Project (Doc B)

War Message of President James Polk, Washington, May 11, 1846

#### To the Senate and House of Representatives:

(In an earlier message) I informed you that ... I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte (Rio Grande)." This had become necessary, to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces.... The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined ... to annex herself to our Union; and, under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

... The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic.... The country between that river and the Del Norte ... is now included within one of our congressional districts.... It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defense of that portion of our country....

(On the 24th of April) a party ... of sixty-three men and officers, were ... dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its (North) bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross, the river... (They) became engaged with a large body of these (Mexican) troops, and, after a short affair, in which some sixteen (Americans) were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender....

We have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, ... Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.

Note: War Vote, May 13, 1846: US Senate: 40 Yes, 2 No House of Rep: 174 Yes, 14 No

#### **Document B**

Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: DBQ Project (Doc C)

Jesus Valasco-Marquez, Instituto Technologico Autonomo de Mexico, "A Mexican Viewpoint on the War With the United States," *Voices of Mexico*, issue #41, Center for Research on North America (CISAN), National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2006.

The most dramatic event in the history of relations between Mexico and the United States took place a century and a half ago. US historians refer to this event as "The Mexican War," while in Mexico we prefer to use the term "The U.S. Invasion."...

From Mexico's point of view, the annexation of Texas to the United States was inadmissible for both legal and security reasons. Thus, when the Mexican government learned of the treaty signed between Texas and the United States in April 1844, it ... would consider such an act "a declaration of war."...

(In early 1846, on Polk's orders) the troops commanded by General Zachary Taylor arrived at the Rio Grande, across from the city of Matamoros, thus occupying the territory in dispute and increasing the possibilities of a confrontation.... In the eyes of the (Mexican) government, the mobilization of the US army was an outright attack on Mexico.... As a consequence, the Mexican government reaffirmed the instruction to protect the border, meaning the territory located between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River – an order which led to the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma....

... (One article) in the daily *El Tiempo* ... stated: "The American government acted like a bandit who came upon a traveler."

#### **Document C**



**Source:** Excerpt from Senator Thomas Hart Benton's Book, *Thirty Years View: A History of the Working of American Government for Thirty Years from 1820-1850.* Volume II. New York, 1873.

This book is chiefly taken from the Congress debates, the private papers of General Jackson, and the speeches of Ex-Senator Benton, with his actual view of men and affairs.

#### From p. 581

"In the winter of 1842-43, nearly two years before the presidential election, there appeared in a Baltimore newspaper an elaborately composed letter on the annexation of Texas, written by Mr. [Thomas Walker] Gilmer, a member of Congress from Virginia, urging the immediate annexation [of Texas], as necessary to forestall the designs of Great Britain upon that young country. These designs, it was alleged, aimed at a political and military domination on our south-western border, with a view to abolition and hostile movements against us; and the practical part of the letter was an earnest appeal to the American people to annex the Texas Republic immediately, as the only means of preventing such great calamities.

#### **Document D**



Source: Washington Daily Union Article of March 16, 1848

From (Kennedy & Bailey, The American Spirit Volume I. 2010, p. 420)

"It is true that the war has cost us millions of money, and, what is far more precious, the lives of some of our noblest citizens. But what great advantages has it not obtained for us? It has covered us with glory. It has extended our fame to the remotest corners of earth. If the treaty be ratified, it will extend the area of freedom to the southern Pacific.

... Now they are tamed. Now they have consented to negotiate for peace, without requiring our ships to leave their coast and our troops to desert their territory. These in the popular sentiment have been produced by the brilliant achievements of Buena Vista and of Cerro Gordo, the capture of their castle and of their capital. Does anyone now believe that their spirit is not humbled, and that the sense of their own inferiority will not induce them to refrain from a repetition of the insults and aggressions which they had so repeatedly perpetrated upon us?

They will be stripped, too, of a large portion of their territory. They may be stripped of more, if they should wantonly insult us again. Will not the lessons they have learned operate as a security for the future? Will not the moral force we have gained, and the military genius we have exhibited, go beyond Mexico, and produce their impression upon the other nations of the earth?

With ample indemnity for the past, then, and with such security for the future- with achievements in arms which any nation might envy- with an extension of territory to the Pacific, which gives us some of the finest harbors in the world (for one of which alone- the bay of San Francisco- Gen. Jackson was willing to give five millions of dollars)- with an immense commerce opening upon us with the richest nations of Asia- with every facility secured for our whalers in the Pacific, and with the other advantages which we will have secured- with all of these, we can truly say that we have every reason to be proud of the war, and proud of the peace which it has obtained us."

#### **Document E**



Source: President James Polk Address to Congress Regarding Gold in California – Dec. 5, 1848.

From- Gilder Lehrman History In A Box "The West"

(American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php)

"...It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. Reluctant to credit the reports in general circulation as to the quantity of gold, the officer commanding our forces in California visited the mineral district in July last for the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject. His report to the War Department of the result of his examination and the facts obtained on the spot is herewith laid before Congress. When he visited the country there were about 4,000 persons engaged in collecting gold. There is every reason to believe that the number of persons so employed has since been augmented. The explorations already made warrant the belief that the supply is very large and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country....

The effects produced by the discovery of these rich mineral deposits and the success which has attended the labors of those who have resorted to them have produced a surprising change in the state of affairs in California. Labor commands a most exorbitant price, and all other pursuits but that of searching for the precious metals are abandoned. Nearly the whole of the male population of the country [California] have gone to the gold districts.... This abundance of gold and the all engrossing pursuit of it have already caused in California an unprecedented rise in the price of all the necessaries of life...."

#### **Document F**



Source: Taylor, Bayard – Reporter for new York Tribune – 1849 "Problems of the Gold Rush"

From: Sources in American History. Harcort Brace Jovanovich. 1986 (p. 148)

"The first result of the rush of emigrants from all parts of the world into California- a country almost unknown- was to nearly end all law. The countries which were nearest the golden coast sent forth thousands of adventurers, who speedily outnumbered the American population. Another factor that threatened serious consequences was the large numbers of worthless and wicked people from our own country who came to the pacific coast. From the beginning, a lack of government, or law might have been expected. Instead of this, there was a desire to maintain order and protect the rights of all throughout the mining districts. In the absence of all law or available protection, the people met and adopted rules for their mutual security – rules adapted to their situation where they had neither guards nor prisons. Small thefts were punished by banishment from diggings. For those of large amount or for more serious crimes, there was the single alternative of hanging.

.... There is much jealousy and bitter feeling among some of the people. The large number of emigrants from the Atlantic states outnumbered the native population three times over within a single year, and consequently placed forever in a hopeless minority. They witnessed the swift loss of their own political importance and the introduction of a new language, new customs, and new laws."

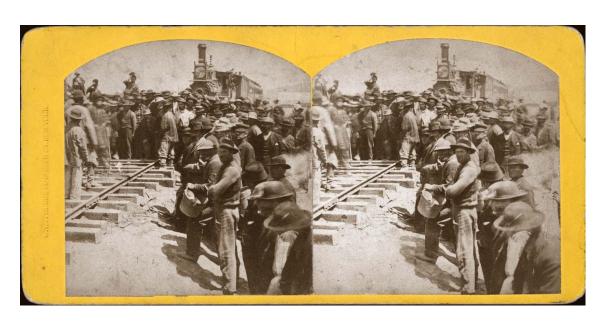
#### **Document G**

#### Two Images From the Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

**Source:** Russell, Andrew J. (Gilder Lehrman Collection – GLC04481.01)



Mission accomplished: Promontory Point, Utah, May 10, 1869.



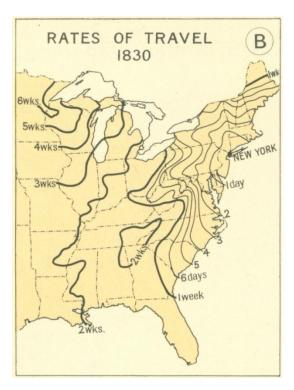
A.J. Russell Stereoview #539 "Chinese at Laying Last Rail UPRR" may be the only photographic record of the Chinese role in the Last Rail ceremony; The view clearly shows at least one Chinese worker and a partner with rail-laying tools appearing to adjust the last rail laid. Stereoview and caption Courtesy of the Phil Anderson Collection

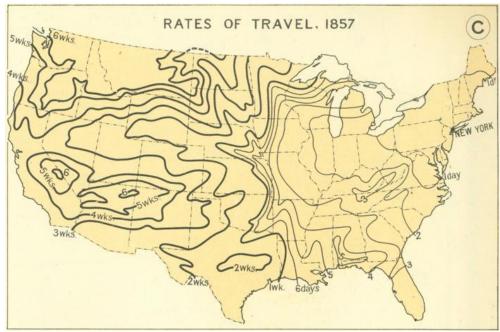
#### **Document H**



**Source:** Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States by Paullin and Wright (Carnegie Institute of Washington and the American Geographical Society of new York – 1932)

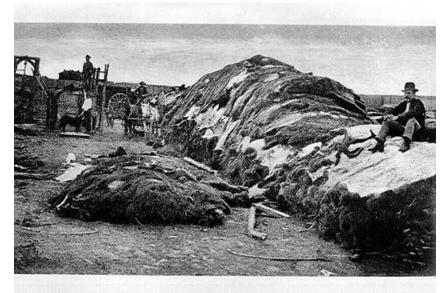
#### Railroad Rates of Travel 1830 & 1850





#### **Document I**

**Source:** Photographs of the American West: The National Archives [79-M-1B-3]



RATH & WRIGHT'S BUFFALO HIDE YARD IN 1876, SHOWING 40,000 BUFFALO HIDES. DODGE CITY, KANSAS

"A couple of years before it was nothing to see 5,000, 10,000 buff in a day's ride. Now if I saw 50 I was lucky. Presently all I saw was rotting red carcasses or bleaching white bones. We had killed the golden goose."

