The inside of this wagon is only 4 feet by 10 feet—smaller than a modern minivan.
The year is 1844, and you live on a small rocky farm in Massachusetts. Your family has decided to move to Oregon to gain cheap, fertile land. Your father says this move will make your family better off—and give you a better future.

**What might you gain or lose by going west?**

**What Do You Think?**

- What do you think daily life on the trail west might be like?
- What might be the greatest obstacles that you face?
- Notice the necessities packed in this crowded wagon. What might have been left behind?
Reading Strategy: Categorizing Information

What Do You Know?
What do you think of when you hear the phrase “the West”? Who do you think moved west in the early 1800s? What do you think drew them to the West?

Think About
• what you’ve learned about the West from movies or travel
• reasons that people move to new places today
• your responses to the Interact with History about going West (see page 391)

What Do You Want to Know?
What questions do you have about the westward movement of the 1800s? Write those questions in your notebook before you read the chapter.

Categorizing Information
To help you understand and remember historical information, learn to categorize. Categorizing means organizing information into groups. The chart below will help you categorize the information in this chapter about the westward movement. Use the chart to categorize information about what groups went west, why they went, and what events brought each territory into the United States.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of people who traveled there</th>
<th>Why they went there</th>
<th>Key events that brought the territory into the United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reading 2.0 Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose.
**MAIN IDEA**

Thousands of settlers followed trails through the West to gain land and a chance to make a fortune.

**WHY IT MATTERS NOW**

This migration brought Americans to the territories that became New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah.

**TERMS & NAMES**

- Jedediah Smith: mountain man
- Santa Fe Trail
- Jim Beckwourth: land speculator
- Oregon Trail
- Mormon
- Brigham Young

**ONE AMERICAN’S STORY**

The mountain man Jedediah Smith was leading an expedition to find a route through the Rocky Mountains when a grizzly bear attacked. The bear seized Smith’s head in its mouth, shredded his face, and partially tore off one ear. Smith’s men chased the bear away. Jim Clyman recalled the scene.

**A VOICE FROM THE PAST**

I asked [Smith] what was best. He said, “One or two go for water and if you have a needle and thread get it out and sew up my wounds around my head.” . . . I told him I could do nothing for his ear. “Oh, you must try to stitch it up some way or other,” said he. Then I put in my needle and stitched it through and through.

Jim Clyman, quoted in *The West*, by Geoffrey C. Ward

Ten days after this attack, Jedediah Smith was ready to continue exploring. Smith was one of the daring fur trappers and explorers known as mountain men. The mountain men opened up the West by discovering the best trails through the Rockies. In this section, you will learn about the trails—and why pioneers followed them west.

**Mountain Men and the Rendezvous**

Mountain men spent most of the year alone, trapping small animals such as beavers. Easterners wanted beaver furs to make the men’s hats that were in fashion at the time. To obtain furs, mountain men roamed the Great Plains and the Far West, the regions between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean, and set traps in icy mountain streams.

Because of their adventures, mountain men such as Jedediah Smith and Jim Beckwourth became famous as rugged loners. However, they were not as independent as the legends have portrayed them. Instead, they were connected economically to the businessmen who bought their furs.

**CALIFORNIA STANDARDS**

- 8.8.2 Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees’ “Trail of Tears,” settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.
- 8.8.3 Describe the role of pioneer women and the new status that western women achieved (e.g., Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bidwell; slave women gaining freedom in the West; Wyoming granting suffrage to women in 1869).

**CST3** Students use a variety of maps and documents to identify physical and cultural features of neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries and to explain the historical migration of people, expansion and disintegration of empires, and the growth of economic systems.

**FEP4** Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.

**Taking Notes**

Use your chart to take notes about New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah.

- [ ] Types of people who traveled there
  - New Mexico
  - Utah
  - Oregon
  - Nevada
  - California
One businessman, William Henry Ashley, created a trading arrangement called the rendezvous system. Under this system, individual trappers came to a pre-arranged site for a rendezvous with traders from the east. The trappers bought supplies from those traders and paid them in furs. The rendezvous took place every summer from 1825 to 1840. In that year, silk hats replaced beaver hats as the fashion, and the fur trade died out.

**Mountain Men Open the West**

During the height of the fur trade, mountain men worked some streams so heavily that they killed off the animals. This forced the trappers to search for new streams where beaver lived. The mountain men’s explorations provided Americans with some of the earliest firsthand knowledge of the Far West. This knowledge, and the trails the mountain men blazed, made it possible for later pioneers to move west.

For example, thousands of pioneers used South Pass, the wide valley through the Rockies that Jedediah Smith had publicized. Smith learned of this pass, in present-day Wyoming, from Native Americans. Unlike the high northern passes used by Lewis and Clark, South Pass was low, so snow did not block it as often as it blocked higher passes. Also, because South Pass was wide and less steep, wagon trails could run through it.

Smith wrote to his brother that he wanted to help people in need: “It is for this that I go for days without eating, and am pretty well satisfied if I can gather a few roots, a few snails, . . . a piece of horseflesh, or a fine roasted dog.”

**The Lure of the West**

Few of the people who went west shared Smith’s noble motive. To many, the West with its vast stretches of land offered a golden chance to make money. The Louisiana Purchase had doubled the size of the United States, and some Americans wanted to take the land away from Native Americans who inhabited this territory.

People called **land speculators** bought huge areas of land. To speculate means to buy something in the hope that it will increase in value. If land value did go up, speculators divided their land holdings into smaller sections. They made great profits by selling those sections to the thousands of settlers who dreamed of owning their own farms.

Manufacturers and merchants soon followed the settlers west. They hoped to earn money by making and selling items that farmers needed. Other people made the trip to find jobs or to escape people to whom they owed money.
The Trail to Santa Fe

Traders also traveled west in search of markets. After Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, it opened its borders to American traders, whom Spain had kept out. In response, the Missouri trader William Becknell set out with hardware, cloth, and china for Santa Fe, capital of the Mexican province of New Mexico. By doing so, he opened the Santa Fe Trail, which led from Missouri to Santa Fe. Once in Santa Fe, he made a large profit because the New Mexicans were eager for new merchandise.

