

## **Settling of the West: Expansion, Emigration, and Extermination**

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### **Overview:**

During the middle of the nineteenth century from 1830-1880 many factors combined to result in the push of the American frontier from the Appalachian Mountains across the continent to the Pacific Ocean. Settling of the West is the story of the conquest of land, natural resources and native peoples. By 1848, the United States claimed virtually the entire West. The Louisiana Purchase, the annexation of Texas and Oregon, and the war with Mexico had stretched the nation's boundaries all the way to the Pacific. This unit will investigate the different waves of Western expansion: the Oregon Trail, the Gold Rush, various Homestead Acts and the railroad, all of which included a disregard for the Native American people already populating the West.

In this unit, the students will be trained in the art of “looking at painting” to hone their observation skills. I intend to use some of the strategies from the Project Zero and Artful/VisibleThinking developed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The students in grades 5-8 will investigate the paintings of Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, George Catlin and Frederic Remington and determine the part these paintings might have played in creating the myth of the West and what effect these paintings had on the national consciousness and the desire of some Easterners to emigrate. In addition to the paintings of George Catlin, the students will also read the journals and notes of his travels among the Native American tribes.

The lessons will use many primary source documents. The students will examine the journal of Catherine Sager, an orphaned survivor of the Oregon Trail who was also a survivor of an Indian massacre in the Willamette Valley. The students will also use the historical fiction books from the Dear America series by Scholastic focusing on Westward Expansion.

Students will use web sites, maps, charts, newspaper articles, diary entries, public documents, photographs and paintings to explore this topic. Students will be expected to choose one historical figure for in-depth study. Through the use of primary source documents, diaries, and memoirs to further their understanding of these historic figures, they will attempt to view historical events from the perspective of their chosen historical figure.

**Rationale:**

As 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students study American history and Westward Expansion, this unit will enhance their understanding of the many different factors which contributed to the reasons people left their homes and traveled thousands of miles and endured unspeakable hardship as they sought a better life. We will investigate the meaning of the term “Manifest Destiny” and its impact on American policy. This unit will also focus on the horrific treatment the Native American people endured at the hands of the United States government.

The eastern seaboard of the country was changing as cities were becoming industrialized. Waves of European immigrants flooded the cities competing for jobs and housing. Farmers and settlers were lured with possibility of rich fertile land, as the soil in the East seemed depleted. The stories of the land with vast, open landscapes, abundant game and pristine rivers and lakes was so appetizing to the majority of Americans who still shared the pioneer spirit of their ancestors who came to America just a few generations earlier.

An economic depression occurred in 1837 and left many people yearning for their own piece of land and the desire to become independent and self-sufficient. Explorers, frontiersmen, fur trappers and traders as well as missionaries had gone before and told stories of hardship but also of the possibilities if one was willing to sacrifice and work hard. The discovery of gold in California in 1848 opened the floodgates of people willing to sacrifice all for a chance to make it rich.

“For twenty-five years, 1841-1866, people 'pulled-up-stakes' and headed west. Estimates range from 250,000 to 650,000 persons made the trip. About one-third immigrated to Oregon, another one-third was bound for California, and one-third went to Utah, Colorado, and Montana. Explorers and fur traders first traced the Oregon Trail, the longest of the overland routes used in the westward expansion of the United States. Settlers began following the trail in 1841. The first large group of about 900 immigrants used the trail in the "Great Migration" of 1843. In that year, a provisional government was organized in Oregon. The Oregon Country's northern boundary was set in 1846, and the Territory of Oregon was formed in 1848 as over 12,000 people made the journey in that decade.” (Lamb and Johnson, 1)

“Families usually began their journey at Independence, Missouri near the Missouri River. The journey in a covered wagon took six months, following a winding 2,000-mile trail through prairies, deserts, and across mountains to the Pacific Northwest. The journey was a severe test of strength and endurance. Of the 10,000 deaths that occurred from 1835 to 1855, only 4 percent resulted from Indian attacks. Cholera, smallpox, and firearms accidents were the chief causes of death on the trail. Food, water, and wood were always scarce, and the travelers often encountered contaminated water holes.

