

A Destiny Debate

Read how an idea shaped westward expansion and affected many people.

SS.5.A.6.7 "Discuss the concept of Manifest Destiny."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that explains what Manifest Destiny meant, then circle two details that show how westward expansion affected people.

An Idea About Expansion

- ① In the 1840s, many Americans used the words Manifest Destiny to describe a belief about the nation's future. They believed the United States was meant, or destined, to spread across North America to the Pacific Ocean. Some supporters said this expansion would bring farms, towns, and American laws to new places. The phrase helped turn an idea about growth into a reason for action.
- ② Not everyone agreed with this belief. Westward expansion threatened the homes, governments, and lands of Indigenous peoples already living in these regions. It also increased conflict with Mexico. After the United States annexed Texas in 1845, a dispute over the Texas-Mexico border helped lead to the Mexican-American War. The war ended in 1848, and Mexico gave up a large area of land to the United States.
- ③ Manifest Destiny was not a law or a promise that expansion was fair. It was an idea used by supporters to explain and defend expansion. Looking at the idea means considering more than settlers' hopes. It also means noticing who was affected, including Indigenous nations and Mexican people, and asking whether growth for one group caused losses for another.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did Manifest Destiny mean to many Americans in the 1840s?

2 How did supporters use the idea of Manifest Destiny?

3 Name two groups whose homes, lands, or governments were affected by westward expansion.

4 How was the Mexican-American War connected to westward expansion?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences that explain why some Americans supported Manifest Destiny and describe one harmful effect of westward expansion on another group.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that explains what Manifest Destiny meant, then circle two details that show how westward expansion affected people. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Manifest Destiny mean to many Americans in the 1840s?	It was the belief that the United States was meant to spread across North America to the Pacific Ocean.
2	How did supporters use the idea of Manifest Destiny?	They used it to explain and defend westward expansion.
3	Name two groups whose homes, lands, or governments were affected by westward expansion.	Indigenous peoples or nations and Mexican people.
4	How was the Mexican-American War connected to westward expansion?	After the United States annexed Texas, a border dispute with Mexico helped lead to the war. The war ended with Mexico giving a large area of land to the United States.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Manifest Destiny gave some Americans a reason to support moving west. They hoped to build farms and towns under American laws. However, this growth could take land and power from Indigenous nations and Mexican people.

Accept equivalent explanations that identify Manifest Destiny as a belief that the United States should expand westward. For the open response, accept a clear supporter reason and an accurate effect on Indigenous peoples, Mexican people, or both.