~ Frank H. Mayer, A buffalo hunter in the 1870s and 1880s

#### **Document J**



**Source:** German immigrant description of a Rendezvous on the Green River in southwestern Wyoming in 1839 (From *Sources in American History*, p. 146)

"We reached the camping place. What first struck our eye was several long rows of Indian tents, extending along the Green River for at least a mile. Indians and whites were mingled here in varied groups. Of the Indians present, there were chiefly Snakes, Flatheads, and Nez Perces, all peaceful tribes, living beyond the Rocky Mountains. Of the whites present, there were agents of the different trading companies and a large number of trappers. They came to buy and to sell, to renew old contracts and to make new ones, to make arrangements for future meetings, to meet friends, to tell of adventures they had been through, and to spend for once a jolly day.... Groups of whites and Indians were engaged in barter. The Indians had for trade chiefly tanned skins, moccasins, ...buffalo leather or braided buffalo hair, and fresh or dry buffalo meat. They have no beaver skins. The articles that attracted them most in exchange were powder and lead, knives, tobacco, cinnabar, gaily colored kerchiefs, pocket mirrors, and all sorts of ornaments. Before an Indian begins to trade he demands sight of everything that may be offered by the other party to the trade. If there is something there that attracts him, he, too, will produce his wares, but discovers very quickly how much or how little they are coveted. If he himself does not want to sell some particular thing, he refuses, though ten times the value be offered.... The Rendezvous usually lasts a week. Then the different parties move off to their destinations and the plain that today echoed with Indian music, that was thronged with people of both races, with horses and dogs returns to its old quiet land, interrupted only now and then by the muffled roar of the buffalo and howl of the wolf."

#### **Document K**



Source: Santana, Chief of the Kiowa, 1867 (From smithsoniansource.org)

"A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its banks.

These soldiers cut down our timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry."

#### **Document L**



**Source:** Catherine Haun Diary 1849 (From *For the Record*, pp. 419-423)

"Early in January of 1849 we first thought of emigrating to California. It was a period of national hard times and we being financially involved in our business interests near Clinton, Iowa, longed to go to the new El Dorado and "pick up" gold enough with which to return and pay off our debts.... Some half dozen families of our neighborhood joined us and probably about 25 persons constituted our band."

#### **Document M**



**Source:** From Melvin Bashore, Senior Librarian, Church History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *Mormon Migration: Where the Prophets of God Live- A Brief Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience*.

In the dead of winter 1846, Appleton Milo Harmon left his home in Nauvoo with his wife, Elmeda, "Crossing the Mississippi on the ice." In the spring of 1844, things changed for the Mormons in Illiniois. Although they were never generally popular, Illinois had accepted the Mormons in 1838 after Missouri cast them out. That initial welcome and feeling of goodwill gradually diminished until 1844, when Harmon noted:

"The tide of emegratin in to Nauvoo had for a time been gradualy increasing and had caused a Spirit of Jelousey to arise in the breasts of our eneymies they feard that if they left us thus alone all men would believe on us and the Mormons would take away their place and nation. and hold the balance of power. acordingly our old enemies renewed the attact and new ones Joined in the precedution until it became quite warm."

In the latter part of June, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered by a mob while in custody in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. Thour understandably despondent, most of the Mormons accepted a continuation of leadership by Brigham Young and the apostles. Construction was pushed forward on the temple, in the face of continual and increasing persecution by their enemies. Of this, Harmon wrote:

"our enemies Continued to Haras us in the fall of 1845 their percecution became mutch warmer wven so they commenced Burning houses grain Stacks driving off cattle catching and whipping the Breathering and some ware Killed. the persecution became So general that for the Sake of peace we agreed to leave as early in the Spring of 1846 as Circumstances would admit."

#### **Document N**



**Source:** Portion of William Lloyd Garrison 1847 Letter (From Mexican-American War Mini-Q Doc D – Content Notes)

"We are in good spirits, and serene as heaven itself, though the opposition is still formidable... especially in regard to the atrocious war with Mexico. It is certainly not a popular war; it was begun and is carried on against the deep moral conviction of the sober portion of the people; its real object, the extension and preservation of slavery, no intelligent man honestly doubts; still, the diabolical motto, "our country, right or wrong..."

#### **Document O**

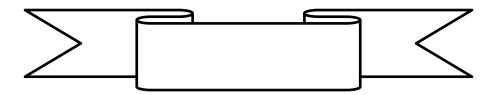


**Source:** Robert Toombs of Georgia statement on the House of Representatives Floor December 13, 1849 regarding the Wilmot Proviso. (From *The American Spirit*, p. 426)

"I do not, then, hesitate to avow before this House and the country, and in the presence of the living God, that if by your legislation you seek to drive us from the territories of California and New Mexico, purchased by the common blood and treasure of the whole people, and to abolish slavery in this District, thereby attempting to fix a national degradation upon half the states of this Confederacy, I am for disunion. And if my physical courage be equal to the maintenance of my convictions of right and duty, I will devote all I am and all have on earth to its consummation.

The Territories are the common property of the people of the United States, purchased by their common blood and treasure. You are their common agents. It is your duty, while they are in a territorial state, to remove all impediments to their free enjoyment by all sections and people of the Union, the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder."

## **Manifest Destiny Longer Version**



## **Documents Containing Scaffold Questions**

#### **Document A**



Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: The DBQ Project (Document B)

War Message of President James Polk, Washington, May 11, 1846

#### To the Senate and House of Representatives:

(In an earlier message) I informed you that ... I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte (Rio Grande)." This had become necessary, to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces.... The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined ... to annex herself to our Union; and, under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

... The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic.... The country between that river and the Del Norte ... is now included within one of our congressional districts.... It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defense of that portion of our country....

(On the 24th of April) a party ... of sixty-three men and officers, were ... dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its (North) bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross, the river... (They) became engaged with a large body of these (Mexican) troops, and after a short affair, in which some sixteen (Americans) were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender....

We have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, ... Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invadeour territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.

Note: War Vote, May 13, 1846: US Senate: 40 Yes, 2 No House of Rep: 174 Yes, 14 No

- 1. What river did Texas and President Polk regard as the Texas-Mexico border?
- 2. Would Mexico have viewed a Mexican advance north of the Rio Grande an invasion of the US?
- 3. Where did the April 24 fight between Mexican and American soldiers occur?
- 4. What was the response of Congress to Polk's war message?
- 5. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

#### **Document B**



Jesus Valasco-Marquez, Instituto Technologico Autonomo de Mexico, "A Mexican Viewpoint on the War With the United States," *Voices of Mexico*, issue #41, Center for Research on North America (CISAN), National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2006.

The most dramatic event in the history of relations between Mexico and the United States took place a century and a half ago. US historians refer to this event as "The Mexican War," while in Mexico we prefer to use the term "The U.S. Invasion."...

From Mexico's point of view, the annexation of Texas to the United States was inadmissible for both legal and security reasons. Thus, when the Mexican government learned of the treaty signed between Texas and the United States in April 1844, it ... would consider such an act "a declaration of war."...

(In early 1846, on Polk's orders) the troops commanded by General Zachary Taylor arrived at the Rio Grande, across from the city of Matamoros, thus occupying the territory in dispute and increasing the possibilities of a confrontation.... In the eyes of the (Mexican) government, the mobilization of the US army was an outright attack on Mexico.... As a consequence, the Mexican government reaffirmed the instruction to protect the border, meaning the territory located between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River – an order which led to the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma....

... (One article) in the daily *El Tiempo* ... stated: "The American government acted like a bandit who came upon a traveler."

- 1. Whose point of view is held by the author of this document?
- 2. How did the Mexican government feel about the annexation of Texas by the United States?
- 3. According to the author, why did a Mexican force attack Zachary Taylor's troops when they arrived at the Rio Grande River?
- 4. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

#### **Document C**



**Source:** Excerpt from Senator Thomas Hart Benton's Book, *Thirty Years View: A History of the Working of American Government for Thirty Years from 1820-1850.* Volume II. New York, 1873.

This book is chiefly taken from the Congressional debates, the private papers of General Jackson, and the speeches of Ex-Senator Benton, with his actual view of men and affairs.