During summer, the trail was crowded with wagon trains, army units, missionaries, hunting parties, traders, and even sightseeing tours. Some travelers complained that they sometimes had to stop early in the day in order to find a good campsite ahead of the crowd. Others spoke of the need to wear masks for protection against the dust kicked up by the heavy traffic.”(Lamb and Johnson, 1)

The emigrants traveled in large caravans that stretched for miles over the plains. Most emigrants walked alongside their wagons, which were so packed with provisions that there was little room left inside. Unlike the 49ers, which were mainly men, the pioneers of the Oregon Trail traveled in family groups, including many women and children. Though many emigrants used mules, records suggest that many more relied on oxen to pull their wagons across the plains. Emigrants typically took along herds of cattle to stock the farms they dreamed of starting in the Oregon Territory. Descriptions of the pioneers suggest that their wagons were practically bulging with provisions for the journey and furnishings for their Oregon homes. Other descriptions of the great immigration also suggest that the trail itself was littered with broken equipment, discarded items, and all the other junk that thousands of travelers would typically leave in their wake. In 1850, at the peak of migration, some 55,000 pioneers rolled westward by wagon train.

## The Gold Rush

Gold fever swept the states and the world after gold was discovered in California in 1848. The trickle of migrants turned into a rush in 1849 when an estimated 90,000 miners arrived by sea or land and brought a population boom that by 1850 resulted in statehood.

A PBS documentary program on the Gold Rush from filmmakers Steven Boettcher and Michael Trinklein in 1998 is a wonderful resource about the era. It includes a website that explores all aspects of the Gold Rush including a list of teacher resources.

The following excerpts are samples of the information available on the site. “An accidental discovery near the obscure American River would forever change a young nation. The simple life would no longer be enough. In its place would come a new kind of lifestyle: entrepreneurial, wide-open, and free. The new American dream: to get rich; to make a fortune—quickly. □ Instant wealth was here for the taking. All across America, young men made the decision to go to California. □ Every city, every hamlet would send it’s brightest, its strongest, to California--and eagerly await their triumphant return home. They came from Europe, Asia, and South America in search of instant riches. □ □ It was one of the greatest adventures the world had ever seen. In the early 1840s, California was a distant outpost that only a handful of Americans had seen. The sleepy port that would become San Francisco had just a few hundred residents. One of the wealthiest people in the region was John Sutter--an affable Swiss immigrant who came to California in 1839,

intent on building his own private empire. Sutter soon built a fort, amassed 12,000 head of cattle, and took on hundreds of workers. His most prolific crop was debt. He owed money to creditors as far away as Russia. But Sutter was a man with a dream; a dream of a vast agricultural domain that he would control. Sutter's undoing began 50 miles northeast of his fort on the American River. In late 1847, James Marshall and about 20 men were sent to the river by Sutter to build a sawmill--to provide lumber for Sutter's growing ranch. The sawmill was nearly complete when a glint of something caught Marshall's eye. It was January 24th, 1848. "I reached my hand down and picked it up; it made my heart thump, for I was certain it was gold. The piece was about half the size and shape of a pea. Then I saw another." James Marshall. After making the greatest find in the history of the West, Marshall and the other workers went back to work. But they kept stumbling upon more gold. By the winter of 1848, whispers of a gold strike had drifted eastward across the country--but few easterners believed. It was an age when rumors were discounted--and government officials were revered. The gold discovery needed validation, and President James Polk delivered just that in early December, 1848: **President James Polk: "The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by authentic reports of officers in the public service."** Polk's confirmation reached deep into the soul of millions. His simple words were a powerful call to action. Farmers left their fields; merchants closed their shops; soldiers left their posts--and made plans for California. Although the gold in the California hills eventually ran out--the impact of the gold rush era lives on. California was shaped by the adventurers who stayed--to form the idea that is California today: a place that accepts and nurtures risk takers." (Trinklein, 1)

## The Impact of Railroads

By 1857, passengers could travel from the Atlantic Coast to St. Louis making only five changes along the way. There were over 30,00 miles of track and Chicago had become a leading rail center. The trip west by wagon train took from 4-6 months. After the discovery of gold in 1848, thousands of gold seekers took the California Trail turnoff the Oregon Trail at Fort Hall in Idaho. As the mining camps in California increased in number, express companies were organized to carry mail, gold dust and other valuables. Stagecoach companies prospered with a semiweekly passenger service from St. Louis to Portland Oregon by way of El Paso, Texas and San Francisco, California. This 3,600-mile journey took a month. For a brief eighteen-month period between April 1860 and October 1861, Pony Express riders created an undying legend of courage and endurance. They were able to cover the 1,966 miles from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento California in just 11 days. Completion of the overland telegraph in 1861 put the Pony Express out of business.

