

Lines of Power

Trace how political maps show changing borders and governments.

SS.8.G.4.6 "Use political maps to describe changes in boundaries and governance throughout American history."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each date, circle each political unit or governing body, and number each sentence that describes a change in a boundary or in who governed land. Your marks should help you trace changes across time.

Reading Changing Political Maps

- ① Political maps show more than coastlines and rivers. They use boundary lines, colors, and labels to show who governed each area. Before independence, thirteen British colonies lined the Atlantic coast. Each colony had borders approved by Britain and a colonial government under the king. In 1783, the Treaty of Paris recognized the United States and set its western boundary at the Mississippi River. A political map from that year would show a new nation stretching beyond the former colonies, while Britain controlled Canada.
- ② After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the United States acquired from France a vast region west of the Mississippi River. On a political map, the national boundary moved westward toward the Rocky Mountains, although parts of the western border were disputed with Spain. Congress divided much of this land into territories. Territorial residents lived under federal laws and had governors appointed by the president. To become a state, a territory needed congressional approval. A map could distinguish states from territories because their governments had different powers.
- ③ By 1850, maps recorded another major change. Texas joined the United States as a state in 1845, bringing its claimed lands into the nation. After the Mexican-American War, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 transferred a large area from Mexico to the United States. In 1850, California entered as a state, while Congress organized Utah and New Mexico as territories. A map from this period would show new international boundaries and different labels for states and federally governed territories.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Compare the United States boundary in 1783 with its boundary after the Louisiana Purchase. What change would a political map show?

2 How would a political map show a difference in governance before independence and in 1783?

3 What details from the passage explain why a map should distinguish a territory from a state?

4 Name one boundary change and one governance change that a map from 1850 could show.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly four sentences for a map caption comparing a political map from 1802 with one from 1850. Include two boundary changes, one difference in governance, and one detail a mapmaker could use to separate states from territories.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each date, circle each political unit or governing body, and number each sentence that describes a change in a boundary or in who governed land. Your marks should help you trace changes across time. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare the United States boundary in 1783 with its boundary after the Louisiana Purchase. What change would a political map show?	In 1783, the western boundary was the Mississippi River. After the Louisiana Purchase, the United States claimed land westward toward the Rocky Mountains.
2	How would a political map show a difference in governance before independence and in 1783?	Before independence, it would label British colonies governed under the king. In 1783, it would show the independent United States.
3	What details from the passage explain why a map should distinguish a territory from a state?	Territories were governed by federal laws and had governors appointed by the president. A territory needed congressional approval to become a state.
4	Name one boundary change and one governance change that a map from 1850 could show.	It could show land transferred from Mexico to the United States after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. It could also show California as a state and Utah and New Mexico as territories.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In 1802, the United States ended at the Mississippi River, but by 1850 it extended west across former French and Mexican lands. The Louisiana Purchase and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo moved the nation's boundaries. By 1850, California was a state, while Utah and New Mexico were federally governed territories. A mapmaker could use different labels or shading for states and territories.

Accept equivalent descriptions of boundary movement and governance as long as they match the passage. For the open response, check for exactly four sentences, two accurate boundary changes, an accurate governance comparison, and a reasonable map-labeling detail.