Westward Expansion — Was It Worth It?

No one can deny that a map of the United States of America looks quite different from how it did back in 1787 when our Constitution solidified our presence as a nation.



Our nation's growth came in stages, but none of that growth was more expansive than our move west. During the 19th century, there was a mass migration past the once-solid border of the Appalachian Mountains. Towns and cities popped up and were filled by immigrants looking to strike it rich. The size of the country began to reflect the growth of America's power and influence — a phenomenon named *Manifest Destiny* to reflect the belief that God wanted the nation to grow.

Manifest Destiny may have been the philosophical foundation upon which today's "West" was built, but while many were moving westward and carving out fortunes, an even larger group was dealing with the consequences of expansion. This period in history was marked by Native American tribes who had inhabited western lands for centuries being forced to move or killed. The American bison, the nation's largest land animal, was hunted almost to extinction. Our environment was impacted as huge fortunes were built for some, while others struggled to survive — all in the name of progress.

No one can deny the American appetite for adventure and exploration. If history is meant to provide an allegory for better decisions in the future, should we continue to explore the unknown above and below us? If we continue to mark uncharted territories, are we doomed to repeat past failings . . . or are failures just a consequence of progress?

Based on an analysis of sources, it's up to you to decide if continued expansion is "worth it." After making a decision, you will argue your point to a national leader currently involved in sea or space exploration. Your compelling voice, supported by strong evidence, may help steer our nation in a new direction.

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Westward Expansion — Was It Worth It? *Rubric*

	Novice	*Apprentice*	*Practitioner*	*Expert*
Environment	• identifies that land was affected by westward expansion • states that industry affected the environment • identifies one primary effect of westward expansion on the environment	• acknowledges that land was affected by westward expansion • gives two examples of how industry affected the environment • identifies three primary and at least one secondary effect of westward expansion on the environment	• explains how land (including natural resources and landforms) was affected by westward expansion • cites three specific examples of how industry affected the environment • identifies at least three primary and secondary effects of westward expansion on the environment	all of *Practitioner* plus: • provides examples how the U.S. is dealing with these effects in modern times • describes tertiary effects that are still relevant today
People	• defines push and pull factors • acknowledges that Native Americans were affected by westward expansion • suggests that people had to make changes to adapt to survive	• defines and explains push and pull factors • identifies impact on Native Americans in terms of tribes, culture, and locations • names adaptations that pioneers had to make to survive	• defines and explains pull and push factors using specific examples of each • describes the impact on Native American tribes, cultures, and locations • identifies and explains at least three adaptations pioneers had to make to survive	all of *Practitioner* plus: addresses the impact of government policy on Native Americans and its effect on them today
Government	• defines Manifest Destiny • states that the government supported it	• defines and explains Manifest Destiny • identifies government's role in Manifest Destiny • identifies at least one new political movement that arose	• defines and explains Manifest Destiny • explains government's role in supporting Manifest Destiny • names at least two new political movements and their views	all of *Practitioner* plus: analyzes the impact of having the government supporting a movement

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Industry and Economy	• identifies major banks of the era • identifies three inventions from this period	• describes how banks came to power • names two inventions created during this period and why they were invented • gives examples of how the railroad affected daily lives	• explains the role of the banks during these times and its impact on the overall economy • identifies and describes three inventions that were created for a specific need • describes progress made as a result of the railroads	all of *Practitioner* plus: compares and analyzes banking troubles in the 1800s to banking troubles from 2011
Research Process	• uses one to three sources • locates at least one quotation • cites sources with no more than three errors • cites sources	• uses multiple sources, at least one print and one digital • finds quotations to use as primary sources • cites sources with no more than three errors • accurately cites sources	• uses multiple print and digital sources (at least two of each) • finds "voices" of the pioneers from at least three primary sources • primary sources give at least one quotation and one "story" • cites sources correctly • accurately cites sources using MLA format	all of *Practitioner* plus: uses mostly primary sources as evidence
Final Analysis and Presentation	• clear introduction used • arguments made • uses mainly secondary sources • gives a conclusion to end argument	• strong introduction • makes three strong arguments defending opinion • attempts to use primary sources as evidence • provides a strong conclusion	• strong introduction using a "hook" to capture the audience • describes a strong claim • makes three strong arguments that answer the question using factual evidence • accurately uses primary sources as evidence • addresses possible counterarguments in presentation • provides strong conclusion statement or paragraph	all of *Practitioner* plus: makes predictions of consequences for 20th-century progress using specific examples