Despite the progress made by express and stage lines, many government officials and

citizens insisted that a transcontinental railroad was essential to provide quick and reliable transportation between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. In 1862 Congress passed the Pacific Railroad Bill providing loans and land grants to the government created the Union Pacific and California-chartered Central Pacific. The Union Pacific began building west from Omaha Nebraska and the Central Pacific began building east from Sacramento, California. About 1776 miles of railroad was laid without the benefit of bulldozers, pneumatic drills, or computers. Picks, shovels, plows and scrapers drawn by horsepower were the tools used. Since government loans and land grants were based on the miles of track laid, the Union Pacific, depending on Civil War veterans and Irish immigrants, and the Central Pacific utilizing Chinese workers were engaged in a race across deserts and through mountains. On May 10, 1869 the two roads met at Promontory point, north of Ogden, Utah and a golden spike was driven to signal the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. The railroad cut the travel time between east and west to days instead of weeks.

### The Homestead Acts

As Americans moved westward the question of how the public lands were to be divided became increasingly important. By the 1830's thousands of pioneers had settled on unsurveyed lands, improved it and claimed it as their own. The Preemption Act of 1841 legitimized this situation by giving the squatters the right to buy 160 acres for \$1.25 an acre. This principle of cheap land, once established, was soon expanded, The Homestead Act of 1862 made much of the public domain almost free. Under its terms any adult male who would reside on and cultivate 160 acres for five years could achieve full title for a small fee.

### Native American Extermination

“Despite the finer ideals that supposedly had defined the United States, there was little change throughout the nineteenth century in the white man’s belief that the Native Americans were inferior people destined either to “rise above” their culture into white society or to disappear. Andrew Jackson likened the Native Americans to wolves and General Philip Sheridan is reputed to have said that the only good Indian is a dead Indian. Unfortunately, most non-Native Americans agreed with both views. Whites sought to remove Indians for a variety of reasons, although most were interested solely in the tribes’ lands and were oblivious to concerns about the rights or culture of the people they were displacing. After all Manifest Destiny justified shoving any obstacle aside. (Brinkley, 154)

“Beginning in the 1860’s, the federal government had slowly abandoned its previous policy of treating the West as a vast Indian reserve. introducing a system of smaller separate tribal reservations. The Indians would be forced to exchange their nomadic ways for a settled agricultural life. Some tribes calmly accepted this fate but others opposed it

to no avail. The remaining tribes with a combined population of 200,000 in the northern plains were determined to resist such brutal and inhumane treatment. From the 1860s through the 1880s these tribes—the western Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa and Comanche on the Great Plains, the Nez Perce and Bannock in the Northwest and the Apache throughout the Southwest squared off with the U.S. Army in a final battle for the West. (Brinkley, 256)

The bloody massacres that characterized so many of the reservation roundups greatly reduced the Native American populations, allowing the non-Indian westward expansion to continue with one less obstacle. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, any fear of the Native American menace had become a memory. And the notion of the U.S. government's helping to "civilize" native peoples was viewed by honest journalists as a complete, holocaustic farce. (Brinkley, 258)

### **Objectives:**

The lessons in this unit are primarily designed for use in fifth and eighth grade American history classes. This unit is integrated into the American history curriculum when teaching Westward Expansion. The major concept is for students to understand how and why American citizens and settlers spread across the continent.

The main objectives are:

- to understand the differences between primary and secondary sources
- to use a wide variety of primary source documents, written and graphic
- to analyze, organize, and interpret information
- to identify and analyze historical images
- to evaluate informational resources for relevance and accuracy
- to recognize points of view in print and visual materials, including paintings, photographs and video
- to identify and analyze historical images
- to synthesize information presented in video, images and documents
- to gather information, pictures and documents to be used in a display for an interactive "wax" museum

### **Strategies:**

Student will engage in a variety of activities to demonstrate their mastery of the subject matter.

- Creative Writing- Write first person journal accounts from different perspectives. Settler, Native American, Forty-niner, Frontiersman, Fur Trapper, Boomer, Farmer
- Research a pivotal figure involved in a move westward and write a first person account of their journey or involvement in western expansion.

- Creation of Keynote presentation about a significant character involved in the Westward Expansion ex. Mark Twain, Sitting Bull, George Armstrong Custer
- Visiting National Gallery of Art website to create their own landscape paintings
- Creation of maps outlining the various routes including land and water used to migrate to the West
- Creation of timelines listing important events in California or Westward Expansion history
- Creation of 3-4 page newspaper using the application ComicLife
- Use the Online video game “Oregon Trail” and arrive in Oregon using the knowledge acquired in their study to successfully complete the journey.