#### From p. 581

"In the winter of 1842-43, nearly two years before the presidential election, there appeared in a Baltimore newspaper an elaborately composed letter on the annexation of Texas, written by Mr. [Thomas Walker] Gilmer, a member of Congress from Virginia, urging the immediate annexation [of Texas], as necessary to forestall the designs of Great Britain upon that young country. These designs, it was alleged, aimed at a political and military domination on our south-western border, with a view to abolition and hostile movements against us; and the practical part of the letter was an earnest appeal to the American people to annex the Texas Republic immediately, as the only means of preventing such great calamities.

- 1. What country did Congressman Gilmer fear and WHY?
- 2. What was Congressman Gilmer's recommendation in order to protect the United States?
- 3. When Congressman Gilmer refers to Great Britain's designs "upon that young country," to which country is he referring? (Notice the year this statement would have been written.)

#### **Document D**



Source: Washington Daily Union Article of March 16, 1848

From (Kennedy & Bailey, The American Spirit Volume I. 2010, p. 420)

"It is true that the war has cost us millions of money, and, what is far more precious, the lives of some of our noblest citizens. But what great advantages has it not obtained for us? It has covered us with glory. It has extended our fame to the remotest corners of earth. If the treaty be ratified, it will extend the area of freedom to the southern Pacific.

... Now they are tamed. Now they have consented to negotiate for peace, without requiring our ships to leave their coast and our troops to desert their territory. These in the popular sentiment have been produced by the brilliant achievements of Buena Vista and of Cerro Gordo, the capture of their castle and of their capital. Does anyone now believe that their spirit is not humbled, and that the sense of their own inferiority will not induce them to refrain from a repetition of the insults and aggressions which they had so repeatedly perpetrated upon us?

They will be stripped, too, of a large portion of their territory. They may be stripped of more, if they should wantonly insult us again. Will not the lessons they have learned operate as a security for the future? Will not the moral force we have gained, and the military genius we have exhibited, go beyond Mexico, and produce their impression upon the other nations of the earth?

With ample indemnity for the past, then, and with such security for the future- with achievements in arms which any nation might envy- with an extension of territory to the Pacific, which gives us some of the finest harbors in the world (for one of which alone- the bay of San Francisco- Gen. Jackson was willing to give five millions of dollars)- with an immense commerce opening upon us with the richest nations of Asia- with every facility secured for our whalers in the Pacific, and with the other advantages which we will have secured- with all of these, we can truly say that we have every reason to be proud of the war, and proud of the peace which it has obtained us."

- 1. What evidence from this newspaper article shows the author believes the Mexican-American War was justified?
- 2. How does the author believe the success of the United States in the War could be of benefit internationally?
- 3. What trade advantages did the United States gain from the favorable outcome of the Mexican-American War?

# **Document E**



Source: President James Polk Address to Congress Regarding Gold in California - Dec. 5, 1848.

From- Gilder Lehrman History In A Box "The West"

(American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php)

"...It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. Reluctant to credit the reports in general circulation as to the quantity of gold, the officer commanding our forces in California visited the mineral district in July last for the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject. His report to the War Department of the result of his examination and the facts obtained on the spot is herewith laid before Congress. When he visited the country there were about 4,000 persons engaged in collecting gold. There is every reason to believe that the number of persons so employed has since been augmented. The explorations already made warrant the belief that the supply is very large and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country....

The effects produced by the discovery of these rich mineral deposits and the success which has attended the labors of those who have resorted to them have produced a surprising change in the state of affairs in California. Labor commands a most exorbitant price, and all other pursuits but that of searching for the precious metals are abandoned. Nearly the whole of the male population of the country [California] have gone to the gold districts.... This abundance of gold and the all engrossing pursuit of it have already caused in California an unprecedented rise in the price of all the necessaries of life...."

- 1. Does President Polk's address to Congress encourage the Gold Rush?
- 2. Where did President Polk obtain his information about the mining prospects in California?
- 3. What did Polk report about the changes that California was experiencing at the time of the speech?

# **Document F**



Source: Taylor, Bayard - Reporter for new York Tribune - 1849 "Problems of the Gold Rush"

From: Sources in American History. Harcort Brace Jovanovich. 1986 (p. 148)

"The first result of the rush of emigrants from all parts of the world into California- a country almost unknown- was to nearly end all law. The countries which were nearest the golden coast sent forth thousands of adventurers, who speedily outnumbered the American population. Another factor that threatened serious consequences was the large numbers of worthless and wicked people from our own country who came to the pacific coast. From the beginning, a lack of government, or law might have been expected. Instead of this, there was a desire to maintain order and protect the rights of all throughout the mining districts. In the absence of all law or available protection, the people met and adopted rules for their mutual security – rules adapted to their situation where they had neither guards nor prisons. Small thefts were punished by banishment from diggings. For those of large amount or for more serious crimes, there was the single alternative of hanging.

.... There is much jealousy and bitter feeling among some of the people. The large number of emigrants from the Atlantic states outnumbered the native population three times over within a single year, and consequently placed forever in a hopeless minority. They witnessed the swift loss of their own political importance and the introduction of a new language, new customs, and new laws."

- 1. From where were most emigrants to California?
- 2. What problems were created by the vast increase in population California experienced as a result of the Gold Rush?
- 3. In what ways did the California people try to protect themselves from the resulting problems?
- 4. How did the Native Californians lose influence in their own lands?

# **Document G**

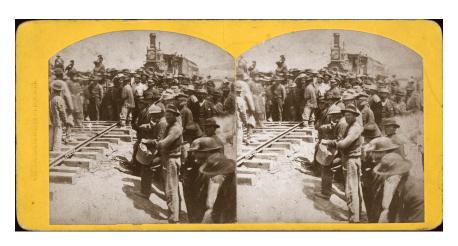
# Two Images From the Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

-----

**Source:** Russell, Andrew J. (Gilder Lehrman Collection – GLC04481.01)



Mission accomplished: Promontory Point, Utah, May 10, 1869.



A.J. Russell Stereoview #539 "Chinese at Laying Last Rail UPRR" may be the only photographic record of the Chinese role in the Last Rail ceremony; The view clearly shows at least one Chinese worker and a partner with rail-laying tools appearing to adjust the last rail laid. Stereoview and caption Courtesy of the Phil Anderson Collection

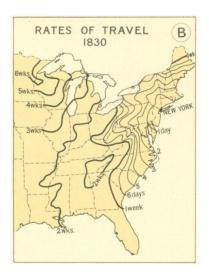
- 1. What is the significance of the top photo by AJ Russell?
- 2. In what way does the bottom photo also by AJ Russell- tell a different story?
- 3. What reasons may account for the differences between the two photos?

# **Document H**



**Source:** Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States by Paullin and Wright (Carnegie Institute of Washington and the American Geographical Society of new York – 1932)

# Railroad Rates of Travel 1830 & 1850

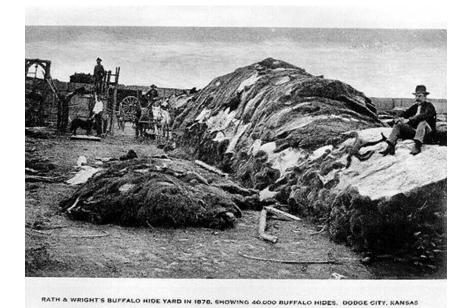




- 1. In what ways might the improvement in the rate of travel between 1830 and 1857 have impacted the United States?
- 2. When looking at information from Document G, how might a map showing the Rate of Travel for 1870 look different from this 1857 map?
- 3. What types of positive AND negative effects did increasing the rate of travel bring about in the United States?

# **Document I**

**Source:** Photographs of the American West: The National Archives [79-M-1B-3]



"A couple of years before it was nothing to see 5,000, 10,000 buff in a day's ride. Now if I saw 50 I was lucky. Presently all I saw was rotting red carcasses or bleaching white bones. We had killed the golden goose."

~ Frank H. Mayer, A buffalo hunter in the 1870s and 1880s

- 1. In what way is the photograph above portraying a positive aspect of the movement to the west?
- 2. What does Frank Mayer mean when he states, "We had killed the golden goose."?

# **Document J**



**Source:** German immigrant description of a Rendezvous on the Green River in southwestern Wyoming in 1839 (From *Sources in American History*, p. 146)

"We reached the camping place. What first struck our eye was several long rows of Indian tents, extending along the Green River for at least a mile. Indians and whites were mingled here in varied groups. Of the Indians present, there were chiefly Snakes, Flatheads, and Nez Perces, all peaceful tribes, living beyond the Rocky Mountains. Of the whites present, there were agents of the different trading companies and a large number of trappers. They came to buy and to sell, to renew old contracts and to make new ones, to make arrangements for future meetings, to meet friends, to tell of adventures they had been through, and to spend for once a jolly day.... Groups of whites and Indians were engaged in barter. The Indians had for trade chiefly tanned skins, moccasins, ...buffalo leather or braided buffalo hair, and fresh or dry buffalo meat. They have no beaver skins. The articles that attracted them most in exchange were powder and lead, knives, tobacco, cinnabar, gaily colored kerchiefs, pocket mirrors, and all sorts of ornaments. Before an Indian begins to trade he demands sight of everything that may be offered by the other party to the trade. If there is something there that attracts him, he, too, will produce his wares, but discovers very quickly how much or how little they are coveted. If he himself does not want to sell some particular thing, he refuses, though ten times the value be offered.... The Rendezvous usually lasts a week. Then the different parties move off to their destinations and the plain that today echoed with Indian music, that was thronged with people of both races, with horses and dogs returns to its old quiet land, interrupted only now and then by the muffled roar of the buffalo and howl of the wolf."