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How-To Sheets

- How to avoid Plagiarism
- How to find a primary source
- How to punctuate a quotation in writing
- How to develop/support a claim
-

Learning Centers

- What makes quality notes?
- Incorporating primary sources into writing
- Group discussions of historical videos about Westward Expansion

How-To Videos/Podcasts

- Creating a digital presentation
- Avoiding plagiarism
- Appropriately citing sources in MLA format
- Taking effective notes
- Writing a strong claim
-

Homework

- Research on Westward Expansion
- Research on space exploration
- Reflection journal
-

Westward Expansion — Was It Worth It?

Scaffold for Learning

Interactive Web Sites

- Primary source audio
- Primary source text/pictures
- Citing sources
- Underwater and space exploration
-

Benchmark Lessons

- What is Progress?
- So Many Effects!
- Take a Stand!
- Future Exploration?
-



Technology Uses

- Digital presentation creation
- Research
- Typing of Works Cited
- Creating a Timeline
-

Small-Group Mini-Lessons

- Research tips
- Citing sources
- Using a quote
- Writing a claim
- Building a case using reference sources
- Counterarguments
-

Individual Tasks

- Research
- Note-taking
- Citing sources
- Analysis paper
- Response to videos
- Response to text

Group Tasks

- Share and compile reasons for both sides
- Peer edit citing sources
- Show, Don't Tell What WWE looked like
-

Peer Tutoring

- Highlighting
- Citing sources
- Using quotations
- Strong introductions/conclusions
-

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Westward Expansion — Was It Worth It? *Content Facilitation Grid*

Student	Defines Manifest Destiny	Accurately connects Manifest Destiny to Westward Expansion	Explains government's role in Manifest Destiny	Describes how WWE affected Native Americans	Makes connections on how WWE affected the environment	Describes the role of banks	Identifies the effects of the growing railroad	Describes the push and pull factors of WWE	Based on research, develops a strong claim that directs space exploration	Supports claim with three strong arguments	Support includes primary sources	Uses multiple resources to gather research	Incorporates quotes into argument	Addresses possible counterargument	Cites sources	

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Westward Expansion — Was It Worth It? *Content Facilitation Questions*

COMPREHENSION: *Ask questions that ensure students understand content and skills needed to solve the problem.*	• What was westward expansion? • What is Manifest Destiny? • What does progress mean to a country? • What are primary, secondary, and tertiary consequences?
APPLICATION: *Ask questions that ensure the ability of students to apply learning to new situations.*	• What factors lead to westward expansion? • How do you think the pioneers would feel about their accomplishments today? • What are the lessons sea and space explorers should remember today? • How are sea/space explorers like/different from pioneers of the west?
CONNECTION: *Ask questions that ensure the ability of students to apply learning to their lives.*	• Do any of the effects of westward expansion remain today? • How does transportation affect your life? • How might your life be different had there never been westward expansion? • Have you ever been to a new place? If so, how did you adapt to your new surroundings?
SYNTHESIS: *Ask questions that encourage students to create new information from existing data.*	• What can we learn from the effects (good and bad) of westward expansion? • How can we make sure there are fewer secondary and tertiary effects with space and ocean exploration? • How do you know if exploration is worth the consequences?
METACOGNITION: *Ask questions that prompt students to think about their own thinking process.*	• What was the most difficult part of choosing a side for your argument? Why? • Do you have a different opinion about exploration and expansion based on this unit? • What else do you want to know? • How could you have made your claim stronger?

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