### **Classroom Activities:**

Prior to beginning the unit, I will take time to train the students in the art of looking. Much information can be derived from the photographs and paintings that we will be studying. As we begin our study of the paintings connected with Western Expansion, I intend to use the techniques outlined in Project Zero, an educational research group at the [Graduate School of Education at Harvard University](#). Project Zero's mission is to understand and enhance learning, thinking, and creativity in the arts, as well as humanistic and scientific disciplines, at the individual and institutional levels. The research projects [Visible Thinking](#) is an approach to teaching and learning that emphasizes the use of thinking routines and documentation to make thinking more visible in classrooms. Thinking routines support the development of students as self-directed learners and learning for understanding. Each thinking disposition has several thinking routines connected to it. Thinking routines are short, easy-to-learn mini-strategies that extend and deepen students’ thinking and become part of the fabric of everyday classroom life. They are used flexibly and repeatedly -- with art, and with a wide variety of topics in the curriculum, particularly in language arts and social studies.

All of the information on Project Zero and the Learning Routines may be found on the website: <http://pzweb.harvard.edu/Research/ResearchThink.htm>  
I have included two samples of learning routines.

#### **Routine 1: WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT??**

##### **Interpretation with Justification Routine**

There are two core questions for this routine. The first question asks for an interpretation. The second question asks for justification.

1. What’s going on? □
2. What do you see that makes you say that?

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine helps students describe what they see or know and asks them to build explanations. It promotes evidential reasoning (evidence-based reasoning) and because it invites students to share their interpretations, it encourages students to understand alternatives and multiple perspectives.

When and where can I use it?

Because the basic questions in this routine are flexible, it is useful when looking at objects such as works of art or historical artifacts, but it can also be used to explore a poem, make scientific observations and hypothesis, or investigate more conceptual ideas (i.e., democracy). The routine can be adapted for use with almost any subject and may also be useful for gathering information with students

What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

In most cases, the routine takes the shape of a whole class or group conversation around an object or topic, but can also be used in small groups or by individuals. When first introducing the routine, the teacher may scaffold students by continually asking the follow-up questions after a student gives an interpretation. Over time students may begin to automatically support their interpretations with evidence without even being asked, and eventually students will begin to internalize the routine.

Routine 2: I SEE / I THINK / I WONDER

A routine for exploring works of art and other interesting things

1. What do you see?
2. What do you think about that?
3. What does it make you wonder?

WHY

To help student make careful observations and thoughtful interpretations; to stimulate curiosity and set the stage for inquiry

WHEN

Use this routine when you want students to think carefully about why something looks the way it does or is the way it is.

HOW

Ask students to make an observation about the artwork or topic and follow up with what they think might be going on or what they think this observation might be. Encourage students to back up their interpretation with reasons. Ask the students to think about what this makes them wonder about the artwork or topic.

The routine works best when a student responds by using the three stems together at the same time, i.e., I see? I think?, I wonder ?. However, you may find that students begin by using one stem at a time, and that you need to scaffold each response with a follow up question for the next stem.



The routine works well in a group discussion but in some cases you may want to have students carry out the routine individually on paper or in their heads before sharing them out as a class. Student responses to the routine can be written down and recorded so that a class chart of observations, interpretations and wonderings are listed for all to see and return to during the course of study.

#### Culminating Activity:

As the unit's culminating activity, selected students will create a living history interactive "wax" museum. Students will portray 10-15 historical pivotal figures involved in westward expansion. Some examples might include: Catherine Sager, John Fremont, Albert Bierstadt, Mark Twain, Sitting Bull, George Armstrong Custer, Meriwether Lewis, Sacajawea, an Oklahoma boomer, a California prospector, a member of the Donner Party, or a member of the Union Pacific railroad crew.

Students will research their chosen pivotal figures, creating costumes and a detailed backdrop display—one including photos and maps to be used in the museum. Students will also create a brochure using the application ComicLife™. This brochure will be distributed to visitors as they enter the museum, staged in the atrium at Penn Alexander School.

The students will also write and memorize a report that they will deliver as a two-minute speech. When visitors press the button in the museum display, the character will come to life.

As a teacher in the School District of Philadelphia, I have access to the service, Discovery Streaming, a library of images and videos. I intend to have students download video segments relating to the topic of Westward Expansion. A preliminary search of the service revealed that there are hours of video available to download. Many of the segments can be edited. The students will use these editable segments along with photographs collected on the web to create their own 4-5 minute documentary movies in the application iMovie and then add a voice-over using the application Garage band. These movies will be shown in one wing of the museum.

