

The Flag Center



Flags of Manifest Destiny

Content Materials In Support
of a Curriculum Unit
For 5th Through 8th Grade Students

Aligned with the California State
History-Social Studies Framework

Available Online at
<http://www.atthepresidio.org/>

The Flag Center

Flags of Manifest Destiny

Flags, with their changing designs and rich histories, reflect the struggles and achievements of the United States as it grew from sea to shining sea. Flags provide an unusual and exceptionally interesting means of teaching and learning about the concept of Manifest Destiny and the importance of westward expansion in U.S. History.

The materials that follow provide content in support of a curriculum unit on Manifest Destiny. They were developed exclusively for The Flag Center by James Ferrigan, a history teacher and well known expert on flags. The materials are intended to support instructional strategies targeted to 5th through 8th grade students and have been aligned with the History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools. The materials may be used independently or in conjunction with the exhibition, *The American Flag: Two Centuries of Concord and Conflict*, on display through September 2003 at the Presidio of San Francisco. Permission is granted to individual teachers to use and reproduce parts of the curriculum in their own classrooms only.

For information about The Flag Center or setting up a docent-led tour of the exhibit for your class, please contact The Flag Center at info@flagcenter.org.

Unit & Lessons

The term Manifest Destiny was coined in 1845 by a New York magazine editor and advocate of Texas annexation, John Louis O’Sullivan. O’Sullivan, who was also a lawyer, argued that Manifest Destiny was “the inevitable fulfillment of the general law which is rolling our [U.S.] population westward.”

We can better understand the concept of Manifest Destiny by studying the flags used in the United States during that era. U.S. Flags, in many forms and varieties, replaced many foreign national flags as America expanded west. They can help us to better understand the motivations, events and consequences of Manifest Destiny.

The U.S. flag changed as the territories became new states. They “got their star”, symbolizing their joining the Union on equal footing with their predecessors. Even a casual look at the growing number of stars and the banners they replaced, offers a direct lesson in America’s expansion across North America.

Time Allotment

One Week Unit

Time Estimates Per Lesson (Based of a period lasting approximately one hour)

Introduction: 5:00 minutes

Presentation: 30:00 minutes

Activity: 15:00 minutes

Culmination: 5:00 minutes

Overview

In studying of the concept of Manifest Destiny it is necessary to consider multiple points of view, i.e., Native American Indian, European and American.

Manifest Destiny was the beginning of a clash of cultures that continues to the present. Native Americans viewed the land as essentially the provider of a succession of endless seasons to sustain them. This is the way it had always been and always would be. Europeans and Americans viewed the area as essentially endless territory, full of resources that could sustain them, perhaps endlessly.

These two views, one temporal the other territorial, could not be reconciled and eventually lead to a period of conflict known as the Indian Wars.

The prudent educator will bear this in mind when using flags, as they are an overt manifestation of the European and American view of western North America. With that in mind however, flags are one of the most useful classroom tools for demonstrating and explaining the motivations, events and consequences of Manifest Destiny.

Many Native American Indian tribal groups have evolved flags, but all of them post date Manifest Destiny.

Subject Matter

Art

Language Arts

Social Studies

 Geography

 History

Learning Objective

After this unit (lesson) students will be able to:

Identify the nations that previously occupied portions of North America that are now part of the United States.

Identify and explain the significance of:

- Louisiana Purchase
- Lewis and Clark Expedition
- Explorations of Zebulon Pike

- Trail of Tears
- Battle of the Alamo
- Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo
- Oregon & California Trails

- Spanish Trail
- Santa Fe Trail
- Central Overland Trail
- Mormon Trail

- Donner Party
- California Gold Rush

Standards

Some or all of the following California State Content Standards may be met as follows:

Social Studies (History):

All standards cited are from History-Social Science Framework for California Public schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, California Department of Education, Sacramento, 2001 Updated edition with Content standards.

5th Grade

5.3.4 Discuss the role of broken treaties and massacres and the factors that led to the Indian's defeat, including the resistance of Indian Nations to encroachments and assimilation (e.g., the story of the Trail of Tears).

