

Chapter 13-8th Grade Study Guide

New Test format: What to expect-?

The test on Friday will share similar elements to previous tests in that it will have some multiple choice/true or false questions. However, the test will also feature a few documents, most of which you have already covered. These will be included below:

What to know in terms of contextual information:

- That Polk wanted to expand the United States during his presidency (something that he was quite successful at).
- The concept of Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism (be prepared to explain what each one is)
- What caused the rush of settlers to California in the late 1840's
- What groups of people traveled to settle in Oregon Country and why did they decide to go there?
- What was the Whitman Massacre? What was the cause?
- Be prepared to analyze the painting discussed in class (shown below).
- Be prepared to take a stance on Manifest Destiny pulling from sources to defend your position.
- Know that Oregon was split without any violence by an agreement with the British.
- Know that the United States and Mexico had differing interpretations concerning Texan independence and the annexation of the country into the United States.
- Be prepared to take a position on the fact that some Americans felt a right to certain lands due to US citizen populations in them.

Listed below are several documents, many of which will be on the test. Following each document are some questions that should be considered to prepare for the final test. If the time is taken to fully understand the positions of each then you can start writing immediately instead of pondering their positions during the test.

Mexican War:

...We have tried every effort at reconciliation... But now, after [repeated threats], Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil. [Mexico] has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war.

In further vindication of our rights and defense of our territory, I invoke the prompt action of Congress to recognize the existence of the war, and to place at the disposition of the Executive the means of prosecuting the war with vigor, and thus hastening the restoration of peace...

-James K. Polk, May 11, 1846.

The annexation of... Texas to the United States... does not yet satisfy the ambitious desires of the degenerate sons of Washington...

The right of conquest has always been a crime against humanity... [W]ith an enemy... which shamefacedly derides the very principles invoked by it previously in order to excuse its ambitious views, we have no other resource than arms. We are fortunately always prepared to take them up with glory, in defense of our country... [and] to assure our nationality and independence...

- General Francisco Mejia, March 18, 1846.

Know the positions of the two gentlemen concerning the fault of the war:

Polk:

Mejia:

Any questions that you have should be listed below:

Be sure to underline any important information.

Take note of any pertinent thoughts below:



This cartoon criticizes the Whig Party's presidential candidate for 1848. Here the "available candidate" is General Zachary Taylor. The skulls and sword allude to the bloody but successful Mexican War campaigns waged. This made him popular with many Whigs, but not with this artist.

How might you use this cartoon in argument against Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism?

What is the main aspect of American expansion (in terms of how it is carried out) that the cartoonist opposes?

Texan Independence:

Texas Declaration of Independence (March 2, 1836) [Adapted]

When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people . . . it is the right of the people to abolish such government, and create another one that will secure their future welfare and happiness.

General Santa Anna, has overturned the constitution of his country, and now offers us the cruel option either to abandon our homes, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny.

Questions:

What is the main purpose of this document?

Does this document support texan independence? What can you quote from the piece to show evidence of whether it does or does not support independence?

We cannot trust the Anglo-American colonists because they are continually demonstrating that they refuse to follow our laws, unless it is convenient for them. We will have many problems if we do not stop their disrespectful behavior by stationing soldiers and a Mexican judge in each settlement. They have been using their own colonists as judges and practicing their own laws, forgetting that they swore to obey the laws of Mexico.

Source: The letter above was written by Rafael Antonio Manchola, a Tejano (Mexican living in Texas). He wrote this letter about the Anglo-Americans in 1826 to a military commander.

Thoughts about the document:

Why does this individual oppose Americans living in Texas?

We have been asked to believe that the inhabitants of Texas have been fighting to maintain the sacred principles of Liberty, and the natural, inalienable Rights of Man:---whereas, their motives have been exactly the opposite.

has been to grab the large and valuable territory of Texas from the Mexican Republic, in order to re- establish the SYSTEM OF SLAVERY; to open a vast and profitable SLAVEMARKET; and, ultimately, to annex it to the United States.