The museum will be open for two consecutive days so that all students (K-8) at Penn Alexander can visit. Timed tickets will be issued to classrooms. Parents, our Parent Infant Center neighbors and the Penn community will also be invited to the Living History "Wax" Museum.

All subsequent lesson ideas will contribute to the student's ability to create a well-researched and documented display. Lessons will enable the students to gather all information, written and visual, necessary to present museum visitors with an outstanding experience.

### *Lesson 1: Art of the West*

Overview: As an introduction to the unit on Western Expansion we will begin by viewing the PBS Video series *The American West*. In the first three class periods students will view the works and read the accounts of such painters as George Catlin (1796-1872), Albert Bierstadt (1830-1872), Thomas Moran (1837-1870), and Frederic Remington (1861-1909). The paintings of Bierstadt and Moran influenced early conservation policy as well as the concepts of "Manifest Destiny" and an era of progress. Remington's work glorifies the cowboys and soldiers and demonizes the Native Americans justifying their increasing elimination from the actual territories of the West. The students will compare and contrast the various works to help recognize how different artists and the images they produced have become part of western iconography and contributed to the overall myth of the West. As child growing up in Pennsylvania, Catlin spent many hours hunting, fishing, and looking for American Indian artifacts. His mother, who told him stories of the Western Frontier and how she was captured by a tribe when she was a young girl, kindled his fascination with Native Americans. George Catlin is best known as a painter of the American Indians.

#### Objectives:

To analyze how the images of these artists might have influenced the public and their willingness to emigrate.

Evaluate the images as historical documents and the effect on public attitudes toward native inhabitants.

To create artifacts of each of the artists for the museum display.

#### Activity 1: Art of the West

Time: 3-4 class periods

Materials: PBS Video Series

Internet sites for each of the artists and their work

#### Procedures:

Prior to the beginning of any lesson on Western Expansion it would be helpful to investigate the students knowledge of what remnants of the myth of the American West remain in our culture today. Ask them to think of modern product brand names, advertising art, sports teams, films, and articles of clothing. Have them share their

lists and discuss how these symbols of the past have become both stereotypes and ideals to people of this nation.

1. Show the opening segments of episodes of *The West*, preferably from the Episode 1, "[The People](#)" (the beginning to approximately 10:24,)
2. Show Episode 3, "[Speck of the Future](#)" (the first 15 minutes),
3. Show Episode 5, "[The Grandest Enterprise Under God](#)" (the beginning to approximately 5:20).
4. Divide students into research groups to investigate the work of one of the artists. Artists include: George Catlin, Albert Bierstad, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington

Each group will be responsible for creating a map of the travels of the assigned artists. In addition students will include examples of the artists work and a brief biography of each artist. They should also select, wherever possible, quotations from the artist's own words to caption the selections. Using the Internet, each group should locate and select images. Those assigned to George Catlin should examine his paintings of the Nez Perce, Mandan and Lakota Sioux, and of buffalo hunts, and read Letters 2 and 3 of his accounts of his travels among the tribes.

5. Have a class discussion of the impact of these visual images on popular opinion and emotion. Points of discussion might include:  
Do these artists tell the "truth" about the American West??  
Where and how were these works first seen?  
Do the works of the artists conform to common stereotypes of the Indians as described by members of the government and army officers who are quoted in the PBS video?

### *Lesson 2: On the Oregon Trail*

**Overview:** The Oregon Trail was much more than a pathway to the state of Oregon; it was the only practical corridor to the entire western United States. The Oregon Trail was the only feasible way for settlers to get across the Rocky Mountains. The journey west on the Oregon Trail was exceptionally difficult by today's standards. One in 10 died along the way; many walked the entire two thousand miles barefoot. The common misperception is that Native Americans were the emigrant's biggest problem en route. Quite the contrary, most native tribes were quite helpful to the emigrants. The real enemies of the pioneers were cholera, poor sanitation and--surprisingly--accidental gunshots. The first emigrants to go to Oregon in a covered wagon were Marcus and Narcissa Whitman who made the trip in 1836. But the big wave of western migration did not start until 1843, when about a thousand pioneers made the journey.

In this lesson, students will work with primary documents, websites and latter-day photographs to recapture the experience of traveling on the Oregon Trail.

## Objectives

To learn about the pioneer experience on the Oregon Trail.

To evaluate a historical re-enactment in light of documentary evidence.