When Becknell returned to Missouri weeks later, a curious crowd met him. One man picked up one of Becknell's bags and slit it open with a knife. As gold and silver coins spilled onto the street, the onlookers gasped. The news spread that New Mexico was a place where traders could become rich.

The following spring, Becknell headed to Santa Fe again. This time he loaded his trade goods into covered wagons, which Westerners called prairie schooners. Their billowing white canvas tops made them look like schooners, or sailing ships.

Becknell could not haul wagons over the mountain pass he had used on his first trip to Santa Fe. Instead, he found a cutoff, a shortcut that avoided steep slopes but passed through a deadly desert to the south. As his traders crossed the burning sands, they ran out of water. Crazed by
thirst, they lopped off mules’ ears and killed their dogs to drink the animals’ blood. Finally, the men found a stream. The water saved them from death, and they reached Santa Fe.

Becknell returned home with another huge profit. Before long, hundreds of traders and prairie schooners braved the cutoff to make the 800-mile journey from Missouri to New Mexico each year.

Oregon Fever

Hundreds of settlers also began migrating west on the **Oregon Trail**, which ran from Independence, Missouri, to the Oregon Territory. The first whites to cross the continent to Oregon were missionaries, such as Marcus and Narcissa Whitman in 1836. At that time, the United States and Britain were locked in an argument about which country owned Oregon. To the Whitmans’ great disappointment, they made few converts among the Native Americans. However, their glowing reports of Oregon’s rich land began to attract other American settlers.

Amazing stories spread about Oregon. The sun always shone there. Wheat grew as tall as a man. One tale claimed that pigs were “running about round and fat, and already cooked, with knives and forks sticking in them so you can cut off a slice whenever you are hungry.”

Such stories tempted many people to make the 2,000-mile journey to Oregon. In 1843, nearly 1,000 people traveled from Missouri to Oregon. The next year, twice as many came. “The Oregon Fever has broken out,” observed a Boston newspaper, “and is now raging.”

One Family Heads West

The experiences of the Sager family show how difficult the trail could be. In 1844, Henry Sager, his wife, and six children left Missouri to find cheap, fertile land in Oregon. They had already moved four times in the past four years. Henry’s daughter Catherine explained her family’s moves.

**A VOICE FROM THE PAST**

Father was one of those restless men who are not content to remain in one place long at a time. . . . [He] had been talking of going to Texas. But mother, hearing much said about the healthfulness of Oregon, preferred to go there.

*Catherine Sager,* quoted in *The West,* by Geoffrey C. Ward

The Oregon Trail was dangerous, so pioneers joined wagon trains. They knew their survival would depend on cooperation. Before setting out, the wagon train members agreed on rules and elected leaders to enforce them.

Even so, life on the trail was full of hardship. The Sagers had barely begun the trip when Mrs. Sager gave birth to her seventh child. Two
months later, nine-year-old Catherine fell under a moving wagon, which crushed her left leg. Later, “camp fever” killed both of the Sager parents.

Even though the Sager parents had died, the other families in the train cooperated to help the Sager orphans make it to Oregon. There, the Whitmans agreed to adopt them. When Narcissa met them, Catherine recalled, “We thought as we shyly looked at her that she was the prettiest woman we had ever seen.”

The Mormon Trail

While most pioneers went west in search of wealth, one group migrated for religious reasons. The Mormons, who settled Utah, were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Joseph Smith had founded this church in upstate New York in 1830. The Mormons lived in close communities, worked hard, shared their goods, and prospered.

The Mormons, though, also made enemies. Some people reacted angrily to the Mormons’ teachings. They saw the Mormon practice of polygamy—allowing a man to have more than one wife at a time—as immoral. Others objected to their holding property in common.

In 1844, an anti-Mormon mob in Illinois killed Smith. Brigham Young, the next Mormon leader, moved his people out of the United States. His destination was Utah, then part of Mexico. In this desolate region, he hoped his people would be left to follow their faith in peace.

In 1847, about 1,600 Mormons followed part of the Oregon Trail to Utah. There they built a new settlement by the Great Salt Lake. Because Utah has little rainfall, the Mormons had to work together to build dams and canals. These structures captured water in the hills and carried it to the farms in the valleys below. Through teamwork, they made their desert homeland bloom.

In the meantime, changes were taking place in Texas. As you will read in Section 2, Americans had been moving into that Mexican territory, too.
Survive the Oregon Trail!
You are part of a wagon train heading west on the Oregon Trail. During your journey, you will cross endless flat prairies and mountains that climb more steeply than a staircase. You will suffer through blazing heat and icy snowstorms. Food is scarce in the land you travel through—and human settlements are even more scarce.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING On this page are three challenges you will face on your journey. Working with a small group, create a solution for each challenge. To help your group work together, assign a task to each group member. You will find helpful information in the Data File. Be prepared to present your solutions to the class.

SCIENCE CHALLENGE
"The most terrible mountains"
One pioneer called the Rockies "the most terrible mountains for steepness." Your oxen have struggled for hours to pull your wagon up a steep slope. Now you have to go down the other side without crashing—and wagon wheels have no brakes. How will you slow your descent? Use the Data File for help. Present your ideas using one of these options:
- Write instructions for climbing and descending the mountain.
- Illustrate your solution in a how-to diagram.

CIVICS CHALLENGE
"A thieving scoundrel"
You wake one morning to the sound of shouting. One of the men in the wagon train has been caught stealing another family’s ox—to replace an ox that died from drinking bad water. The wagon train leader asks you to help decide how to punish the thief. Present your decision using one of these options:
- As a group, role-play a discussion of what the punishment should be.
- Write an explanation of a punishment to the wagon train leader.

