

Manifest Destiny - Webquest

Directions: Complete the following questions using the link listed below.

<http://www.ushistory.org/us/29.asp>



1. Who coined the term "Manifest Destiny"? When did they "coin" it?

2. According to the website, what is meant by "Manifest Destiny"?

3. What evidence or reasoning does this website provide to explain the belief in "Manifest Destiny" for many Americans? Use the following to organize your ideas:

a. Religious Motives:

b. Economic Motives:

4. In what ways was the belief in "Manifest Destiny" based on a belief in the superiority of American culture and race?

5. What information does the map on the bottom of the webpage display?



Teachers Key

Name: _____

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6. Who coined the term "Manifest Destiny"? When did they "coin" it?

Newspaper editor John O'Sullivan coined the term "manifest destiny" in 1845.

7. According to the website, what is meant by "Manifest Destiny"?

Manifest Destiny is a term that applies to the idea of American westward expansionism in North America as natural and as an extension of American nationalism, especially in the early and mid 1800's.

8. What evidence or reasoning does this website provide to explain the belief in "Manifest Destiny" for many Americans? Use the following to organize your ideas:

a. Religious Motives:

The religious fervor spawned by the Second Great Awakening created another incentive for the drive west. Indeed, many settlers believed that God himself blessed the growth of the American nation. The Native Americans were considered heathens. By Christianizing the tribes, American missionaries believed they could save souls and they became among the first to cross the Mississippi River.

b. Economic Motives:

Economic motives were paramount for others. The fur trade had been dominated by European trading companies since colonial times. German immigrant John Jacob Astor was one of the first American entrepreneurs to challenge the Europeans. He became a millionaire in the process. The desire for more land brought aspiring homesteaders to the frontier. When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the number of migrants increased even more.

9. In what ways was the belief in "Manifest Destiny" based on a belief in the superiority of American culture and race?

At the heart of manifest destiny was the pervasive belief in American cultural and racial superiority. Native Americans had long been perceived as inferior, and efforts to "civilize" them had been widespread since the days of John Smith and Miles Standish. The Hispanics who ruled Texas and the lucrative ports of California were also seen as "backward."

10. What information does the map on the bottom of the webpage display?



The map is showing the expansionism westward of American in the mid 1800's. It shows the effects of Manifest Destiny on the territories in the west and the gradual growth of American nationalism westward.