To synthesize historical data through two creative writing activities

One describing all preparations for a trip

One completing five journal entries from the perspective of an Oregon Trail pioneer (farmer, tradesman, woman, child, missionary)

### Activity 1: Traveling the Trail

Time: 3-4 class periods

Materials:

- Primary source documents including:
  - The reports by John C. Frémont - Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, from the National Archives
  - "*Across the Plains in 1844*" In Chapter One, Catherine Sager describes how she and her siblings became orphans when their family made the journey to Oregon.
  - "*Overland Trail Lore and Early Life*" An interview that includes "Excerpts from the published reminiscences of James Meikle Sharp, who, at the age of eight, crossed the plains with his mother and father in 1852."
  - Diary of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, the first settlers to make the overland journey to Oregon. Extensive excerpts from Narcissa Whitman's diary are available at the [New Perspectives on THE WEST](#) website, which also includes a synopsis of the Whitman's tragic experiences taken from the PBS documentary series, THE WEST.
- Interactive Websites about the Oregon Trail
  - [Links to The Oregon Trail](#) (Part of the Overland Trail site) <http://www.over-land.com/trore.html> Here you find information about the Donner Party, the Whitmans, and other people on the Oregon Trail along with diaries, memoirs, letters and reports.

- Oregon Trail <http://www.isu.edu/%7Etrinnich/Oregontrail.html>  
This web site is brought to you by teachers Mike Trinklein and Steve Boettcher, creators of The Oregon Trail, the award-winning documentary film, which aired nationally on PBS. During the three years they spent researching the film, they found lots of great material they thought would be great for teachers and home schoolers--so they built this web site to make it all available.
  
- Learner.org <http://www.learner.org/interactives/historymap/index.html>  
Discover how the continent was irrevocably changed by European colonization, the events that caused the wholesale displacement and decimation of the land's original inhabitants, and how the 50 states came to be formed.

Procedure:

1. Students will read each of the primary source selections provided.
2. As a follow up to their reading, give each group a set of pictures showing a reenactment of the trek West on the Oregon Trail. (Students can view modern-day pictures of "Historic Sites along the Trail" at [The Oregon Trail](#) website. For a more historical view, [The Digital Classroom](#) provides access to photographs taken by William Henry Jackson in 1870: Heading west from the North Platte River in Wyoming; approaching Independence Rock; and traveling the plains along the Sweetwater River.)
3. Online experience about The Oregon Trail

Students will visit the Oregon Trail site; <http://www.isu.edu/~trinnich/Oregontrail.html>. This web site was created by teachers Mike Trinklein and Steve Boettcher, creators of The Oregon Trail, the award-winning documentary film, which aired nationally on PBS. During the three years they spent researching the film, they found lots of great material they thought would be useful for teachers and home schoolers--so they built this web site to make it all available. On the [Oregon Trail](#) website, students will be able to access useful and entertaining information about the following topics:

"Jumping Off" Cities--lists the places where emigrants, many of whom initially traveled the Missouri River by steamship, would "jump off" before the river made a turn to the north.

Waiting--tells how thousands of pioneers delayed their journeys until the grass (necessary for feeding their animals along the way) had started to grow.

Supplies--describes the amount of food a family would need in order to survive on the Trail.

Wagons--offers a detailed description of the farm wagons that most emigrants used for the westward journey.

Congestion--describes the traffic jams that delayed the start of the pioneers' journeys.

Overpacking--recounts how emigrants would simply throw things off their wagons when they realized they had brought along too much for their journeys.

4. After students read the primary source accounts and use the Oregon Trail website, students will choose a role as an Oregon Trail pioneer and plan a journey. Students will plan a trip across the Great Plains that follows as closely as possible one of the Oregon Trail routes.
  - They will decide what modes of transportation they are going to use and all provisions needed.
  - They will identify the stops that they will make; making sure to include the significant landmarks that early pioneers noted on their journey.
  - They will map out the route.
  - They will itemize costs for all items and find the total cost of the trip.
5. They will write at least five journal entries, including one before the journey even begins describing the type of life they might be leaving behind. The other entries will describe experiences, places visited and sights seen, while on the trail.

### *Lesson 3: The Gold Rush*

Overview: Although there were many gold rushes in world history, the California gold rush was a unique event. Unlike other places, the gold in California was both plentiful and easy to get--at least at first. The result would be profound changes in California, America, and the entire world. James Marshall first discovered gold in California in early 1848. Later that year, gold seekers from the west coast converged on the American River-

-50 miles north from Sacramento--where Marshall first saw the shiny metal. Within a matter of months, word spread eastward and by 1849 thousands were en route to California. Some traveled overland on the already established Oregon-California Trail. Others traveled by ship around the tip of South America. Still others took shortcuts across Panama and Mexico. Regardless of the route, it was an intensely difficult journey.