CALIFORNIA STANDARDS
8.8.2 Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition, accounts of the removal of Indians, the Cherokees’ "Trail of Tears," settlement of the Great Plains) and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

Reading 2.6 Use information from a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents to explain a situation or decision and to solve a problem.
**HEALTH CHALLENGE**

"A grand blow-out"

On July 4, your wagon train stops near Independence Rock for “a grand blow-out” to celebrate your progress. Each family will bring a dish to the party. What will you cook that is tasty and nutritious? You might use supplies from your wagon and berries or animals from the area. Look at the Data File for help. Present your choice using one of these options:

- Draw a picture of your dish and describe it.
- Write an original recipe.

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP**

Present to the class Using the model shown here, ask and answer questions about geographic patterns in the West. Choose the best questions to present to the class.
The Texas Revolution

Main Idea

American and Tejano citizens led Texas to independence from Mexico. The diverse culture of Texas has developed from the contributions of many different groups.

Why It Matters Now

American and Tejano citizens led Texas to independence from Mexico. The diverse culture of Texas has developed from the contributions of many different groups.

Terms & Names

Stephen Austin
Tejano
Antonio López de Santa Anna
Sam Houston
William Travis
Juan Seguín
Battle of the Alamo
Lone Star Republic

ONE AMERICAN’S STORY

Son of a bankrupt Missouri mine owner, Stephen Austin read his mother’s letter, written in 1821, in stunned silence. His father, Moses Austin, was dead. In his last moments, she told her son, “He called me to his bedside, . . . he begged me to tell you to take his place . . . to go on . . . in the same way he would have done.”

Stephen knew what that meant. Moses Austin had spent the last years of his life chasing a crazy dream. He had hoped to found a colony for Americans in Spanish Texas. A week after his father’s death, Stephen Austin was standing on Texas soil. His father’s dream would become his destiny.

This section explains how Stephen Austin, along with others, worked hard to make the lands of Texas a good place to live.

Spanish Texas

The Spanish land called Tejas (Tay•HAHS) bordered the United States territory called Louisiana. The land was rich and desirable. It had forests in the east, rich soil for growing corn and cotton, and great grassy plains for grazing animals. It also had rivers leading to natural ports on the Gulf of Mexico. It was home to Plains and Pueblo Native Americans. Even though Tejas was a state in the Spanish colony of New Spain, it had few Spanish settlers. The Spanish mission system you learned about in Chapter 2 was still common. Missions raised crops and livestock, traded with other missions, and were largely self-sufficient. Around 1819, Spanish soldiers drove off Americans trying to claim those lands as a part of the Louisiana Purchase.

In 1821, only about 4,000 Tejanos (Tay•HAH•nohs) lived in Texas. Tejanos are people of Spanish heritage who consider Texas their home. The Comanche, Apache, and other tribes fought fiercely against Spanish settlement of Texas. Also, the mission system began to decline. The Spanish officials wanted many more settlers to move to Texas. They hoped that new colonists would help to defend against Native Americans and Americans who illegally sneaked into Texas.
To attract more people to Texas, the Spanish government offered huge tracts of land to *empresarios*. But they were unable to attract Spanish settlers. So, when Moses Austin asked for permission to start a colony in Texas, Spain agreed. Austin was promised a large section of land. He had to agree that settlers on his land had to follow Spanish laws.

**Mexican Independence Changes Texas**

Shortly after Stephen Austin arrived in Texas in 1821, Mexico successfully gained its independence from Spain. *Tejas* was now a part of Mexico. With the change in government, the Spanish land grant given to Austin’s father was worthless. Stephen Austin traveled to Mexico City to persuade the new Mexican government to let him start his colony. It took him almost a year to get permission. And the Mexican government would consent only if the new settlers agreed to become Mexican citizens and members of the Roman Catholic Church.

Between 1821 and 1827, Austin attracted 297 families to his new settlement. These original Texas settler families are known as the “Old Three Hundred.” He demanded evidence that each family head was moral, worked hard, and did not drink. So law-abiding were his colonists that Austin could write to a new settler, “You will be astonished to see all our houses with no other fastening than a wooden pin or door latch.”

The success of Austin’s colony attracted more land speculators and settlers to Texas from the United States. Some were looking for a new life, some were escaping from the law, and others were looking for a chance to grow rich. By 1830, the population had swelled to about 30,000, with Americans outnumbering the *Tejanos* six to one.

**Rising Tensions in Texas**

As more and more Americans settled in Texas, tensions between them and the *Tejanos* increased. Used to governing themselves, Americans resented following Mexican laws. Since few Americans spoke Spanish, they were unhappy that all official documents had to be in that language. Slave owners were especially upset when Mexico outlawed slavery in 1829. They wanted to maintain slavery so they could grow cotton. Austin persuaded the government to allow slave owners to keep their slaves.

On the other hand, the *Tejanos* found the Americans difficult to live with, too. *Tejanos* thought that the Americans believed they were superior and deserved special privileges. The Americans seemed unwilling to adapt to Mexican laws, and few converted to Catholicism.
The Mexican government sent an official to Texas to investigate the tensions. He was not happy with what he found. In 1829, he reported to his government, “I am warning you to take timely measures . . . Texas could throw this whole nation into revolution.” His advice turned out to be right.

Responding to the warnings, the Mexican government cracked down on Texas. First, it closed the state to further American immigration. Next, it required Texans to pay taxes for the first time. Finally, to enforce these new laws, the government sent more Mexican troops to Texas.

**Texans Revolt Against Mexico**

These actions caused angry protests. Some Texans even talked of breaking away from Mexico. Most, however, listened to Austin, who remained loyal to Mexico. In 1833, Austin set off for Mexico City with a petition. This document listed reforms supported by both Americans and Tejanos. The most important request was that Texas become a self-governing state within Mexico.

