

Teacher's Guide

The Louisiana Purchase

Introduction

This guide will help educators teach children about the decisions people made during the early nineteenth century in American and France regarding the American acquisition of a large tract of land from France known as the Louisiana Purchase. Beginning with the desire of our young country to expand its jurisdiction into western territories held by France and Spain, through changes in American access to the port of New Orleans, the story of how the Louisiana Purchase came to be is presented to students. Provided with basic information about key aspects of the purchase process, students are asked what they would do. Each dilemma is followed by an explanation of the actual course of events and their impact on the next steps in the development of our country.

National Standards

Go to www.enslowclassroom.com and click on the Curriculum Correlations tab. Click on your state, grade level, and curriculum standard to display how any book in this series backs up your state's specific curriculum standard.

Classroom Activities

Activities for teaching the five curriculum areas: Reading/Language Arts; Math; Science; Social Studies; and the Arts, can be found in this teacher's guide.

Guided Reading Level: O

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How to Use This Book

The material in this book is presented in a format that allows students the opportunity to think critically about specific events in American history, weigh the advantages and potential consequences of a course of action, then asks students to decide for themselves which way they would proceed. Students should be encouraged to make a personal decision before turning the page to find out the historical outcome of the dilemma. After learning the actual course of events, students should be encouraged to speculate on the ramifications of the other choices presented. In this way students will feel more directly connected with the events that became turning points in American history.

The passing of long periods of time is an abstract concept for students so the creation and maintenance of a physical timeline while using this text would help students gain a better understanding of the amount of time between significant events presented. Register tape or yarn marked at even intervals representing years beginning with 1760 through the present would be displayed in the classroom for reference throughout this American History unit.

Here are some basic facts that you can share about the events noted in this book and in the “What Would You Do?” series:

The Revolutionary War – The origins of the Revolutionary War include disagreements between the British Crown and the American colonists over taxation and other issues. These increasingly bitter disputes led to armed revolt. The conflict initially began in Massachusetts, but eventually involved all thirteen original colonies. When the Revolutionary War began, Britain commanded a well-trained army and the world’s most powerful navy. The American rebels’ forces included a ragtag army and virtually no navy. Yet, the American forces prevailed, with timely assistance from France. Important battles include George Washington’s crossing of the Delaware River, the British defeat at Saratoga and Lord Cornwallis’ surrender at Yorktown. Among the key political events of the war, the most memorable was the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Westward Expansion – The series focuses on two important episodes in the history of America’s westward expansion: the Louisiana Purchase and the California Gold Rush. In the early 19th Century, American political leaders such as Thomas Jefferson were keenly interested in expanding into North American territories held by France and Spain. Jefferson especially wanted access to the port of New Orleans and control of the Mississippi River. The purchase of the land, known as the Louisiana Purchase, massively expanded the territory of the young United States, while removing French and Spanish power from North America’s continental land mass.

The California Gold Rush started in 1848, with the discovery of the precious metal in northern California. Soon after the discovery, thousands of people moved west. By sea, gold seekers faced fierce storms; by land, they endured climatic extremes, disease, and Native American attacks. The Gold Rush also saw an influx of Chinese immigrants to California. While the Gold Rush ended around 1852, it profoundly shaped the nation’s awareness of the region’s natural resources.

The Civil War – Westward expansion and its impact on slavery was a cause of the Civil War. The conflict began in 1861, shortly after the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency. Eleven southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. The Northern states’ military attempts to enforce unification met with sustained Confederate resistance from the war’s origin – the firing upon Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina – to the Confederate surrender in 1865. Among the Civil War’s essential events was Lincoln’s issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves in those states in conflict with the Union. The war’s most important conflicts included the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, in which a Confederate invasion of the North was defeated. Abraham Lincoln would later visit Gettysburg and deliver his famous “Gettysburg Address” to commemorate the battle site.

The Five Curriculum Activities for The Louisiana Purchase

SAFETY WARNING:

Before any activity, make sure your students do not have any allergies to items that you might use. Never use anything that is sharp or may cut a student. Do not use anything too hot or cold that might injure any student. Always have an adult supervise all activities to ensure the safety of your students.

Reading/Language Arts activity: Illustrated vocabulary. Individually or in small groups students will draw illustrations of the three words they find most interesting. These illustrations will be posted on a Word Wall in the classroom where students can refer to them through the unit on American history.

Math activity: Students will imagine they are trappers collecting furs and pelts in the forests along the Mississippi River. Students will calculate the number of furs they would need to sell in the market in New Orleans each month to earn enough money to live. The average person during the early 1900's could live on \$20 per month. If beaver pelts sold for 25 cents each and fox for 75 cents but trappers only got two foxes in an average month, how many beaver pelts would be needed to earn enough money each month?

Science activity: Students will create model flatboats similar to those used by settlers to transport goods on the Mississippi River. Provide students with a variety of materials including craft sticks, small tree branches, straws, play dough, string, glue and other similar items. In small groups, students will design and construct a model flatboat approximately 6" x 6" that will float. Using large metal washers or other "cargo" students can determine which design will support the greatest load of goods when floating in a bin of water.

Social Studies activity: Maps with accurate information were critical in conveying information for westward expansion and decisions about land use but were often inaccurate. Students will create a map of a location familiar to them such as the schoolyard, town square or their own home. Scale and attention to detail to convey information will be emphasized by the teacher. Maps will be shared with classmates and evaluated for effectiveness through class discussion.

Arts activity: Students will draw an illustration of a typical pioneer family moving west in a covered wagon or a scene that includes a flatboat of goods on the Mississippi River.

The Louisiana Purchase Student handout

1. In 1800, the nation was _____ the size it is today.
2. The port of New Orleans was owned by _____ in the early 1800s.
3. When settlers moved west it would take letters _____ to get to them from other parts of the country.
4. Queen Maria Luisa of Spain thought the land in America was _____.
5. The name of the leader of France in 1801 was _____.
6. President Jefferson sent his friend _____ to France to talk to Napoleon about his land near the United States.
7. When the French general Claude Victor-Perrin went to Holland to get his men and supplies they had already left to bring supplies to _____.
8. When President Jefferson offered to buy New Orleans from Napoleon, what was his first answer? _____
9. In March 1803, which country attacked Napoleon's ships? _____
10. What sickness killed many of Napoleon's French soldiers in Haiti during the rebellion? _____.
11. When Napoleon did finally sell all of his territory, how much did Livingston and Monroe agree to pay for it? _____.
12. Create a list of all the states that have land that was part of the Louisiana Purchase.
_____.