□□The gold seekers were dubbed "49ers" because most left home in 1849. The sudden influx of many people from different cultures resulted in clashes. We will investigate the impact on the Native Americans living in California at the time of the discovery of gold. We will also focus on laws passed to protect the interests of white citizens to the detriment of all others. As the diggings became oppressively crowded, Americans attempted to drive all foreigners from the mines.

### Activity 1: Spreading the News

Time: 5 class periods

#### Materials:

PBS video The Gold Rush, primary documents of accounts of the discovery of gold, websites:

<http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/> (Site supporting Gold Rush exhibit) □ The Oakland Museum of California's Gold Rush exhibit

<http://www.sfmuseum.net/hist6/impact.html> □ Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco Gold Rush pages

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/home.html> □ Historian Michael Trinklein's Gold Rush site

<http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/calcultures/eras/era4.html> □ University of California at Berkeley's site on the gold rush

#### Procedure:

1. Students will view the documentary American Experience presents The Gold Rush; from producer/director Randall MacLowry and writer Michelle Ferrari, this documentary features interviews with acclaimed writer Isabel Allende, and noted historians James Rawls, Kevin Starr, and Richard White, among others. Incorporating rare and exquisite daguerreotypes and original recreations, this film offers a vivid new portrait of a seminal event in America's history.

2. Students will read primary source newspaper accounts of the gold discovery.
3. Students will visit websites about the Gold Rush.
4. Students will use the software application Comic Life to create their own 3-4-page newspaper. The newspaper will include first person accounts, interviews with 49ers, advertisements, and photographs from the era.

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### **Works Consulted:**

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Catlin, George. *Letters and Notes on the North American Indians*. Mooney, Michael, Ed. New York: Clarkson Potter, 1975. Print.

Ritchart, Ronald. "Project Zero". Harvard Graduate School Of Education. March 13,2010 <<http://pzweb.harvard.edu/Research/ResearchThink.htm>>. Web March 15, 2010

Robotham, Tom. *Albert Bierstadt*. Greenwich CT: Brompton Books, 1993. Print.

*Oxford History of the American West*. New York: Oxford UP, 1994. Print.

Utley, Robert Marshall. *Lance and the Shield the Life and Times of Sitting Bull*. New York: Henry Holt, 1993. Print.

Ward, Geoffrey C. *West An Illustrated History*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1996. Print.



## Online Resources -Westward Expansion

American Missionaries and Western Migration. Ancient Lights. 1990.  
Discovery Education. 28 February 2010  
<http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/>

The American West  
<http://www.americanwest.com/index2.htm>

The Iron Road  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/iron/>

## Online Resources -Gold Rush:

<http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/> (Site supporting Gold Rush exhibit) □ The Oakland Museum of California's Gold Rush exhibit

<http://www.sfmuseum.net/hist6/impact.html> □ Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco Gold Rush pages

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/home.html> □ Historian Michael Trinklein's Gold Rush site

<http://www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu/calcultures/eras/era4.html> □ University of California at Berkeley's site on the gold rush

## Online Resources -Oregon Trail:

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/Oregontrail.html>

<http://www.historyglobe.com/ot/otmap1.htm>

-Fremont Eyewitness exhibit  
<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/eyewitness/html.php?section=22>

Oregon Trail <http://www.42explore2.com/oregon.htm>

## Online Resources- Artists

Albert Bierstadt

Traditional Fine Arts Online: Albert

Bierstadt □ [www.tfaoi.com/permc/ab.htm](http://www.tfaoi.com/permc/ab.htm) □ [www.tfaoi.com/distingu/ab8.htm](http://www.tfaoi.com/distingu/ab8.htm)

Paradise Prints Online: Albert

Bierstadt □ <http://wildwestart.com/bierstadt/bierstadt.html>

CGFA: Albert Bierstadt □ <http://sunsite.dk/cgfa/bierstadt/>

George Catlin

National Gallery of Art: George Catlin □ <http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/psearch?Request=A&Person=4950>

National Gallery of Art, Kids: George

Catlin □ <http://www.nga.gov/kids/catlin/catlin1.html>

Traditional Fine Arts Online: George

Catlin □ <http://www.tfaoi.com/newsm1/n1m660.htm>

The Yale University Library: □ The Illustrating Traveler (Catlin's North American Indian Portfolio) □ <http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke/valor2.htm>

Thomas Moran

National Gallery of Art: Thomas Moran □ [www.nga.gov/feature/moran/index.html](http://www.nga.gov/feature/moran/index.html)

National Park Service: Thomas Moran □ <http://www.cr.nps.gov/csd/exhibits/moran/>

Frederic Remington

Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art: Frederic Remington  
<http://www.sidrmuseum.org/fredr.html>

Frederic Remington Art Museum □ <http://www.remington-museum.org/>

In addition to the individual web sites, I used the electronic database - ARTstor, Inc., New York, New York.