5.8 Students trace the colonization, immigration and settlement patterns of the American people from 1789 to the mid-1800s, with emphasis on the role of economic incentives, effects of the physical and political geography and transportation systems.

5.8.2 Name the states that existed in 1850 and identify their locations and major geographical features (e.g., mountain ranges, principal rivers, dominant plant regions).

5.8.3 Demonstrate knowledge of the explorations of the trans-Mississippi West following the Louisiana Purchase (e.g., Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Zebulon Pike, John Fremont).

5.8.4 Discuss the experiences of settlers on the overland trails to the West (e.g., the; location of the routes; purpose of the journeys; influence of the terrain, rivers, vegetation, and climate; life in the territories at the end of these trails).

5.8.6 Relate how and when California, Texas, Oregon, and the other western lands became part of the United States, including the significance of the Mexican-American War.

8th Grade

8.5 Students analyze U. S. foreign policy in the early Republic.

8.5.2 Know the changing boundaries of the United States and describe the relationships the country has with its neighbors (current Mexican and Canada) and Europe, including the influence of the Monroe Doctrine, and how those relationships influenced westward expansion and the Mexican-American War

8.8 Students analyze the divergent paths of people in the West from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.

8.8.2 Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion including the concept of Manifest Destiny (e.g., the Lewis and Clark Expedition, accounts of the removal of the Indians, the Cherokee Trail of Tears, settlement of the Great Plains and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

8.8.6 Describe the Texas War for Independence and the Mexican-American War, including territorial settlements, the aftermath of the wars, and the effects the wars had on the lives of Americans, including Mexican Americans today.

Describe Manifest Destiny and the expansion of the United States, including:

- Lewis and Clark and the Louisiana Purchase
- Zebulon Pike
- Trail of Tears
- Battle of the Alamo
- Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo
- Oregon & California Trails
- Spanish Trail, Santa Fe Trail, Central Overland Trail, Mormon Trail
- Donner Party
- California Gold Rush

Preparation for Teachers

Media Components

Ability to display Power Point is recommended.

Internet access is recommended.

Materials

Per Class:

Power Point presentation (or print out), lecture notes, illustrations of appropriate flags, (or actual flags) Map of U.S., Image of the painting American Progress, by James Gast.

Vinyl adhesive back paper (white or some assorted colors), poster boards, colored markers, scissors.

Per Student:

Notebooks, pens or pencils, pre-cut blank “bumper sticker paper” and/or poster boards.

In Advance for Teachers

- This unit is designed so that the teacher may select any of the components of Manifest Destiny that may coincide with their lessons, and present one or two of the events in a normal class period.
- Teachers should already be familiar with the text and outside reading on Manifest Destiny.
- In order to become familiar with this material, teachers should examine the descriptions of the flags associated with the various aspects of Manifest Destiny.
- For more detailed information on specific flags please consult <http://www.fotw.ca/flags/> or

Smith, Whitney, Flag Book of the United States, William Morrow & Company, New York, 1975. Pp. 306. (NB: This is one of the best single volume reference book on historical flags of then U.S.)

Getting Started

Referring to a map of the U.S. and the 1872 painting by John Gast, “American Progress”, discuss the painting’s symbolism (The original painting is at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles, CA.)

An image of the painting is available on the internet at:

- <http://www.autry-museum.org/explore/>
- Click on Galleries;
- On the upper level map click on the Romance Gallery;
- Select & click “American Progress”.

Attributes of the Painting

- Miss Liberty, the Spirit of America floats effortlessly westward. On her head is, “the star of empire”, a symbol of the independence and sovereignty of United States.
- Behind her are the cities of the east and the Mississippi. With her on their westward trek are settlers, miners, farmers, and trappers as railroads and stage coaches following. Before her the buffalo, horses, game and the Native American Indians flee.
- She is holding a telegraph line and a schoolbook, symbolic of enlightenment and communication that will bind the nation together.
- Notice the three railroads that seem to follow her west.
- Notice that she is bathed in light (symbolizes progress) while the left side of the painting is darker (symbolizes wilderness).