In Mexico City, Austin met General Antonio López de Santa Anna, the Mexican president. At first, the general agreed to most of the reforms in Austin’s petition. But then Santa Anna learned of a letter Austin had written. The letter said that if the changes weren’t approved Austin would support breaking away from Mexican rule. This was rebellion! The general had Austin jailed for an entire year. The Texans were furious and ready to rebel.

Santa Anna’s answer to talk of rebellion was to send more troops to Texas. In late September 1835, Mexican soldiers marched to the town of Gonzales. They had orders to seize a cannon used by the Texans for protection against Native Americans. Texas volunteers had hung a flag on the big gun that said, “Come and Take It.”

The Mexican troops failed to capture the cannon. Two months later, Texans drove Mexican troops out of an old mission in San Antonio that was used as a fortress. It was called the Alamo. Among the Texas volunteers were free African Americans such as Hendrick Arnold and Greenbury Logan. Angered by these insults, Santa Anna and 6,000 troops headed for Texas.

**The Fight for the Alamo**

On March 1–2, 1836, Texans met at a settlement called Washington-on-the-Brazos to decide what to do about Santa Anna’s troops. They believed they could do only one thing: to declare Texas a free and independent republic. Sam Houston, the only man at the meeting with military experience, was placed in command of the Texas army.
The Texas army hardly existed. At that moment, there were two small forces ready to stand up to Santa Anna’s army. One was a company of 420 men, led by James Fannin, stationed at Goliad, a fort in southeast Texas. The second was a company of 183 volunteers at the Alamo. Headed by William Travis, this small force included such famous frontiersmen as Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie. In addition, Juan Seguín (wahn seh•GEEN) led a band of 25 Tejanos in support of revolt.

On February 23, 1836, Santa Anna’s troops surrounded San Antonio. The next day, Mexicans began their siege of the Alamo. Two nights later, Travis scrawled a message to the world.

“A VOICE FROM THE PAST
The enemy has demanded a surrender. . . . I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat.

William Travis, “To the People of Texas and all the Americans in the World”

Because Juan Seguín spoke Spanish, he was chosen to carry the plea through enemy lines. Seguín got the message through to other Texas defenders. But when he returned, he saw the Alamo in flames.

The Alamo’s defenders held off the Mexican attack for 12 violent days. Travis and the defenders stubbornly refused to surrender. On the 13th day, Santa Anna ordered more than 1,800 men to storm the fortress. The Texans met the attackers with a hailstorm of cannon and gun fire. Then suddenly it became strangely quiet. The Texans had run out of ammunition. At day’s end, all but five Texans were dead. The Battle of the Alamo was over.

“Remember the Alamo!”

a Texan soldier

D. Making Inferences Why would William Travis address his message to all Americans?

HISTORY through ART
The Battle of the Alamo was so intense that Davy Crockett did not have time to reload his gun, which he called “Betsy.” He used it as a club. This print is by a 20th-century illustrator, Frederick Yohn.

What does the print reveal about the battle?
Those men who had not died in the fighting were executed at Santa Anna’s command. A total of 183 Alamo defenders died. A few women and children were not killed. Susanna Dickinson, one of the survivors, was ordered by Santa Anna to tell the story of the Alamo to other Texans. He hoped the story would discourage more rebellion. The slaughter at the Alamo shocked Texans—and showed them how hard they would have to fight for their freedom from Mexico.

Victory at San Jacinto

With Santa Anna on the attack, Texans—both soldiers and settlers—fled eastward. Houston sent a message to the men at Goliad, ordering them to retreat. They were captured by Mexican forces, who executed more than 300. The Texans would not soon forget the massacre at Goliad. But even in retreat and defeat, Houston’s army doubled. Now it was a fighting force of 800 angry men. It included Tejanos, American settlers, volunteers from the United States, and many free and enslaved African Americans.

In late April, Santa Anna caught up with Houston near the San Jacinto (san juh•SIN•toh) River. Late in the afternoon of April 21, 1836, the Texans advanced on the Mexican army “with the stillness of death.” When close to Santa Anna’s camp, they raced forward, rifles ready, screaming “Remember the Alamo!” “Remember Goliad!”

In just 18 minutes, the Texans killed more than half of the Mexican army. Santa Anna was forced to sign a treaty giving Texas its freedom. With the Battle of San Jacinto, Texas was now independent.
Lone Star Republic

In September 1836, Texans raised a flag with a single star. They adopted a nickname—Lone Star Republic—and proclaimed Texas an independent nation. The new nation set up its own army and navy. Sam Houston was elected president of the Lone Star Republic by a landslide.

Many Texans did not want Texas to remain independent for long. They considered themselves Americans and wanted to be a part of the United States. In 1836, the Texas government asked Congress to annex Texas to the Union.

Many Northerners objected. They argued that Texas would become a slave state, and they opposed any expansion of slavery. If Texas joined the Union, slave states would outnumber free states and have a voting advantage in Congress. Other people feared that annexing Texas would lead to war with Mexico.

In response, Congress voted against annexation. Texas remained an independent republic for almost ten years. In the next section, you will learn that the question of annexing Texas did lead to a war between the United States and Mexico.

**ACTIVITY OPTIONS**

**ART**

Research a figure from the Texas Revolution. Create a trading card or design that person’s Web page for the Internet. (HI1)

**TECHNOLOGY**

GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER Interpreting Maps

1. Movement About how many total miles did Santa Anna travel from Mexico to San Jacinto?

2. Movement Look at the distances traveled by Mexican forces and those traveled by the Texans. Which side do you think had an advantage? Explain.
The War with Mexico

The United States expanded its territory westward to stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

MAIN IDEA

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Today, one-third of all Americans live in the areas added to the United States in 1848.

TERMS & NAMES

James K. Polk
manifest destiny
Zachary Taylor
Bear Flag Revolt

Winfield Scott
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
Mexican Cession

ONE AMERICAN’S STORY

Henry Clay sneered, “Who is James K. Polk?” Clay had just learned the name of the man nominated by Democrats to run against him for president in 1844. “A mistake!” answered Washington insiders.