- 1. What groups were represented at the Rendezvous and for what purpose were they in attendance?
- 2. What was the relationship and attitudes between whites and Natives as depicted by this report?
- 3. How populated would the west have been at the time this report was written?

# **Document K**



Source: Santana, Chief of the Kiowa, 1867 (From smithsoniansource.org)

"A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its banks. These soldiers cut down our timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry."

- 1. How does this quote portray the relationship between whites and Indians?
- 2. How had the west changed between the 1830s and 1860s?

# **Document L**



**Source:** Catherine Haun Diary 1849 (From *For the Record*, pp. 419-423)

"Early in January of 1849 we first thought of emigrating to California. It was a period of national hard times and we being financially involved in our business interests near Clinton, Iowa, longed to go to the new El Dorado and "pick up" gold enough with which to return and pay off our debts.... Some half dozen families of our neighborhood joined us and probably about 25 persons constituted our band."

- 1. Why did Catherine Haun's family go to California in 1849?
- 2. What does the passage indicate regarding the economic situation in the east- in particular Clinton, lowa?

#### **Document M**



**Source:** From Melvin Bashore, Senior Librarian, Church History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *Mormon Migration: Where the Prophets of God Live- A Brief Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience*.

In the dead of winter 1846, Appleton Milo Harmon left his home in Nauvoo with his wife, Elmeda, "Crossing the Mississippi on the ice." In the spring of 1844, things changed for the Mormons in Illiniois. Although they were never generally popular, Illinois had accepted the Mormons in 1838 after Missouri cast them out. That initial welcome and feeling of goodwill gradually diminished until 1844, when Harmon noted:

"The tide of emegratin in to Nauvoo had for a time been gradualy increasing and had caused a Spirit of Jelousey to arise in the breasts of our eneymies they feard that if they left us thus alone all men would believe on us and the Mormons would take away their place and nation. and hold the balance of power. acordingly our old enemies renewed the attact and new ones Joined in the precedution until it became quite warm."

In the latter part of June, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered by a mob while in custody in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. Thour understandably despondent, most of the Mormons accepted a continuation of leadership by Brigham Young and the apostles. Construction was pushed forward on the temple, in the face of continual and increasing persecution by their enemies. Of this, Harmon wrote:

"our enemies Continued to Haras us in the fall of 1845 their percecution became mutch warmer wven so they commenced Burning houses grain Stacks driving off cattle catching and whipping the Breathering and some ware Killed. the persecution became So general that for the Sake of peace we agreed to leave as early in the Spring of 1846 as Circumstances would admit."

- 1. According to this passage, trace the movements of the Mormons in the 1830s and 1840s.
- 2. According to Mr. Harmon, why were the people of these communities threatened by the presence of Mormons?
- 3. Who had been the leaders of the Mormons and who took over when they were murdered?
- 4. Why did this group of people view the West as their Manifest Destiny?

# **Document N**



**Source:** Portion of William Lloyd Garrison 1847 Letter (From Mexican-American War Mini-Q Doc D – Content Notes)

"We are in good spirits, and serene as heaven itself, though the opposition is still formidable... especially in regard to the atrocious war with Mexico. It is certainly not a popular war; it was begun and is carried on against the deep moral conviction of the sober portion of the people; its real object, the extension and preservation of slavery, no intelligent man honestly doubts; still, the diabolical motto, "our country, right or wrong..."

- 1. What does William Lloyd Garrison believe to be the purpose of the Mexican-American War?
- 2. Why might his point of view be different from others?
- 3. What makes his point of view reasonable?

# **Document O**



**Source:** Robert Toombs of Georgia statement on the House of Representatives Floor December 13, 1849 regarding the Wilmot Proviso. (From *The American Spirit*, p. 426)

"I do not, then, hesitate to avow before this House and the country, and in the presence of the living God, that if by your legislation you seek to drive us from the territories of California and New Mexico, purchased by the common blood and treasure of the whole people, and to abolish slavery in this District, thereby attempting to fix a national degradation upon half the states of this Confederacy, I am for disunion. And if my physical courage be equal to the maintenance of my convictions of right and duty, I will devote all I am and all have on earth to its consummation.

The Territories are the common property of the people of the United States, purchased by their common blood and treasure. You are their common agents. It is your duty, while they are in a territorial state, to remove all impediments to their free enjoyment by all sections and people of the Union, the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder."

- 1. What were the main provisions of the Wilmot Proviso?
- 2. What is Representative Toombs belief regarding access to the Territories?
- 3. Did the expansion of the United States to include western lands create tension between northern and southern states in the 1840s?

# Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?



A Document Based Question (DBQ) ---- Shorter Version

# Manifest Destiny DBQ Lesson Plan - Longer Version and Short Version

DAY 1

ноок	Complete the Hook Exercise on John Gast's American Progress painting.	
BACKGROUND ESSAY	Have students read the Background Essay. Be sure they are clear on the events surrounding the transfer of property in the west between Spain, Mexico, and the United States. The essay addresses the events leading to US expansion as well as the general benefits and negative consequences faced as a result of the Mexican cession of land.	
DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION	After handing out the document packets, ask students to skim each of the documents. Ask what images or ideas stand out. Next, ask students if there are any documents that can be grouped together. Explain that these groupings can be called analytical categories. Ask students to read through the documents and finalize their analytical categories. They should then place each document in the appropriate category. Explain to students that by doing this they are really formulating a simple outline.	

DAY 2

DISCUSSION	Drawing on student outlines formed from Document Organization, create an outline on the board that approaches the outline in the Teacher Document List		
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	ing an overhead projector, examine one or more documents together as a class. On a insparency, model the kind of notation you expect for each document. Then, in pairs in groups of three, have students analyze the documents, making their notations her in the margins or on their Document Analysis Sheets.		
DISCUSSION			

DAY 3

ESSAY	Depending on the skill level of the class, a one-day writing workshop is suggested. See the Teachers' Toolkit for ideas.
	Write essay.

\*\*\* For Block Schedule- Modify the time for completion to 2 days instead of 3.

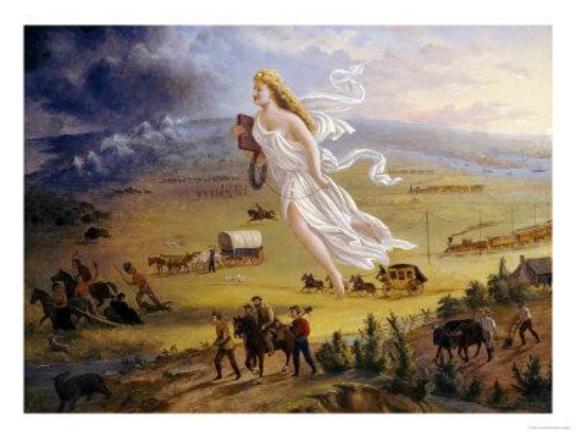
# Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

A Unit Adapted From "The DBQ Project- Mexican-American War Mini Q"

Brief Description	Americans sought territory, resources, and refuge beyond the Mississippi River during the 1840s. The pioneers, military expeditions, and entrepreneurs achieved great successes in the west. However, there were consequences politically, diplomatically, and environmentally. Did the great benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?				
Document GPS Correlations	Doc A— President Polk's Mexican- American War Message to Congress (SSUSH- 7b & 8d)  Doc B- Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War (SSUSH- 7b & 8d)  Doc C- President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California (SSUSH- 7b)  Doc D- Newspaper Article Regarding the Problems of the Gold Rush (SSUSH- 7b)  Doc E- Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs (SSUSH- 7b, 11a, 11b, 14a)  Doc F- Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River (SSUSH- 7b & 12c)  Doc G- Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment (SSUSH- 7b & 12c)  Doc H- Overview of Mormon Trail Experience (SSUSH- 7b)  Doc I- William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West (SSUSH- 7b, 8a, 8b, 8d)  Doc J- Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso (SSUSH- 7b, 8b, 8d)				
Common Core Standards Correlations	The DBQ Project integrates reading and writing skills with historical content. Common Core Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening are embedded in the lessons naturally. The following 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Common Core Standards are specifically addressed:    Reading in History Standards:   Writing in History Standards:     RH1 RH6   WHST1 WHST6     RH2 RH7   WHST2 WHST7     RH3 RH8   WHST3 WHST8     RH4 RH9   WHST4 WHST9				
Pacing	RH5 RH10  Traditional  Day 1:  Hook Exercise(10 min) Background Essay (5 min) Emphasizes Document Organization (5 min) Begin Document Analysis (30 min)  Day 2:  Complete Document Analysis (15 min) Discuss docs and categorize —(10 min) Writing Guidelines (10-30 min. based on class level & DBQ experience)  Day 3: Essay Written in Class (45 min) "Did the benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?"	Block  Day 1:  Hook Exercise (10 min)  Background Essay (5 min)  Emphasize  Document Organization (5 min)  Document Analysis (45 min)  Discuss docs and categorize (10 min)  Day 2:  Writing Guidelines (10-30 min based on class level & DBQ experience)  Essay written in class (45 min)  "Did the benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?"			