Curriculum Content

Each of the aspects of Manifest Destiny is presented in the chronological order. Each segment has been crafted to stand alone as a lesson or be part of a lesson. The instructor may pick and choose which may best suit their unit on Manifest Destiny.

The Louisiana Purchase (1803)

Flags:

15-star, 15- stripe U.S. Flag (1795 – 1818)

The U.S. flag of the period already represented the expansion of the United States. After Vermont and Kentucky were admitted to the Union the U.S. flag was changed by adding both a star and a stripe to the flag, this flag had 15 stars and 15 stripes.

French Tri-Color Flag

The tri-color flag of France was lowered in 1803. France, wishing to deprive Britain of Louisiana in the event of war, sold Louisiana to the United States. The French claims to the interior of North America were based on exploration, colonization and commerce.

The blue, white and red of the French flag came about by combining the dynastic color of the French Royal family – white, with the colors of Paris – red and blue. They came to symbolize the watchwords of the French Revolution, liberty, equality and brotherhood.

The Louisiana Purchase (1803) Attributes:

- This was the first phase of Manifest Destiny, even though the term will not be coined until 1845.
- Louisiana was purchased in 1803 from France.
- The price was \$15,000,000.
- It doubled the size of the United States.
- The Louisiana territory had French, Spanish & Native American Indian peoples.
- It was largely unexplored territory.
- Indians were considered as wards of the U.S., and were allowed to exercise certain rights of sovereignty, but were not considered to be sovereign nations.
- The purchase gave the U.S. Trans-Mississippian borders with the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Spain.
- Eventually all or part of sixteen U.S. states will be formed from the Louisiana Purchase. They are Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.

Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806)

Flags:

The 15-star, 15-stripe U.S. Flag (1795 – 1818)

The U.S. flag of the period already represented the expansion of the United States. After Vermont and Kentucky were admitted to the Union the U.S. flag was changed by adding both a star and a stripe to the flag, this flag had 15 stars & 15 stripes. Lewis and Clark brought three different sizes of this flag with them to present to Native American Indian chiefs.

This was a continuation of the tradition of presenting gift flags as symbols of peace, friendship and sovereignty to the Indians. This was a continuance of the custom that had been started by the British, French and Spanish.

The Indian Peace Flag

In the early 1800s the U.S. government often gave Indian agents a version of the U.S. flag that included the U.S. coat of arms in the star field.

These were intended to be more impressive symbols of “peace and friendship” to friendly Indian tribes.

Lewis & Clark Keelboat flag reconstruction by Gary Lucy

(For more on this artist see <http://www.garylucy.com/>)

This is a reconstruction based on the drawings that Meriwether Lewis made of the expedition's keelboat. It seems that they combined two flags the Indians might recognize, the Indian Peace flag, a symbol of U.S. sovereignty, with a long white pennant, a symbol the Indians along the Missouri would have recognized as a sign of peace or parlay.

Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806) Attributes:

- In 1804 Lewis & Clark were ordered to explore the Louisiana territory.
- They formed a military “Corps of Discovery” to accomplish this task.
- They were to explore the rivers of the West & find a route to the Pacific
- They were to, “Seek knowledge & other objects worthy of notice.”
- Although it was principally a scientific expedition, their explorations formed basis of U.S. claim to the Oregon Territory, pushing U.S. claims to the Pacific Coast.
- These U.S. claims were eventually codified in the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1819.
- The first phase of Manifest was now over.

Explorations of Zebulon Pike (1805-1807)

Flags:

Kingdom of Spain (1785)

The modern red and yellow flag of Spain was adopted in 1785. It was the Spanish flag that flew over Spanish lands in New Spain until Mexico established its independence.

The 15-star,15-stripe U.S. Flag (1795 – 1818)

The U.S. flag of the period already represented the expansion of the United States. After Vermont and Kentucky were admitted to the Union the U.S. flag was changed by adding both a star and a stripe to the flag, this flag had 15 stars & 15 stripes. Both of Zebulon Pike's expeditions were carried out under this flag. Less is known than desired about the accomplishments of the Pike Expeditions, but it is known that he carried extra U.S. flags to present to Native American Indian chiefs as symbols of the sovereignty of the Great White Father of the 17 Nations to the East. This was a continuation of the custom, started by the British, French and Spanish, of presenting gift flags as symbols of peace, friendship and sovereignty to the Indians.

