

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Claim Your Stake: Westward Expansion Analysis for 7th Grade

Can you handle the grit of the frontier? Analyze 10 complex scenarios regarding the Gadsden Purchase, the Pony Express, and the Mormon Trail.

1. Which 1853 land acquisition was primarily intended to facilitate the construction of a southern transcontinental railroad route?

Answer: A) The Gadsden Purchase

The Gadsden Purchase involved buying land from Mexico to provide a flat southern route for a transcontinental railroad, bypassing the rocky terrain of the north.

2. Seeking religious freedom and isolation, Brigham Young led the ____ to the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847.

Answer: B) Mormons

The Mormon Pioneers traveled west to escape persecution, establishing a unique irrigation-based society in present-day Utah.

3. True or False: The Pony Express stayed in operation for over twenty years as the primary method of cross-country communication.

Answer: B) False

The Pony Express only lasted about 18 months; it was rendered obsolete by the completion of the transcontinental telegraph in 1861.

4. African Americans who migrated from the South to Kansas in the late 1870s to escape post-Reconstruction violence were known as:

Answer: C) Exodusters

Inspired by the biblical story of Exodus, these migrants sought freedom and land ownership in the Great Plains.

5. Which invention by John Deere in 1837 allowed Midwestern farmers to cut through thick prairie sod more effectively?

Answer: B) Steel Plow

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The steel plow was essential for farming the Great Plains because the heavy, sticky soil often broke traditional wooden or iron plows.

6. The '___ Dispute' between the U.S. and Britain was settled in 1846 by establishing the border at the 49th parallel.

Answer: C) Oregon Territory

The Oregon Territory was jointly occupied by Britain and the U.S. until the Oregon Treaty divided the land at the 49th parallel.

7. True or False: Narcissa Whitman was one of the first white women to cross the Rocky Mountains via the Oregon Trail.

Answer: A) True

Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding proved in 1836 that the journey across the mountains was possible for families and women, encouraging later migration.

8. Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce is most famous for:

Answer: A) Leading a successful 1,000-mile retreat toward Canada

Chief Joseph led his people on an arduous attempt to reach freedom in Canada before famously declaring, 'I will fight no more forever.'

9. The ___ of 1848 ended the Mexican-American War and ceded over 500,000 square miles of territory to the United States.

Answer: C) Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

This treaty granted the U.S. the land that would become California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico.

10. True or False: Levi Strauss significantly impacted the expansion era by inventing rugged denim pants for miners in California.

Answer: A) True

The Gold Rush spurred innovation and entrepreneurship; Strauss's durable pants became a staple for the physical labor required in the West.