News of Polk’s nomination was flashed to the capital by the newly invented telegraph machine. People were convinced that the machine didn’t work. How could the Democrats choose Polk? A joke!

Polk was America’s first “dark horse,” a candidate who received unexpected support. The Democrats had nominated this little-known man only when they could not agree on anyone else.

Still, Polk wasn’t a complete nobody. He had been governor of Tennessee and served seven terms in Congress. Polk was committed to national expansion. He vowed to annex Texas and take over Oregon.

When the votes were counted, James Knox Polk became the 11th president of the United States. As you will read in this section, after his election Polk looked for ways to expand the nation.

Americans Support Manifest Destiny

The abundance of land in the West seemed to hold great promise for Americans. Although populated with Native Americans and Mexicans, those lands were viewed by white settlers as unoccupied. Many Americans wanted to settle those lands themselves, and they worried about competition from other nations. Mexico occupied the southwest lands, and Britain shared the northwest Oregon Territory with the United States. Many Americans believed that the United States was
destined to stretch across the continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. In 1845, a newspaper editor named John O'Sullivan gave a name to that belief.

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Our manifest destiny [is] to overspread and possess the whole of the continent which Providence [God] has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and . . . self-government.

John O'Sullivan, United States Magazine and Democratic Review

John O'Sullivan used the word manifest to mean clear or obvious. The word destiny means events sure to happen. Therefore, manifest destiny suggested that expansion was not only good but bound to happen—even if it meant pushing Mexicans and Native Americans out of the way. After Polk's election in 1844, manifest destiny became government policy.

The term “manifest destiny” was new, but the idea was not. By the 1840s, thousands of Americans had moved into the Oregon Territory. Since 1818, Oregon had been occupied jointly by the United States and Britain. In his campaign, Polk had talked of taking over all of Oregon. “Fifty-four forty or fight!” screamed one of his slogans. The parallel of 54° 40’ N latitude was the northern boundary of the shared Oregon Territory.

Rather than fight for all of Oregon, however, Polk settled for half. In 1846, the United States and Great Britain agreed to divide Oregon at the 49th parallel. This agreement extended the boundary line already drawn between Canada and the United States. Today this line still serves as the border between much of the United States and Canada.

Troubles with Mexico

Polk had good reason for avoiding war with Britain over Oregon. By 1846, he had much bigger troubles brewing with Mexico over Texas.

In 1845, Congress admitted Texas as a slave state, in spite of Northern objections to the spread of slavery. However, Mexico still claimed Texas as its own. Mexico angrily viewed this annexation as an act of war. To make matters worse, Texas and Mexico could not agree on the official border between them. Texas claimed the Rio Grande, a river south of San Antonio, as its southern boundary. Mexico insisted on the Nueces (noo•AY•sis) River as the border of Texas. The difference in the distance between the two rivers was more than 100 miles at some points. Many thousands of miles of territory were at stake.

Mexico said it would fight to defend its claim. Hoping to settle the dispute peacefully, Polk sent John Slidell, a Spanish-speaking
ambassador, to offer Mexico $25 million for Texas, California, and New Mexico. But Slidell’s diplomacy failed.

Believing that the American people supported his expansion plans, Polk wanted to force the issue with Mexico. He purposely ordered General Zachary Taylor to station troops on the northern bank of the Rio Grande. This river bank was part of the disputed territory. Viewing this as an act of war, Mexico moved an army into place on the southern bank. On April 25, 1846, a Mexican cavalry unit crossed the Rio Grande. They ambushed an American patrol and killed or wounded 16 American soldiers.

When news of the attack reached Washington, Polk sent a rousing war message to Congress, saying, “Mexico has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil.” Two days later, Congress declared war. The War with Mexico had begun. Thousands of volunteers, mostly from western states, rushed to enlist in the army. Santa Anna, who was president of Mexico, built up the Mexican army.

However, Americans had mixed reactions to Polk’s call for war. Illinois representative Abraham Lincoln questioned the truthfulness of the president’s message and the need to declare war. Northerners questioned the justice of men dying in such a war. Slavery became an issue in the debates over the war. Southerners saw expansion into Texas as an opportunity to extend slavery and to increase their power in Congress. To
prevent this from happening, antislavery representatives introduced a bill to prohibit slavery in any lands taken from Mexico. Frederick Douglass, the abolitionist, summarized the arguments.

**A VOICE FROM THE PAST**

The determination of our slaveholding President to prosecute the war, and the probability of his success in wringing from the people men and money to carry it on, is made evident, . . . None seem willing to take their stand for peace at all risks; and all seem willing that the war should be carried on in some form or other.

Frederick Douglass in *The North Star*, January 21, 1848

Despite opposition, the United States plunged into war. In May 1846, General Taylor led troops into Mexico. Many Americans thought it would be easy to defeat the Mexicans, and the war would end quickly.

**Capturing New Mexico and California**

Not long after the war began, General Stephen Kearny (KAHR•nee)—a U.S. Army officer—and his men left Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, with orders to occupy New Mexico. Then they were to continue west to California. As his troops marched along the Santa Fe Trail, they sang songs like this one.

**A VOICE FROM THE PAST**

Old Colonel Kearny, you can bet,  
Will keep the boys in motion,  
Till Yankee Land includes the sand  
On the Pacific Ocean.

Six weeks and 650 hot and rugged miles later, Kearny’s army entered New Mexico. Using persuasion instead of force, he convinced the Mexican troops that he meant to withdraw. This allowed him to take New Mexico without firing a shot. Then Kearny and a small force of soldiers marched on toward California, which had only 8,000 to 12,000 Mexican residents. The remaining force moved south toward Mexico.

In California, Americans led by the explorer John C. Frémont rebelled against Mexican rule in the **Bear Flag Revolt**. They arrested the Mexican commander of Northern California and raised a crude flag showing a grizzly bear sketched in blackberry juice. The rebels declared California independent of Mexico and named it the Republic of California. In the fall, U.S. troops reached California and joined forces with the rebels. Within weeks, Americans controlled all of California.