Source: Benjamin Lundy became active in the antislavery movement in the 1820s. He organized abolitionist societies, lectured extensively, and contributed to many abolitionist publications. He wrote this pamphlet called The War in Texas in 1836. Lundy argued that the Texas revolution was a slaveholders' plot to take Texas from Mexico and to add slave territory to the United States.

Why does this individual have issues with Texan annexation to the United States? What does he state is the reality of the situation?

All the business streets are **teeming** with activity. In fact they seem as active as any in Paris. Over here, however, the men seem more businesslike and in a greater hurry; **loafing** is an unknown quantity. During the day every one plows knee-deep in mud through the lower streets which get the heaviest travel for this is where the banks and the important commercial establishments are located. All are focused on getting business and social **prestige** regardless of their qualifications and trying to make a fortune.

In the midst of this chaos you can hear many languages. Ask a question in English and your reply may be in German; if you speak in French you may perhaps be answered in Spanish, Italian, Russian, Polish or Chinese. This would be amusing if it were not such a handicap. However, those who can speak three languages, English, French and Spanish, can make themselves understood anywhere.

Source: *Ernest de Massey, journal entry for December 15, 1849.*

Vocabulary

score: a group of twenty things

loafing: being lazy

teeming: to be filled with something

prestige: importance in the eyes of other people

Manifest Destiny

Painting Analysis: Manifest Destiny



Be able to correctly describe what is going on in the painting above. Have an interpretation in mind for the test.

In this part of his inaugural address on March 4, 1845, President James K. Polk speaks of the need to acquire the Oregon territory.

Nor will it become in a less degree my duty to assert and maintain by all constitutional means the right of the United States to that portion of our territory which lies beyond the Rocky Mountains. Our title to the country of the Oregon is “clear and unquestionable,” and already are our people preparing to perfect that title by occupying it with their wives and children.

But eighty years ago our population was confined on the west by the ridge of the Alleghanies. Within that period—within the lifetime, I might say, of some of my hearers—our people, increasing to many millions, have filled the eastern valley of the Mississippi, adventurously ascended the Missouri to its headsprings, and are already engaged in establishing the blessings of self-government in valleys of

which the rivers flow to the Pacific. The world beholds the peaceful triumphs of the industry of our emigrants. To us belongs the duty of protecting them adequately wherever they may be upon our soil.

The jurisdiction of our laws and the benefits of our republican institutions should be extended over them in the distant regions which they have selected for their homes.

How are the people securing Oregon for the US according to Polk?

Does he suggest that this securing is done through peaceful means?

“To us belongs the duty of protecting them adequately wherever they may be upon our soil.”

What does this quote suggest about any territory not a part of the official boundary of the United States?

*The passage in the box below is an excerpt from *Throes of Democracy: The American Civil War Era, 1829–1877*, by Walter A. McDougall (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), p. 232.*

If expansionist ambitions and argument were as old as the republic, why did the mania of Manifest Destiny sweep the nation in the 1840s rather than before or after? One answer was the near disappearance of doubt concerning the possibility of a continental republic. Even the expansionist Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri had once thought the Rocky Mountains the abode of “the fabled God, Terminus,” and some New Englanders thought even the Great Plains too remote to govern. The westward march of constitutional government, supported by steamboats, railroads, and telegraphs, dissolved such fears by the 1840s. A second answer was that American trappers, farmers, ranchers, planters, loggers, merchants, whalers, and missionaries were already infiltrating the Great North Woods, Great Plains, Rockies and Pacific Rim. By 1840, the federal government had little choice but to extend its protection over them. A third answer, the one that caused Manifest Destiny to melt into “manifest design,” was a fear that Britain and France were colluding in a sort of “containment policy” against the upstart Yankees. This made expansion a matter of urgency. A fourth answer was simply that Democrats beat the expansionist drum as an electoral ploy in 1844.