On-Level		<u>Honors</u>	
Course Plan	SV Background Essay	LV Background Essay LV Documents (Long Version)	
&	SV Documents (Short Version)		
Resources	• 10 Documents	• 15 Documents	
	O Territory O Trade O Pioneers O Politics  Categories	O Territory O Trade O Pioneers O Politics  Categories	
	SV Scaffolding Questions	LV Scaffolding Questions	
	Use varies with DBQ experience	Use varies with DBQ experience	
Supporting Materials	To be created by teachers using the lesson		

# Manifest Destiny DBQ – Hook Activity John Gast-American Progress



- 1. Divide the painting above into 4 equal parts.
- 2. Analyze each quadrant independently in order to adequately interpret this famous painting. List the people, activities, and means of transportation shown in each using the chart below. Use this analysis to develop a definition for the term "Manifest Destiny."

	-	
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		
ı		

Manifest Destiny is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

# **TEACHER DOCUMENT LIST (Short Version)**

There are 10 documents in the Short Version of this DBQ. The documents are grouped into four analytical categories. Each category contains documents that show the benefits enjoyed by the United States from westward expansion while others highlight the negative consequences that resulted. An uncategorized list of documents accompanies the student materials. An important part of student analysis is to develop categories that may or may not be the same as those below.

# Manifest Destiny and the Acquisition of New Lands in the West

Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War

# Manifest Destiny, Trade, and Resources

Document C: President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California

Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding the Problems of the Gold Rush

Document E: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs

# **Manifest Destiny and the Pioneers**

Document F: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

Document G: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

Document H: Overview of Mormon Trail Experience

# **Manifest Destiny and Politics in the United States**

Document I: William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West

Document J: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to the Wilmot Proviso

# Manifest Destiny Document Content & Teaching Notes Short Version

# Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

#### **Content Notes:**

- President Polk was an expansionist who believed the United States needed to acquire California. Polk
  had sent former Louisiana Representative John Slidell to Mexico to negotiate a deal with the newly
  formed Mexican government. He proposed to pay off the Mexican government's debt to Texans and
  was prepared to offer up to \$40 million for the purchase of California and New Mexico.
- Mexico refused to sell the land and the resulting standoff at the Rio Grande (as shown in the map depicted in the Background Essay) led to the Declaration of War presented in Document A

# **Teaching Notes:**

- What was the response of Congress to Polk's war message?
  - o Overwhelming support as evidenced by the vote results listed at the bottom of the Document.
- Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

# **Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War**

#### **Content Notes:**

• From Mexico's point of view, Texas was not able to secede from them much less go to the United States for annexation. This is a similar idea to the southern United States seceding to begin the Civil War. There were many American leaders who believed the union of states was unbreakable. Mexicans and their government had a very different perspective of the events that led to the outbreak of the Mexican-American War.

# **Teaching Notes:**

- According to the author, why did a Mexican force attack Zachary Taylor's troops when they arrived at the Rio Grande River?
- Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

# Document C: President Polk's Address to Congress on Gold in California

# **Content Notes:**

- The Gold Rush began in 1848 with discovery at Sutter's Mill outside of San Francisco. This started a flood of people going to California to stake their claim. There were over 300,000 people who would move to the territory that was recently acquired from Mexico.
- The conflict between native peoples, the Mexicans, Americans who moved there, and the many immigrants from South America who went in search of wealth was monumental.
- Polk's Address to Congress served to fuel the rush of people to California in 1849.

# **Teaching Notes:**

What did Polk report about the changes that California was experiencing at the time of the speech?

# Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding the Problems of the Gold Rush

# **Content Notes:**

- Because California was not yet a state, there was uncertainty about laws and authority in the
  territory. With so many people entering the territory for purposes founded in greed, there was
  considerable violence and lawlessness that prevailed.
- Californians wanted to become a state as quickly as possible. As part of the Compromise of 1850, California entered the United States as a free state.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• How did Californians lose influence in their own lands?

# **Document E: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs**

#### **Content Notes:**

- The Transcontinental Railroad was completed in May of 1869. This monumental achievement saw the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads connect the Pacific Ocean with the east via railroad. There was considerable Chinese labor used to complete the railroad.
- The Chinese immigrants of this time period faced significant discrimination and prejudice.

#### **Teaching Notes:**

• The photos on the bottom of the page clearly show Chinese workers actually completing the last rail of the project. The top photo is the famous image of the completion ceremony. There are no Chinese laborers visible in the photograph.

# Document F: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

# **Content Notes:**

- The initial contact between white mountain men and Indians was mutually beneficial and relied on
  the barter system. The Rendezvous was an annual meeting that lasted a week allowing for trade of
  goods desired by both parties to be exchanged.
- The Wyoming Rendezvous on the Green River began in 1825 and lasted until 1840 when trading posts became more widespread.

# **Teaching Notes:**

 What was the relationship and attitudes between whites and natives who attended the Rendezvous?

# Document G: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

# **Content Notes:**

- By the 1860s the relationship between whites and natives had become contentious.
- The Fort Laramie Treaty had been signed in 1851 in an attempt to promote peace for the settlers who were rapidly moving west and encroaching on native lands.
- A subsequent Fort Laramie Treaty was signed in 1868. Both were aimed at preventing warfare between the natives and white settlers. Neither treaty was very successful due to the requirement that native tribes give up their free-range lifestyle for settled life on reservations.
- The warfare escalated during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

# **Teaching Notes:**

• How had the west changed between the 1830s and the 1860s?

# **Document H: Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience**

# **Content Notes:**

- The Mormon followers had faced opposition originally in New York and then again in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. When their leader Joseph Smith was murdered in Illinois, the new leadership of Brigham Young encouraged them to move to Utah and settle in what they referred to as New Zion.
- The Mormons first arrived in the Utah territory in 1847. Utah did not become a state until 1896.

# **Teaching Notes:**

• Why was Utah attractive to Brigham Young as a place for the Mormons to settle in 1847?

# Document I: William Lloyd Garrison Condemning Slavery in the West

# **Content Notes:**

- William Lloyd Garrison was an abolitionist whose newspaper, *The Liberator*, went into publication in 1831.
- The questions regarding slavery expanding into the newly acquired lands from Mexico were significant. The Wilmot Proviso was proposed to prevent slavery from the lands acquired from Mexico

# **Teaching Notes:**

• Could this statement by William Lloyd Garrison be biased in any way?

# Document J: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso

# **Content Notes:**

- Robert Toombs was a Representative and Senator from Georgia. He eventually would become one of the founders of the Confederacy. He served as Secretary of State for the Confederacy.
- The Wilmot Proviso was a piece of legislation proposed to block the spread of slavery in the western lands.

# **Teaching Notes:**

• How did the conflicting opinions over the expansion of slavery into the newly acquired territories create greater tension between the northern and southern states in the 1840s?

# STUDENT GUIDE SHEET

# Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

**Directions:** In the 1840s the United States increased its territory to stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. This land was acquired through treaty, war, and negotiation. The opportunities this large area of land offered in terms of resources and trade were great. There were, however, negative consequences that also arose from the expansion of the United States. Did the benefits of populating these lands outweigh the negative consequences that also emerged?

# Follow these steps as you grapple with this historical question:

- 1. Read the Background Essay. It provides an overview of Manifest Destiny and the expansion of the United States to the west.
- 2. Quickly skim the 10 documents to get a sense of what they are about.
- 3. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the events that led to the acquisition of new lands formerly belonging to Mexico before you analyze the documents.
- 4. Read the documents slowly. For each document use the margins or a Document Analysis Sheet to record:
  - ~ What or who is the source?
  - ~ What is the issue being discussed? (land, resources, etc...)
  - ~ Summarize in your own words the main argument or idea being presented in each document.
- 5. Clarify for yourself the different issues addressed by the 10 documents. Make a judgment as to which aspect of westward expansion is the most significant- the benefits or the negative consequences?
- 6. Make a final summary judgment of Manifest Destiny. Overall were the benefits more significant than the negative consequences? Is it reasonable that arguments could be made supporting both? Is it even possible that some of the greatest benefits could also create the greatest negative consequences?

# **The Documents:**

Document A: President Polk's Mexican-American War Message to Congress

Document B: Mexican Viewpoint of the Mexican-American War

Document C: President Polk's Address to Congress Concerning Gold in California

Document D: Newspaper Article Regarding the Problems of the Gold Rush

Document E: Transcontinental Railroad Completion Photographs

Document F: Eyewitness Description of Rendezvous on the Green River

Document G: Chief of the Kiowa's Quote Regarding White Encroachment

Document H: Overview of Mormon Trail Experience

Document I: William Lloyd Garrison Quote Condemning Slavery in the West

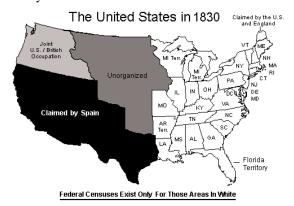
Document J: Rep. Robert Toombs' Opposition to Wilmot Proviso

# **Background Essay**

# Manifest Destiny: Did the Benefits Outweigh the Negative Consequences?

Americans sought territory, resources, and refuge beyond the Mississippi River during the 1840s. The pioneers, military expeditions, and entrepreneurs achieved great successes in the west. However, there were detrimental consequences politically, diplomatically, and environmentally. Did the great benefits of Manifest Destiny outweigh the negative consequences?