**The Invasion of Mexico**

The defeat of Mexico proved far more difficult. The Mexican army was much larger, but the U.S. troops
were led by well-trained officers. American forces invaded Mexico from two directions.

General Taylor battled his way south from Texas toward the city of Monterrey in northern Mexico. On February 22, 1847, his 4,800 troops met General Santa Anna’s 15,000 Mexican soldiers near a ranch called Buena Vista. After the first day of fighting, Santa Anna sent Taylor a note offering him a chance to surrender. Taylor declined. At the end of the second bloody day of fighting, Santa Anna reported that “both armies have been cut to pieces.” However, it was Santa Anna who retreated after the Battle of Buena Vista. The war in the north of Mexico was over.

In southern Mexico, fighting continued. A second force led by General Winfield Scott landed at Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico and battled inland toward Mexico City. Outside the capital, Scott met fierce resistance at the castle of Chapultepec (chuh•POOL•tuh•pek). About 1,000 soldiers and 100 young military cadets bravely defended the fortress. Despite their determined resistance, Mexico City fell to Scott in September 1847. As he watched, a Mexican officer sighed and said, “God is a Yankee.”

**The Mexican Cession**

On February 2, 1848, the war officially ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (gwah•doo•LOOP•ay hih•DAHL•go). In this treaty, Mexico recognized that Texas was part of the United States, and the Rio Grande was the border between the nations. Mexico also ceded, or gave up, a vast region 

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**Background**

General Winfield Scott had become a national hero during the War of 1812.

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**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER**

1. **Region** How many states or parts of states were created by all the lands added after Polk’s election in 1844?

2. **Region** Which addition to the United States after 1783 added the greatest area of land?

**Growth of the United States, 1783–1853**
known as the **Mexican Cession**. (See the map on page 410.) Together with Texas, this land amounted to almost one-half of Mexico. The loss was a bitter defeat for Mexico, particularly because many Mexicans felt that the United States had provoked the war in the hope of gaining Mexican territory.

In return, the United States agreed to pay Mexico $15 million. The United States would also pay the $3.25 million of claims U.S. citizens had against Mexico. Finally, it also promised to protect the approximately 80,000 Mexicans living in Texas and the Mexican Cession.

Mexicans living in the United States saw the conquest of their land differently. Suddenly they were a minority in a nation with a strange language, culture, and legal system. At the same time, they would make important contributions to their new country. A rich new culture resulted from the blend of many cultures in the Mexican Cession.

**“From Sea to Shining Sea”**

The last bit of territory added to the continental United States was a strip of land across what is now southern New Mexico and Arizona. The government wanted the land as a location for a southern transcontinental railroad. In 1853, Mexico sold the land—called the Gadsden Purchase—to the United States for $10 million.

On July 4, 1848, in Washington, President Polk laid the cornerstone of a monument to honor George Washington. In Washington’s day, the western border of the United States was the Mississippi River. The United States in 1848 now stretched “from sea to shining sea.” In August, Polk learned that gold had been found in California. Next, you will read about the California gold rush.

**MEXICAN LAND RIGHTS**

The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was intended to preserve Mexican land rights in areas that Mexico ceded to the United States, but common land grants, or land given to a community, remained in dispute. In 1891 the U.S. Government established a special court to decide land grant claims. The court’s rulings left many Mexican Americans on small farms landless. In addition, many Mexican Americans lost their land in shady business deals.

Some of their descendants continue to dispute the claims, and have had some court victories in recent years. In 2000, a family in Texas was awarded oil royalties from land it lost in 1938. In 2002 the heirs to a land grant in Colorado won a 21-year court case allowing grazing and timber rights on a 77,000-acre ranch.
Gold was found in California, and thousands rushed to that territory. California quickly became a state.

The gold rush made California grow rapidly and helped bring about California’s cultural diversity.

**ONE AMERICAN’S STORY**

Luzena Wilson said of the year 1849, “The gold excitement spread like wildfire.” The year before, James Marshall had discovered gold in California. Luzena’s husband decided to become a forty-niner—someone who went to California to find gold, starting in 1849.

Most forty-niners left their families behind, but Luzena traveled to California with her husband. She soon discovered that women—and their homemaking skills—were rare in California. Shortly after she arrived, a miner offered her five dollars for the biscuits she was baking. Shocked, she just stared at him. He quickly doubled his offer and paid in gold. Luzena realized she could make money by feeding miners, so she opened a hotel.

In this section, you will read about the forty-niners like the Wilsons and what their mining experiences were like. You will also discover how the gold rush boosted California’s economy and changed the nation’s history.

**California Before the Rush**

Before the forty-niners came, California was populated by as many as 150,000 Native Americans and 8,000 to 12,000 Californios—settlers of Spanish or Mexican descent. Most Californios lived on huge cattle ranches. They had acquired their estates when the Mexican government took away the land that once belonged to the California missions.

One important Californio was Mariano Vallejo (mah•RYAH•noh vah•YEH•hoh). A member of one of the oldest Spanish families in America, he owned 250,000 acres of land. Proudly describing the accomplishments of the Californios, Vallejo wrote, “We were the pioneers of the Pacific coast . . . while General Washington was carrying on the war of the Revolution.” Vallejo himself had been the commander of Northern California when it belonged to Mexico.
When Mexico owned California, its government feared American immigration and rarely gave land to foreigners. But John Sutter, a Swiss immigrant, was one exception. Dressed in a secondhand French army uniform, Sutter had visited the Mexican governor in 1839. A charming man, Sutter persuaded the governor to grant him 50,000 acres in the unsettled Sacramento Valley. Sutter built a fort on his land and dreamed of creating his own personal empire based on agriculture.

In 1848, Sutter sent a carpenter named James Marshall to build a sawmill on the nearby American River. One day Marshall inspected the canal that brought water to Sutter's Mill. He later said, “My eye was caught by a glimpse of something shining... I reached my hand down and picked it up; it made my heart thump for I felt certain it was gold.”