Explorations of Zebulon Pike (1805-1807) Attributes:

- Both of Zebulon Pike's expeditions were ordered without the knowledge of President Thomas Jefferson.
- He was ordered to carry out explorations in the Northwest and the Southwest.
- Unlike Lewis & Clark he took no interpreter, had no scientific training, and took few scientific instruments.
- Pike forced some British outposts in the region to lower their flags as they were now on U.S. territory. Ultimately, he failed to stop illegal British fur trade which would continue until the War of 1812.
- He purchased the land for the future site of forts and outposts.
- Pike forced a Pawnee chief to remove a Spanish flag and replace it with a U.S. flag.
- He explored into present day Colorado & spotted Pikes Peak, which he called Grand Peak. He also saw the Royal Gorge.
- Pike and his men were eventually captured by the Spanish and were taken to Santa Fe, before being escorted to Louisiana.
- Neither Pike nor his men were warmly received or rewarded by President Thomas Jefferson.

Trail of Tears (1838-1839)

Flags:

26-Star U.S. Flag

The 26-star U.S. flag used from 1837 to 1845. The U.S. flag of 26 stars became official in 1837 after Michigan joined the Union.

The Cherokee Peace Flag

The Cherokee Peace Flag is symbolic in both color and design. The red stars stand for victory and success, while the white background represents peace and happiness. The seven points of each star recall the seven clans of the Cherokee people. The stars are arranged in the pattern of the asterism “Yonegwa”, known to the white man as the Great Bear or Big Dipper.

According to Cherokee history, the Cherokee carried the peace flag from their traditional home to the Indian Territory along the “Trail of Tears”. Before that journey began, the Cherokee War Flag was buried with a hatchet. The “War Flag” was red and bore the Big Dipper in white according to tribal sources. This counter changing of red and white for war and peace is a common design element in many of the eastern tribes.

Trail of Tears (1837) Attributes:

- As the U.S. expanded many Native American Indians moved further West.
- Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Seminole clung to tribal lands.
- In 1830 Congress passed the Indian Removal Act which authorized the forced exchange of traditional tribal lands for less desirable land in the so-called Indian Territory in present day Oklahoma. (46-star U.S. flag)
- “Trail of Tears” was the name give by the Cherokee people to describe the forced relocation of tribe from ancestral lands.
- Many U.S. religious groups condemned the removal, but most Americans supported removal because it opened new areas for farming and settlement.

Battle of the Alamo (1836)

Flags:

Coahuila y Tejas Flag

Coahuila and Texas were unified as an internal political subdivision of Mexico. The militia of this state is believed to have flown a Mexican flag with two American style stars representing the two parts of the state. After the Texan victory at the battle of Bejar the Texans under Colonel Bowie fortified the Alamo.

Texas Conservative Party Flag

Some of the troops that came to the Alamo were adherents of reconciliation with Mexico as long as Mexico would honor the Constitution of 1824. This document guaranteed their rights but had been abrogated by General Santa Anna.

New Orleans Greys Flag

A portion of the volunteers that arrived with Colonel Travis was from New Orleans and carried this flag. This flag is the only flag associated with the Alamo that is still in existence. It is in Mexico where it is considered both a trophy of war and evidence of American perfidy in Mexico's civil war. For the 150th anniversary of the Battle of the Alamo, the State of Texas asked for the return of this flag, but Mexico refused. This prompted a Texas businessman to offer a bounty of \$30,000 for the safe return of this flag to Texas by any means. To further protect the flag Mexico removed it from display and transferred it to an army base!

