

## Manifest Destiny

### Understanding Context

**Directions:** Read how Oregon Trail pioneers were part of a larger American quest and answer the questions.

**Manifest Destiny:** The philosophy that America should expand its borders, spreading democracy and prosperity across North America. Go West!

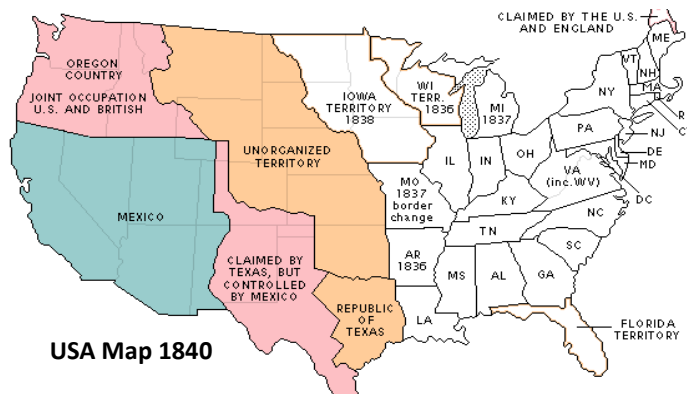
**Situation:** In the mid-1800's, America's population was booming and people were migrating west for new land and opportunity. Lawmakers pushed for America to acquire more territory, so the country would stretch coast to coast. Several factors helped America achieve its Manifest Destiny.

**Conflicts:** Several groups, like the Britain, France, Spain, and Mexico, claimed land to the Pacific. In addition, American tribes inhabited much of the territory. Battles, treaties, purchases, and forced removal were all part of America's expansion across the continent.

#### Achievements:

- **Louisiana Purchase** – In 1803, President Jefferson nearly doubled the size of the country with the Louisiana Purchase (828,000 miles<sup>2</sup>) for \$15 million.
- **Florida** – In 1819, Spain sold Florida to the United States.
- **Texas** – In 1845, the country of Texas became an American State.
- **Mexican-American War (1846-48)** – Mexico agreed to sell its land to America for \$15 million. The United States gained a vast territory in the Southwest (15% more land), including California.
- **Oregon Treaty 1846** – Both Britain and the United States claimed the Oregon Country. It was an isolated region with few settlers, and both sides realized the country with the most settlers would have more influence and control. The Oregon Trail provided access and opportunity for settlers, as well as establishing a greater American presence on the land. The "Great Wagon Train of 1843" brought an impressive 700-1000 pioneers into Oregon, causing Britain to give up its claim and agree to a border similar to other northern American states (49<sup>th</sup> latitude line).

**Legacy:** With America now reaching coast to coast, it was the start of unprecedented prosperity. There would be no more threat of territory wars, citizens had opportunities to purchase new land and achieve individual success, and important industries like farming and trade would soon flourish.



USA Map 1840

#### Questions:

Source: Wikipedia

1. Explain Manifest Destiny in your own words. (≥2 sentences) *It was the idea that America should expand its country across North America. A larger country would give the population room to grow and provide border security.*
2. Give three examples how the United States expanded in the 1800's. (≥2 sentences) *It purchased the Louisiana Territory from France. The United States also bought Florida and accepted Texas as a new state.*
3. America's expansion across North America was not without struggle. Explain. (≥2 sentences, cite examples) *America fought the Mexican-American War, purchasing land as a result. There was also violent conflict with American tribes.*
4. What reason were settlers encouraged to the Oregon Country before 1846? (≥1 sentence, use "because") *They were encouraged to go west because it would mean more Americans than British occupied the territory.*
5. Why would Britain be more willing to settle the border dispute after the "Great Wagon Train of 1843"? (1 sentence) *After a large wagon train arrived, it showed the British that Americans were going to have more influence in the region.*
6. What opportunities do you think settlers could find in the new western lands? (≥2 sentences) *Settlers likely arrived with few possessions and everything would have to be built or purchased, like furniture, houses, food, and new clothing. This would give opportunity for settlers to fill these jobs.*
7. Predict what America would be like if it was only the states of the 1840 USA map. (≥2 sentences) *The United States would likely run out of space for its citizens, causing them to emigrate. With limited resources, prices might likely rise.*

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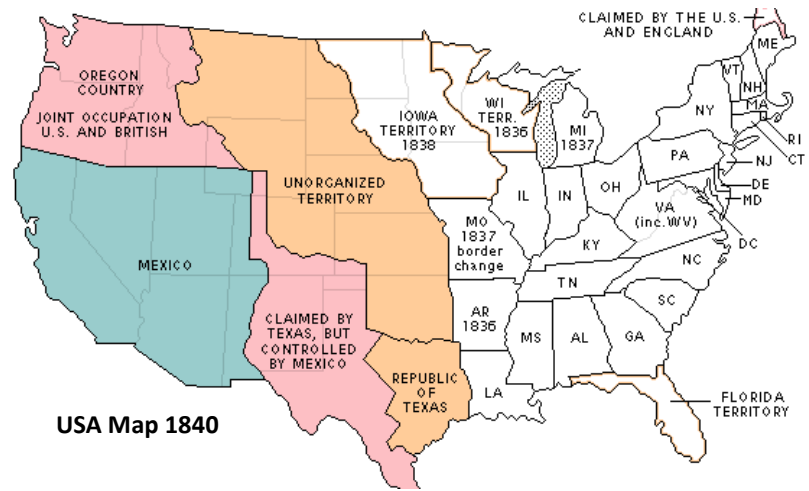
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