Mexico had won its independence from Spain in the early 1820s and the new Mexican leadership knew they needed to increase their population in the northern lands. With the promise of cheap land, many Americans went to the Mexican territory of Texas in search of success.

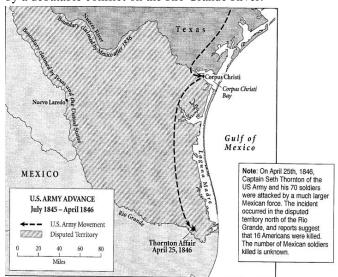


It did not take long before conflict erupted as the settlers did little to adhere to the provisions mandated by the Mexican government for settlement-Catholicism, no slavery, and Mexican citizenship. Texans won their independence from Mexico in 1836 and promptly asked the US for annexation. Controversy grew over Texas, its annexation, and its boundaries. Not all Congressmen wanted to add Texas to the US as fear of a potentially large slave territory threatened the balance of Congress.

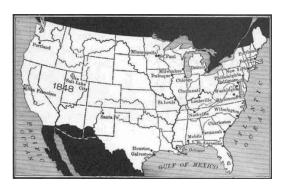
In 1844 the new president, James K. Polk believed in the idea of Manifest Destiny and took action. The term was coined by John O'Sullivan in a July 1845 magazine article. He stated concerning annexation of Texas, "It is time for opposition to the Annexation of Texas to cease.... Texas is now ours.... Let their reception into the 'family' be frank, kindly, and cheerful.... Other nations have

undertaken...hostile interference against us,
...hampering our power, limiting our greatness and
checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to
overspread the continent allotted by Providence
(God) for the free development of our yearly
multiplying millions."

Not only did Polk want to annex Texas, he also was seeking California as a way to span the borders of the US across the continent. War did indeed begin between the US and Mexico, triggered by a debatable conflict on the Rio Grande River.



The war was a resounding victory for the United States and resulted in the addition of not only Texas, but also the California territory and other western land. The Oregon territory had also been acquired through negotiation with Great Britain. Thus the Manifest Destiny of the United States land acquisition was complete to the Pacific Ocean.



Indeed this acquisition of new territory brought great opportunity for the United States in terms of resources, population expansion, and trade. The census data from 1830 and 1840 show a staggeringly rapid population increase of 32.7%. This increase in population within the confines of the eastern states presented the "need" for expansion. The new western lands provided opportunity for the increasing population of the east to find their own land and prosperity in developing these new areas.

The advances made in trade through the pioneer trails to Oregon, Santa Fe, and California brought economic prosperity to many. As gold was discovered in California, it became a great destination in 1849 for those looking for opportunity and wealth. The technology and improvements in transportation made the west even more accessible for trade and immigration. Still others went west seeking religious freedom in the 1840s.

While these benefits of expansion were certainly great, there were also negative consequences to the expansion of the United States into western lands. There were conflicts created with Native Americans as the buffalo population was depleted and their lands were encroached upon. In areas where the population swelled seemingly overnight, there were questions regarding statehood and laws in the region. And finally, the underlying question of the period was whether slavery would extend into these newly acquired lands. Congress wrestled with the Wilmot Proviso proposed by Pennsylvania Democratic David Wilmot to eliminate the expansion of slavery into the territories acquired from Mexico. The proviso was proposed and passed by the House but was always voted down in the Senate. The sectional and political tension created by Wilmot's Proviso and slavery's uncertainty was a small taste of what was to come in the 1850s leading up to the outbreak of Civil War.

Manifest Destiny and westward expansion provided the United States with great opportunity and economic prosperity. At the same time, there were negative consequences to these actions. Examine the documents that follow to determine the answer to the question .... Manifest Destiny: Did the benefits outweigh the negative consequences?

John Gast's American Progress, 1872



# Establishing Context from Background Essay

- 1. From which country did Mexico become independent?
- 2. From which country and when did Texas become independent?
- 3. How could the census data reflect a justification for westward expansion?
- 4. In general, what types of benefits did the United States gain from expansion?
- 5. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico in 1846? How might this same event be viewed differently in Mexico?
- 6. In general, what negative consequences did the United States deal with from western expansion

#### **Document A**

Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: The DBQ Project (Doc B)

War Message of President James Polk, Washington, May 11, 1846

# To the Senate and House of Representatives:

(In an earlier message) I informed you that ... I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte (Rio Grande)." This had become necessary, to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces.... The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined ... to annex herself to our Union; and, under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

... The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic.... The country between that river and the Del Norte ... is now included within one of our congressional districts.... It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defense of that portion of our country....

(On the 24th of April) a party ... of sixty-three men and officers, were ... dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its (North) bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross, the river... (They) became engaged with a large body of these (Mexican) troops, and, after a short affair, in which some sixteen (Americans) were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender....

We have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, ... Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.

Note: War Vote, May 13, 1846: US Senate: 40 Yes, 2 No House of Rep: 174 Yes, 14 No

# **Document B**



Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: DBQ Project (Doc C)

Jesus Valasco-Marquez, Instituto Technologico Autonomo de Mexico, "A Mexican Viewpoint on the War With the United States," *Voices of Mexico*, issue #41, Center for Research on North America (CISAN), National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2006.

The most dramatic event in the history of relations between Mexico and the United States took place a century and a half ago. US historians refer to this event as "The Mexican War," while in Mexico we prefer to use the term "The U.S. Invasion."...

From Mexico's point of view, the annexation of Texas to the United States was inadmissible for both legal and security reasons. Thus, when the Mexican government learned of the treaty signed between Texas and the United States in April 1844, it ... would consider such an act "a declaration of war."...

(In early 1846, on Polk's orders) the troops commanded by General Zachary Taylor arrived at the Rio Grande, across from the city of Matamoros, thus occupying the territory in dispute and increasing the possibilities of a confrontation.... In the eyes of the (Mexican) government, the mobilization of the US army was an outright attack on Mexico.... As a consequence, the Mexican government reaffirmed the instruction to protect the border, meaning the territory located between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River – an order which led to the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma....

... (One article) in the daily *El Tiempo* ... stated: "The American government acted like a bandit who came upon a traveler."

# **Document C**



Source: President James Polk Address to Congress Regarding Gold in California - Dec. 5, 1848.

From- Gilder Lehrman History In A Box "The West"

(American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php)

"...It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. Reluctant to credit the reports in general circulation as to the quantity of gold, the officer commanding our forces in California visited the mineral district in July last for the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject. His report to the War Department of the result of his examination and the facts obtained on the spot is herewith laid before Congress. When he visited the country there were about 4,000 persons engaged in collecting gold. There is every reason to believe that the number of persons so employed has since been augmented. The explorations already made warrant the belief that the supply is very large and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country....

The effects produced by the discovery of these rich mineral deposits and the success which has attended the labors of those who have resorted to them have produced a surprising change in the state of affairs in California. Labor commands a most exorbitant price, and all other pursuits but that of searching for the precious metals are abandoned. Nearly the whole of the male population of the country [California] have gone to the gold districts.... This abundance of gold and the all engrossing pursuit of it have already caused in California an unprecedented rise in the price of all the necessaries of life...."

# **Document D**



Source: Taylor, Bayard - Reporter for new York Tribune - 1849 "Problems of the Gold Rush"

From: Sources in American History. Harcort Brace Jovanovich. 1986 (p. 148)

"The first result of the rush of emigrants from all parts of the world into California- a country almost unknown- was to nearly end all law. The countries which were nearest the golden coast sent forth thousands of adventurers, who speedily outnumbered the American population. Another factor that threatened serious consequences was the large numbers of worthless and wicked people from our own country who came to the pacific coast. From the beginning, a lack of government, or law might have been expected. Instead of this, there was a desire to maintain order and protect the rights of all throughout the mining districts. In the absence of all law or available protection, the people met and adopted rules for their mutual security – rules adapted to their situation where they had neither guards nor prisons. Small thefts were punished by banishment from diggings. For those of large amount or for more serious crimes, there was the single alternative of hanging.

.... There is much jealousy and bitter feeling among some of the people. The large number of emigrants from the Atlantic states outnumbered the native population three times over within a single year, and consequently placed forever in a hopeless minority. They witnessed the swift loss of their own political importance and the introduction of a new language, new customs, and new laws."