□

General Reference National Archives and Records Administration □ Photograph Analysis Worksheet □ [www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo.html](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo.html) □ Old Western Museum □ [www.oldwestmuseum.org/westart.html](http://www.oldwestmuseum.org/westart.html) □ Smithsonian: National Museum of the American Indian □ <http://www.conexus.si.edu/main.htm>

For Students:

[Dear America Series:](#)

Travel back to the earliest days of America through the diary pages of these courageous girls and boys. Follow their amazing journey – as told by incredible authors – through the growth of our great nation.

Ellen. Levine,. *Journal of Jedediah Barstow, an emigrant on the Oregon Trail Overland, 1845.* New York: Scholastic, 2002.

Jedediah’s adventures along with the friends he makes and the lessons he learns, make for the unforgettable story of a brave young boy who sets off to discover a wild, new world.

Gregory, Kristiana. *Across the wide and lonesome prairie the Oregon Trail diary of Hattie Campbell.* New York: Scholastic, 1997.

A young pioneer girl chronicles her family's rigorous and brave journey westward as they pave the way for the thousands of Americans who will follow.

Gregory, Kristiana. *Seeds of hope the gold rush diary of Susanna Fairchild, California Territory, 1849.* New York: Scholastic, 2001.

Susanna Fairchild and her family begin their journey by sea to California in the fall of 1848. In the year that follows fourteen-year old Susanna is struck with sickness and tragedy. She watches her friends and neighbors become obsessed with the "Gold Fever." The hardship Susanna and her family endure is always brightened by the prospect that tomorrow will be better. The pages of Susanna's diary reveal that thoughts and dreams of a young girl who, despite the tragedy of her young life, is determined to mature into a woman who plants seeds of hope in the lives of those around her.

**Standards:**

H.5.2, I: Draw upon visual, literary and musical sources including a) photographs, paintings, cartoons, etc., to clarify, illustrate, or elaborate upon information presented in the historical narrative.

H.5.3, A: Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions by identifying likenesses and differences.

H.5.3, F: Compare competing historical narratives.

H.8.3.6.D.4 - Immigration and Migration (e.g., western settlements, Louisiana Purchase, European immigration)

H.8.2.6.C.5 - Settlement Patterns (e.g., native settlements, Westward expansion, development of towns)

H.8.2.6.C.7 - Transportation (e.g., trade routes, turnpikes, post roads)

H.8.2.6.D.4 - Immigration (e.g., Germans, Irish)

H.8.3.6.C.5 - Settlement Patterns (e.g., frontier settlements, slave plantation society, growth of cities)

Immigration and migration was another crucial event in the settlement of the West. The major reason that led to increased migration and immigration was that the West had desired resources such as Gold, silver, and land. This attracted different kinds of frontiers such as mining, farming, and cattle. Starting off with California in 1848, the increased rushes for gold, silver, lead, and copper led to increased demand for settlement by 1880 (Guarneri, 140). This increased mining demand led white settlers to explore California and other Southwest frontiers. The Homestead act in 1862 provided westward expansion, the 19th-century movement of settlers into the American West, began with the Louisiana Purchase and was fueled by the Gold Rush, the Oregon Trail and a belief in "manifest destiny." In 1843, one thousand pioneers took to the Oregon Trail as part of the "Great Emigration." Did you know? In 1853, the Gadsden Purchase added about 30,000 square miles of Mexican territory to the United States and fixed the boundaries of the "lower 48" where they are today. The West gave way to white settlement faster than the East had because the railroad and telegraph tamed its vast geography in the 1860s. In the early to mid-19th century, though, the West was mostly (politically) untamed territory, claimed by many "Indians, Mexicans, Mormons, British, Americans" but not really controlled or governed by anybody. But one could write all this history from a Native American perspective, with the lens of the camera pointed in the other direction. For Mexicans, this was the North; for Russians the far, remote Southeast; for Britain another potential colony that could connect to eastern Canada; for Mormons their own country to practice their faith; for Indians, this was neither north, nor west, nor east, but rather their ancestral homeland.