**Rush for Gold**

News of Marshall's thrilling discovery spread rapidly. From all over California, people raced to the American River—starting the California gold rush. A gold rush occurs when large numbers of people move to a site where gold has been found. Throughout history, people have valued gold because it is scarce, beautiful, easy to shape, and resistant to tarnish.

Miners soon found gold in other streams flowing out of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Colonel R. B. Mason, the military governor of California, estimated that the region held enough gold to “pay the cost of the present war with Mexico a hundred times over.” He sent this news to Washington with a box of gold dust as proof.

The following year thousands of gold seekers set out to make their fortunes. A forty-niner who wished to reach California from the East had a choice of three routes, all of them dangerous:

1. Sail 18,000 miles around South America and up the Pacific coast—suffering from storms, seasickness, and spoiled food.
2. Sail to the narrow Isthmus of Panama, cross overland (and risk catching a deadly tropical disease), and then sail to California.
3. Travel the trails across North America—braving rivers, prairies, mountains, and all the hardships of the trail.

Because the adventure was so difficult, most gold seekers were young men. “A gray beard is almost as rare as a petticoat,” observed one miner. Luzena Wilson said that during the six months she lived in the mining city of Sacramento, she saw only two other women.
Life in the Mining Camps

The mining camps had colorful names like Mad Mule Gulch, Hangtown, and Coyote Diggings. They began as rows of tents along the streams flowing out of the Sierra Nevada. Gradually, the tents gave way to rough wooden buildings that housed stores and saloons.

Mining camps could be dangerous. One woman who lived in the region wrote about camp violence.

_A VOICE FROM THE PAST_

In the short space of twenty-four days, we have had murders, fearful accidents, bloody deaths, a mob, whippings, a hanging, . . . and a fatal duel.

Louise Clappe, quoted in _Frontier Women_

The mining life was hard for other reasons. Camp gossip told of miners who grew rich overnight by finding eight-pound nuggets, but in reality, such easy pickings were rare. Miners spent their days standing knee-deep in icy streams, where they sifted through tons of mud and sand to find small amounts of gold. Exhaustion, poor food, and disease all damaged the miners’ health.

Not only was acquiring gold brutally difficult, but the miners had to pay outrageously high prices for basic supplies. In addition, gamblers and con artists swarmed into the camps to swindle the miners of their money. As a result, few miners grew rich.

Miners from Around the World

About two-thirds of the forty-niners were Americans. Most of these were white men—many from New England. However, Native Americans, free blacks, and enslaved African Americans also worked the mines.

Thousands of experienced miners came from Sonora in Mexico. Other foreign miners came from Europe, South America, Australia, and China. Most of the Chinese miners were peasant farmers who fled from a region that had suffered several crop failures. By the end of 1851, one of every ten immigrants was Chinese.

Used to backbreaking labor in their homeland, the Chinese proved to be patient miners. They would take over sites that American miners had abandoned because the easy gold was gone. Through steady, hard work, the Chinese made these “played-out” sites yield profits. American miners resented the success of the Chinese and were suspicious of their different foods, dress, and customs. As the numbers of Chinese miners grew, American anger toward them also increased.
Surface Mining

Gold is found in cracks, called veins, in the earth’s rocky crust. As mountains and other outcrops of rock erode, the gold veins come to the surface. The gold breaks apart into nuggets, flakes, and dust. Flood waters then wash it downhill into stream beds. To mine this surface gold, forty-niners had to use tools designed to separate it from the mud and sand around it. American miners learned some technology from Mexicans who came from the mining region of Sonora.

Miners shoveled dirt into the sluice. The rushing water carried lightweight materials along with it. Heavy gold sank to the bottom and was trapped between the ridges.

A sluice was a series of long boxes with ridges on the bottom. Water ran through the sluice, which angled downward.

Mexican miners introduced the use of the pan. A miner would fill a pan with dirt and water. Then he would swirl the pan. Water sloshed over the sides, carrying lightweight minerals with it. Gold settled in the bottom.

Although this photograph shows American and Chinese miners working together, in many places Americans chased the Chinese away.

CONNECT TO HISTORY
1. Drawing Conclusions
Which mining method could be used by an individual miner and which needed a group of miners? Explain your answer.


CONNECT TO TODAY
2. Researching How is gold mined today?

For more about the California gold rush . . .

CALIFORNIA STANDARDS
8.6.1 Discuss the influence of industrialization and technological developments on the region, including human modification of the landscape and how physical geography shaped human actions (e.g., growth of cities, deforestation, farming, mineral extraction).
Conflicts Among Miners

A mixture of greed, anger, and prejudice caused some miners to cheat others. For example, I. B. Gilman promised to free an enslaved African American named Tom if he saved enough gold. For more than a year, Tom mined for himself after each day’s work was done. When he finally had $1,000, Gilman gave him a paper saying he was free. The next day, the paper suspiciously disappeared. Even though Tom was certain he had been robbed, he couldn’t prove it. He had to work for another year before Gilman would free him.

Once the easy-to-find gold was gone, American miners began to force Native Americans and foreigners such as Mexicans and Chinese out of the gold fields to reduce competition. This practice increased after California became a state in 1850. One of the first acts of the California state legislature was to pass the Foreign Miners Tax, which imposed a tax of $20 a month on miners from other countries. That was more than most could afford to pay. As the tax collectors arrived in the camps, most foreigners left.

Driven from the mines, the Chinese opened shops, restaurants, and laundries. So many Chinese owned businesses in San Francisco that their neighborhood was called Chinatown, a name it still goes by today.

The Impact of the Gold Rush

By 1852, the gold rush was over. While it lasted, about 250,000 people flooded into California. This huge migration caused economic growth that changed California permanently. The port city of San Francisco grew to become a center of banking, manufacturing, shipping, and trade. Its population exploded from around 400 in 1845 to 35,000 in 1850. Sacramento became the center of a productive farming region.