# **Document E**

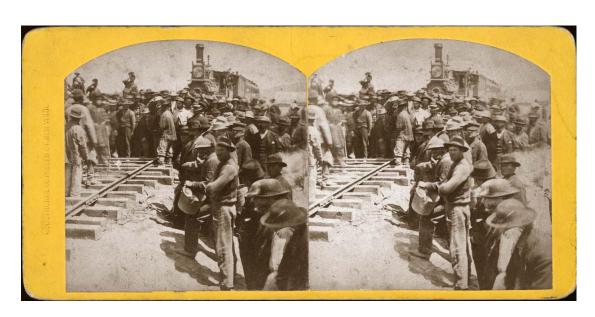
# Two Images From the Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

-----

Source: Russell, Andrew J. (Gilder Lehrman Collection – GLC04481.01)



Mission accomplished: Promontory Point, Utah, May 10, 1869.



A.J. Russell Stereoview #539 "Chinese at Laying Last Rail UPRR" may be the only photographic record of the Chinese role in the Last Rail ceremony; The view clearly shows at least one Chinese worker and a partner with rail-laying tools appearing to adjust the last rail laid. Stereoview and caption Courtesy of the Phil Anderson Collection

# **Document F**



**Source:** German immigrant description of a Rendezvous on the Green River in southwestern Wyoming in 1839 (From *Sources in American History*, p. 146)

"We reached the camping place. What first struck our eye was several long rows of Indian tents, extending along the Green River for at least a mile. Indians and whites were mingled here in varied groups. Of the Indians present, there were chiefly Snakes, Flatheads, and Nez Perces, all peaceful tribes, living beyond the Rocky Mountains. Of the whites present, there were agents of the different trading companies and a large number of trappers. They came to buy and to sell, to renew old contracts and to make new ones, to make arrangements for future meetings, to meet friends, to tell of adventures they had been through, and to spend for once a jolly day.... Groups of whites and Indians were engaged in barter. The Indians had for trade chiefly tanned skins, moccasins, ...buffalo leather or braided buffalo hair, and fresh or dry buffalo meat. They have no beaver skins. The articles that attracted them most in exchange were powder and lead, knives, tobacco, cinnabar, gaily colored kerchiefs, pocket mirrors, and all sorts of ornaments. Before an Indian begins to trade he demands sight of everything that may be offered by the other party to the trade. If there is something there that attracts him, he, too, will produce his wares, but discovers very quickly how much or how little they are coveted. If he himself does not want to sell some particular thing, he refuses, though ten times the value be offered.... The Rendezvous usually lasts a week. Then the different parties move off to their destinations and the plain that today echoed with Indian music, that was thronged with people of both races, with horses and dogs returns to its old quiet land, interrupted only now and then by the muffled roar of the buffalo and howl of the wolf."

# **Document G**



Source: Santana, Chief of the Kiowa, 1867 (From smithsoniansource.org)

"A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its banks.

These soldiers cut down our timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry."

# **Document H**



**Source:** From Melvin Bashore, Senior Librarian, Church History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *Mormon Migration: Where the Prophets of God Live- A Brief Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience*.

In the dead of winter 1846, Appleton Milo Harmon left his home in Nauvoo with his wife, Elmeda, "Crossing the Mississippi on the ice." In the spring of 1844, things changed for the Mormons in Illiniois. Although they were never generally popular, Illinois had accepted the Mormons in 1838 after Missouri cast them out. That initial welcome and feeling of goodwill gradually diminished until 1844, when Harmon noted:

"The tide of emegratin in to Nauvoo had for a time been gradualy increasing and had caused a Spirit of Jelousey to arise in the breasts of our eneymies they feard that if they left us thus alone all men would believe on us and the Mormons would take away their place and nation. and hold the balance of power. acordingly our old enemies renewed the attact and new ones Joined in the prececution until it became quite warm."

In the latter part of June, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered by a mob while in custody in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. Thour understandably despondent, most of the Mormons accepted a continuation of leadership by Brigham Young and the apostles. Construction was pushed forward on the temple, in the face of continual and increasing persecution by their enemies. Of this, Harmon wrote:

"our enemies Continued to Haras us in the fall of 1845 their percecution became mutch warmer wven so they commenced Burning houses grain Stacks driving off cattle catching and whipping the Breathering and some ware Killed. the persecution became So general that for the Sake of peace we agreed to leave as early in the Spring of 1846 as Circumstances would admit."

# **Document I**



**Source:** Portion of William Lloyd Garrison 1847 Letter (From Mexican-American War Mini-Q Doc D – Content Notes)

"We are in good spirits, and serene as heaven itself, though the opposition is still formidable... especially in regard to the atrocious war with Mexico. It is certainly not a popular war; it was begun and is carried on against the deep moral conviction of the sober portion of the people; its real object, the extension and preservation of slavery, no intelligent man honestly doubts; still, the diabolical motto, "our country, right or wrong..."

# **Document J**

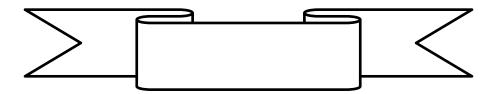


**Source:** Robert Toombs of Georgia statement on the House of Representatives Floor December 13, 1849 regarding the Wilmot Proviso. (From *The American Spirit*, p. 426)

"I do not, then, hesitate to avow before this House and the country, and in the presence of the living God, that if by your legislation you seek to drive us from the territories of California and New Mexico, purchased by the common blood and treasure of the whole people, and to abolish slavery in this District, thereby attempting to fix a national degradation upon half the states of this Confederacy, I am for disunion. And if my physical courage be equal to the maintenance of my convictions of right and duty, I will devote all I am and all have on earth to its consummation.

The Territories are the common property of the people of the United States, purchased by their common blood and treasure. You are their common agents. It is your duty, while they are in a territorial state, to remove all impediments to their free enjoyment by all sections and people of the Union, the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder."

# **Manifest Destiny Short Version**



# **Documents Containing Scaffold Questions**

# **Document A**



Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: The DBQ Project (Document B)

War Message of President James Polk, Washington, May 11, 1846

# To the Senate and House of Representatives:

(In an earlier message) I informed you that ... I had ordered an efficient military force to take a position "between the Nueces and the Del Norte (Rio Grande)." This had become necessary, to meet a threatened invasion of Texas by the Mexican forces.... The invasion was threatened solely because Texas had determined ... to annex herself to our Union; and, under these circumstances, it was plainly our duty to extend our protection over her citizens and soil.

... The Congress of Texas, by its act of December 19, 1836, had declared the Rio del Norte to be the boundary of that republic.... The country between that river and the Del Norte ... is now included within one of our congressional districts.... It became, therefore, of urgent necessity to provide for the defense of that portion of our country....

(On the 24th of April) a party ... of sixty-three men and officers, were ... dispatched from the American camp up the Rio del Norte, on its (North) bank, to ascertain whether the Mexican troops had crossed, or were preparing to cross, the river... (They) became engaged with a large body of these (Mexican) troops, and, after a short affair, in which some sixteen (Americans) were killed and wounded, appear to have been surrounded and compelled to surrender....

We have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance had been exhausted even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, ... Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.

Note: War Vote, May 13, 1846: US Senate: 40 Yes, 2 No House of Rep: 174 Yes, 14 No

- 1. What river did Texas and President Polk regard as the Texas-Mexico border?
- 2. Would Mexico have viewed a Mexican advance north of the Rio Grande an invasion of the US?
- 3. Where did the April 24 fight between Mexican and American soldiers occur?
- 4. What was the response of Congress to Polk's war message?
- 5. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

# **Document B**



Source: Mexican-American War Mini-Q: DBQ Project (Document C)

Jesus Valasco-Marquez, Instituto Technologico Autonomo de Mexico, "A Mexican Viewpoint on the War With the United States," *Voices of Mexico*, issue #41, Center for Research on North America (CISAN), National Autonomous University of Mexico, 2006.

The most dramatic event in the history of relations between Mexico and the United States took place a century and a half ago. US historians refer to this event as "The Mexican War," while in Mexico we prefer to use the term "The U.S. Invasion."...

From Mexico's point of view, the annexation of Texas to the United States was inadmissible for both legal and security reasons. Thus, when the Mexican government learned of the treaty signed between Texas and the United States in April 1844, it ... would consider such an act "a declaration of war."...

(In early 1846, on Polk's orders) the troops commanded by General Zachary Taylor arrived at the Rio Grande, across from the city of Matamoros, thus occupying the territory in dispute and increasing the possibilities of a confrontation.... In the eyes of the (Mexican) government, the mobilization of the US army was an outright attack on Mexico.... As a consequence, the Mexican government reaffirmed the instruction to protect the border, meaning the territory located between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River – an order which led to the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma....

... (One article) in the daily *El Tiempo* ... stated: "The American government acted like a bandit who came upon a traveler."

- 1. Whose point of view is held by the author of this document?
- 2. How did the Mexican government feel about the annexation of Texas by the United States?
- 3. According to the author, why did a Mexican force attack Zachary Taylor's troops when they arrived at the Rio Grande River?
- 4. Was the United States justified in going to war with Mexico?

# **Document C**



Source: President James Polk Address to Congress Regarding Gold in California - Dec. 5, 1848.