Gonzales Flag

This flag was made in the small Texas town of Gonzales in the fall of 1835. The Mexican Army demanded the return of a small cannon that had been given to the settlers for defense against Indians. The citizens of Gonzales refused and "Come and Take it" became their slogan. After Colonel Travis issued a call for help from the besieged Alamo the only ones to answer his call were the men of Gonzales. It is believed that this flag was taken with them to the Alamo where they all perished and the flag was destroyed.

Battle of the Alamo (1836) Attributes:

- Fought for 13 days in Feb – March, 1836
- One of a series of battles fought in Texas-Mexico civil war
- Americans from New Orleans fighting on the side of Texas
- American Colonel Davy Crockett and a party of Tennessee volunteers joined up with Colonel Travis.
- Battle was a tactical defeat for Texans, but altered the war's goal from a redress of grievances to one for independence.
- Santa Anna's delay at the Alamo allowed Gen. Sam Houston to concentrate his forces and defeat the Mexican's at the Battle of San Jacinto. Their battle cry was "Remember the Alamo"
- Ultimately Texas joins the Union as the 28th state.

Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo after Mexican-American War (1848)

Flags:

29-Star U.S. Flag

U.S. flag of 29 stars was in use when the Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo was negotiated, as Iowa's star was added to the flag in 1847.

Flag of Mexico

This flag of Mexico had been in use since the republic was declared in 1823. The colors stood both for the watchwords of the Mexican revolt against Spain – “Religión, Independencia y Unión” – and the three elements of Mexican society, Indians, Europeans and those of mixed blood.

Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo (1848) Attributes:

- Guadeloupe-Hidalgo was the name of the formal treaty with Mexico which ended the Mexican-American War.
- The U.S. was victorious, but nevertheless agreed to pay Mexico \$15,000,000 for her lost province of Alta California.
- Ultimately the U.S. added all of California, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and parts of Wyoming & Colorado.
- Under the treaty the U.S. promised to guarantee property, religious and civil liberties of citizens of ceded territory. Native American Indians were again considered wards of U.S. government but were allowed to exercise certain rights of sovereignty within specific areas.
- In 1853 the Gadsden Purchase gave the contiguous U.S. states its present borders – U.S. territorial expansion was now complete.

Oregon & California Trail (1840s)

Westward Migration in North America was the largest peaceful migration in human history.

Flags:

27-Star U.S. Flag

Most of the wagon trains started west under the 27-star flag.

Dodge Flag

A Pioneer family is believed to have made this flag just before or during their sojourn on the Oregon Trail.

26-Star U.S. Flag Used By John C. Fremont

This flag reversed the traditional design elements of the flag by having a white star field with blue outline stars in addition to the American Eagle. Note that Fremont's eagle, painted for him by his wife, Jessie Hart Benton Fremont, replaced the traditional olive branch of peace with the Indian peace pipe. He is believed to have carried this on all of his expeditions to survey and map routes to Oregon & California.

Hudson's Bay Company Flag

After the Adams-Onís treaty, the U.S. now had a recognized boundary on the Pacific Coast. The British and the U.S. agreed to share the Oregon country. Initially the British had the advantage in the presence of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose flag flew, over all forts, factories and camps belonging to the HBC. This flag was so well known by Native American Indians in the west that the men were called "The bearers of the scarlet banner".

Flag of Mexico

This flag of Mexico had been in use since the republic was declared in 1823. The colors stood both for the watchwords of the Mexican revolt against Spain – "Religión, Independencia y Unión", and the three elements of Mexican society, Indians, Europeans and those of mixed blood. Portions of both the Oregon and California Trails pass through territory that is nominally Mexico as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, but most pioneers were not mindful of this fact.

Oregon Trail (1840s)

33-Star Flag

- This trail stretched 2000 miles and took four months to travel.
- Mountain men told others of the rich land and timber of the Oregon Country, inspiring many to migrate.
- The missionaries from various denominations went first in 1836.
- Settler's wagons followed in 1840s. They described Oregon a "Pioneer Paradise", to relatives in the East, prompting more migration.
- Pioneers often decorated wagons and flags with slogans like "Oregon or the Grave", "On to Oregon" or "Oregon Fever".
- By 1843 the Americans outnumber the British and the Native American Indians and are petitioning for territorial status.
- Eventually the Americans will dominate the territory and Oregon will become the 33rd state in 1859

California Trail (1840s)

26-Star & 27-Star Flags

- This trail branched off of the Oregon Trail and led to California.
- Mountain men also spread tales of California's "Perennial Spring" & "Boundless Fertility".
- The Bidwell-Bartleston Train First organized wagon train left for California in 1841, traveling through territory that was nominally part of Mexico.
- They made it & others followed.
- The trickle of immigrants would become a torrent after the discovery of gold in 1848.