However, the gold rush ruined many Californios. The newcomers did not respect Californios, their customs, or their legal rights. In many cases,
Americans seized their property. For example, Mariano Vallejo lost all but 300 acres of his huge estate. Even so, their Spanish heritage became an important part of California culture.

Native Americans suffered even more. Thousands of them died from diseases brought by the newcomers. The miners hunted down and killed thousands more. The reason was the Anglo-American belief that Native Americans stood in the way of progress. By 1870, California’s Native American population had fallen from 150,000 to only about 58,000.

A final effect of the gold rush was that by 1849 California had enough people to apply for statehood. Skipping the territorial stage, California applied to Congress for admission to the Union and was admitted as a free state in 1850. Although its constitution outlawed slavery, it did not grant African Americans the vote.

For some people, California’s statehood proved to be the opportunity of a lifetime. The enslaved woman Nancy Gooch gained her freedom because of the law against slavery. She then worked as a cook and washerwoman until she saved enough money to buy the freedom of her son and daughter-in-law in Missouri. Nancy Gooch’s family moved to California to join her. Eventually, they became so prosperous that they bought Sutter’s sawmill, where the gold rush first started. Bridget “Biddy” Mason similarly gained her freedom in 1856 when her master moved to California. Mason moved her family to Los Angeles and became a wealthy landowner in the area.

On a national level, California’s statehood created turmoil. Before 1850, there was an equal number of free states and slave states. Southerners feared that because the statehood of California made free states outnumber slave states, Northerners might use their majority to abolish slavery. As Chapter 18 explains, conflict over this issue threatened the survival of the Union.
**TERMS & NAMES**

Briefly explain the significance of each of the following.

1. mountain man
2. Oregon Trail
3. Stephen Austin
4. Tejano
5. Antonio López de Santa Anna
6. manifest destiny
7. Bear Flag Revolt
8. Mexican Cession
9. forty-niner
10. California gold rush

**REVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Trails West**

1. What were three reasons why people moved west? (HI2)
2. What were the three main trails that led to the West? (HI1)
3. How did the Mormons make the land in Utah productive? (HI1)

**The Texas Revolution**

1. Why were Texans unhappy with Mexican rule? (HI1)
2. Why were the battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto important to the Texas Revolution? (CST1)

**The War with Mexico**

1. Why were Americans’ belief in manifest destiny brought about? (HI1)
2. How did the Bear Flag Revolt related to the War with Mexico? (CST1)

**The California Gold Rush**

1. What area did the United States acquire as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo? (HI1)

**CRITICAL THINKING**

1. USING YOUR NOTES: CATEGORIZING INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of people who entered data</th>
<th>Why they went there</th>
<th>Key events that allowed the U.S. to take ownership of the territory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain men</td>
<td>Mountain men opened trails in the Far West.</td>
<td>Ceded to U.S. by treaty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using your completed chart, answer the questions below. (HI2)

a. In what ways were the reasons people went west similar?

b. Which of the five regions listed entered the United States peacefully?

c. Which event added the most territory to the United States?

2. ANALYZING LEADERSHIP

Think about the leaders discussed in this chapter. What characteristics did they have that made them good leaders? (HI1)

3. THEME: EXPANSION

How did the idea of manifest destiny help bring about the expansion of the United States? (HI2)

4. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

How did the War with Mexico and the California gold rush contribute to the cultural diversity of the United States? (HI3)

5. APPLYING CITIZENSHIP SKILLS

What were the different viewpoints that people held about the War with Mexico? (REPS)

**VISUAL SUMMARY**

**Manifest Destiny**

Americans moved into the Mexican territory of Texas. Conflicts led those Americans to revolt, and Texas gained independence.

**The War with Mexico**

President Polk wanted to expand the nation. He negotiated to gain Oregon. The United States fought Mexico to gain much of the Southwest.

**The California Gold Rush**

The discovery of gold lured thousands of people to California. California’s economy and population grew, resulting in statehood.

**Chapter ASSESSMENT**

**United States in 1810**

Mountain men and traders opened trails in the Far West. Pioneers then went west to gain land, wealth, or religious freedom.

**United States in 1853**
Use the map and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer questions 1 and 2.

Additional Test Practice, pp. S1-S33.

1. The area around which city in Texas was settled first? (8.8.6)
   A. Houston
   B. Dallas
   C. San Antonio
   D. El Paso

2. In what general direction was Texas settled? (8.8.6)
   A. north to south
   B. east to west
   C. west to east
   D. south to north

John O’Sullivan describes settling the United States in this quotation. Use the quotation and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer question 3.

PRIMARY SOURCE

Our manifest destiny[is] to overspread and possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and . . . self-government.

John O’Sullivan, United States Magazine and Democratic Review

3. The passage supports which of the following points of view? (8.8.2)
   A. Continental expansion by the United States is bound to happen.
   B. Continental expansion is limited by self-government.
   C. The claims of other countries to the same territory must be respected.
   D. Expansion across the entire continent will require some limits on liberty.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. WRITING ABOUT HISTORY
   Suppose that you are a reporter for a newspaper in northern California in 1849. Write a news article about the discovery of gold. The article should follow the basic organization of a news article by answering the questions Who? What? Where? When? And How? (REP3)
   • You can research your article by looking in books about the California gold rush, in general histories of California, and on the Internet.

2. COOPERATIVE LEARNING
   Work with a group of three or four other students to create a panel discussion that explores the different viewpoints surrounding the Mexican War. Research attitudes toward the war. Then outline and participate in the panel discussion for the class. (REP5)

INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITY

DOING INTERNET RESEARCH
Life on the wagon trains was not like life “back east.” (REP4)
   • On the Internet or in other sources, find primary sources about life on the wagon trains, such as letters, diaries, journals, newspaper articles, and books.
   • Once you have collected a number of primary sources, present your findings to your class.

INTERNET ACTIVITY
CLASSZONE.COM