From- Gilder Lehrman History In A Box "The West"

(American Presidency Project, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php)

"...It was known that mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated. The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation. Reluctant to credit the reports in general circulation as to the quantity of gold, the officer commanding our forces in California visited the mineral district in July last for the purpose of obtaining accurate information on the subject. His report to the War Department of the result of his examination and the facts obtained on the spot is herewith laid before Congress. When he visited the country there were about 4,000 persons engaged in collecting gold. There is every reason to believe that the number of persons so employed has since been augmented. The explorations already made warrant the belief that the supply is very large and that gold is found at various places in an extensive district of country....

The effects produced by the discovery of these rich mineral deposits and the success which has attended the labors of those who have resorted to them have produced a surprising change in the state of affairs in California. Labor commands a most exorbitant price, and all other pursuits but that of searching for the precious metals are abandoned. Nearly the whole of the male population of the country [California] have gone to the gold districts.... This abundance of gold and the all engrossing pursuit of it have already caused in California an unprecedented rise in the price of all the necessaries of life...."

- 1. Does President Polk's address to Congress encourage the Gold Rush?
- 2. Where did President Polk obtain his information about the mining prospects in California?
- 3. What did Polk report about the changes that California was experiencing at the time of the speech?

# **Document D**



Source: Taylor, Bayard - Reporter for new York Tribune - 1849 "Problems of the Gold Rush"

From: Sources in American History. Harcort Brace Jovanovich. 1986 (p. 148)

"The first result of the rush of emigrants from all parts of the world into California- a country almost unknown- was to nearly end all law. The countries which were nearest the golden coast sent forth thousands of adventurers, who speedily outnumbered the American population. Another factor that threatened serious consequences was the large numbers of worthless and wicked people from our own country who came to the pacific coast. From the beginning, a lack of government, or law might have been expected. Instead of this, there was a desire to maintain order and protect the rights of all throughout the mining districts. In the absence of all law or available protection, the people met and adopted rules for their mutual security – rules adapted to their situation where they had neither guards nor prisons. Small thefts were punished by banishment from diggings. For those of large amount or for more serious crimes, there was the single alternative of hanging.

.... There is much jealousy and bitter feeling among some of the people. The large number of emigrants from the Atlantic states outnumbered the native population three times over within a single year, and consequently placed forever in a hopeless minority. They witnessed the swift loss of their own political importance and the introduction of a new language, new customs, and new laws."

- 1. From where were most emigrants to California?
- 2. What problems were created by the vast increase in population California experienced as a result of the Gold Rush?
- 3. In what ways did the California people try to protect themselves from the resulting problems?
- 4. How did the Native Californians lose influence in their own lands?

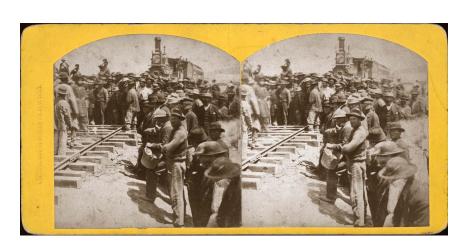
# **Document E**

# Two Images From the Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

Source: Russell, Andrew J. (Gilder Lehrman Collection – GLC04481.01)



Mission accomplished: Promontory Point, Utah, May 10, 1869.



A.J. Russell Stereoview #539 "Chinese at Laying Last Rail UPRR" may be the only photographic record of the Chinese role in the Last Rail ceremony; The view clearly shows at least one Chinese worker and a partner with rail-laying tools appearing to adjust the last rail laid. Stereoview and caption Courtesy of the Phil Anderson Collection

- 1. What is the significance of the top photo by AJ Russell?
- 2. In what way does the bottom photo also by AJ Russell- tell a different story?
- 3. What reasons may account for the differences between the two photos?

# **Document F**



**Source:** German immigrant description of a Rendezvous on the Green River in southwestern Wyoming in 1839 (From *Sources in American History*, p. 146)

"We reached the camping place. What first struck our eye was several long rows of Indian tents, extending along the Green River for at least a mile. Indians and whites were mingled here in varied groups. Of the Indians present, there were chiefly Snakes, Flatheads, and Nez Perces, all peaceful tribes, living beyond the Rocky Mountains. Of the whites present, there were agents of the different trading companies and a large number of trappers. They came to buy and to sell, to renew old contracts and to make new ones, to make arrangements for future meetings, to meet friends, to tell of adventures they had been through, and to spend for once a jolly day.... Groups of whites and Indians were engaged in barter. The Indians had for trade chiefly tanned skins, moccasins, ...buffalo leather or braided buffalo hair, and fresh or dry buffalo meat. They have no beaver skins. The articles that attracted them most in exchange were powder and lead, knives, tobacco, cinnabar, gaily colored kerchiefs, pocket mirrors, and all sorts of ornaments. Before an Indian begins to trade he demands sight of everything that may be offered by the other party to the trade. If there is something there that attracts him, he, too, will produce his wares, but discovers very quickly how much or how little they are coveted. If he himself does not want to sell some particular thing, he refuses, though ten times the value be offered.... The Rendezvous usually lasts a week. Then the different parties move off to their destinations and the plain that today echoed with Indian music, that was thronged with people of both races, with horses and dogs returns to its old quiet land, interrupted only now and then by the muffled roar of the buffalo and howl of the wolf."

- 1. What groups were represented at the Rendezvous and for what purpose were they in attendance?
- 2. What was the relationship and attitudes between whites and Natives as depicted by this report?
- 3. How populated would the west have been at the time this report was written?

# **Document G**



Source: Santana, Chief of the Kiowa, 1867 (From smithsoniansource.org)

"A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the river I see camps of soldiers here on its banks. These soldiers cut down our timber; they kill my buffalo; and when I see that, my heart feels like bursting; I feel sorry."

- 1. How does this quote portray the relationship between whites and Indians?
- 2. How had the west changed between the 1830s and 1860s?

# **Document H**



**Source:** From Melvin Bashore, Senior Librarian, Church History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *Mormon Migration: Where the Prophets of God Live- A Brief Overview of the Mormon Trail Experience*.

In the dead of winter 1846, Appleton Milo Harmon left his home in Nauvoo with his wife, Elmeda, "Crossing the Mississippi on the ice." In the spring of 1844, things changed for the Mormons in Illiniois. Although they were never generally popular, Illinois had accepted the Mormons in 1838 after Missouri cast them out. That initial welcome and feeling of goodwill gradually diminished until 1844, when Harmon noted:

"The tide of emegratin in to Nauvoo had for a time been gradualy increasing and had caused a Spirit of Jelousey to arise in the breasts of our eneymies they feard that if they left us thus alone all men would believe on us and the Mormons would take away their place and nation. and hold the balance of power. acordingly our old enemies renewed the attact and new ones Joined in the prececution until it became quite warm."

In the latter part of June, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered by a mob while in custody in a jail in Carthage, Illinois. Thour understandably despondent, most of the Mormons accepted a continuation of leadership by Brigham Young and the apostles. Construction was pushed forward on the temple, in the face of continual and increasing persecution by their enemies. Of this, Harmon wrote:

"our enemies Continued to Haras us in the fall of 1845 their percecution became mutch warmer wven so they commenced Burning houses grain Stacks driving off cattle catching and whipping the Breathering and some ware Killed. the persecution became So general that for the Sake of peace we agreed to leave as early in the Spring of 1846 as Circumstances would admit."

- 1. According to this passage, trace the movements of the Mormons in the 1830s and 1840s.
- 2. According to Mr. Harmon, why were the people of these communities threatened by the presence of Mormons?
- 3. Who had been the leaders of the Mormons and who took over when they were murdered?
- 4. Why did this group of people view the West as their Manifest Destiny?

# **Document I**



**Source:** Portion of William Lloyd Garrison 1847 Letter (From Mexican-American War Mini-Q Doc D – Content Notes)

"We are in good spirits, and serene as heaven itself, though the opposition is still formidable... especially in regard to the atrocious war with Mexico. It is certainly not a popular war; it was begun and is carried on against the deep moral conviction of the sober portion of the people; its real object, the extension and preservation of slavery, no intelligent man honestly doubts; still, the diabolical motto, "our country, right or wrong..."

- 1. What does William Lloyd Garrison believe to be the purpose of the Mexican-American War?
- 2. Why might his point of view be different from others?
- 3. What makes his point of view reasonable?

# **Document J**



**Source:** Robert Toombs of Georgia statement on the House of Representatives Floor December 13, 1849 regarding the Wilmot Proviso. (From *The American Spirit*, p. 426)

"I do not, then, hesitate to avow before this House and the country, and in the presence of the living God, that if by your legislation you seek to drive us from the territories of California and New Mexico, purchased by the common blood and treasure of the whole people, and to abolish slavery in this District, thereby attempting to fix a national degradation upon half the states of this Confederacy, I am for disunion. And if my physical courage be equal to the maintenance of my convictions of right and duty, I will devote all I am and all have on earth to its consummation.

The Territories are the common property of the people of the United States, purchased by their common blood and treasure. You are their common agents. It is your duty, while they are in a territorial state, to remove all impediments to their free enjoyment by all sections and people of the Union, the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder."

- 1. What were the main provisions of the Wilmot Proviso?
- 2. What is Representative Toombs belief regarding access to the Territories?
- 3. Did the expansion of the United States to include western lands create tension between northern and southern states in the 1840s?