Spanish, Santa Fe, Central Overland, & Mormon Trails (1776 - 1840)

Flags:

Spanish State Ensign & Military Color

The Spanish had many variations of this flag. The ragged cross represents two crossed sticks or tree trunks, perhaps man's oldest weapon. The cross they form is representative of Spain's Catholic faith, one of her primary motivations for colonies in the New World.

The military escorts that accompanied early Spanish expeditions that established the Spanish and Santa Fe trails would have been likely to carry this type of flag. It would have been displayed by the Spanish garrisons on the trails like Santa Fe.

Flag of Spain

The modern red and yellow flag of Spain was adopted in 1785. It was the Spanish flag that flew over Spanish lands in New Spain until Mexico established

Flag of Mexico

This flag of Mexico had been in use since the republic was declared in 1823. The colors stood both for the watchwords of the Mexican revolt against Spain - "Religión, Independencia y Unión", and the three elements of Mexican society, Indians, Europeans and those of mixed blood. Portions of both the Oregon and California Trails pass through territory that is nominally Mexico as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, but most wagons were not mindful of this fact.

“State” of Deseret Flag

In 1847 members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Later Day Saints began to settle in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, and establish Salt Lake City. Far removed from nominal Mexican control and in the absence of any local US administered government the Mormons organized a de facto local government. Their goal was statehood. This flag is a reconstruction of the supposed flag of the state of Deseret, which did petition for statehood. Instead the territory of Utah, named for the local Ute Indians, was created in 1850.

Spanish Trail (1776)

- This trail went from Santa Fe to Los Angeles.
- It was explored & pioneered by the Spanish in 1776.
- The Spanish trail crossed the deserts of Utah and southern Nevada.
- It was pioneered for commerce and the conversion of Indians.

Santa Fe Trail (Early 1800s)

- This trail went from Kansas City, Missouri to Santa Fe, Mexico.
- It was the major trading route for Spanish and Mexicans in southwest to trade with the United States.
- It was pioneered primarily for commerce.

Central Overland Trail (1840s)

- This trail headed west from Kansas City, Missouri, along the Platt River and on through the Rocky Mountains.
- It was common to the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails until each split off to separate destinations.
- It was the easiest and most widely used portion of the pioneer trails.
- Most of the westward bound pioneers traveled this route.
- It was said that, “A coward never left, and a quitter never made it”.

Mormon Trail (1840s)

- Went from Nauvoo, Illinois to Salt Lake City
- Mormons founded in New York in 1830 – persecuted for their beliefs one of which was polygamy, or plural marriage.
- They tried settling in Ohio & Illinois where they built the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, but eventually had to move again.
- They left in 1846 for the valley of the Great Salt Lake.
- 15,000 would leave of the Later Day saints would move west.
- Eventually built Salt Lake City, Utah – applied for statehood in 1849, granted territorial status in 1850 and statehood in 1896.

Donner Party (1846)

Flags:

27-Star U.S. Flag

U.S. flag with 27 Stars after Florida became a state. They are known to have celebrated the 4th of July, 1846 with a raising of the U.S. flag.

Donner Party (1846) Attributes:

- Their desire to get to California was so great that they took an untried shortcut that cost them time, animals and supplies.
- “The Donner Party,” recounts the tragic story of pioneers who were stranded in a mountain winter.
- They were just short of their destination and chose to stop.
- The tragedy occurred because of poor decisions their group made at almost every juncture on their journey.
- In order to survive the group resorted to cannibalism.
- About half survived and eventually reached California.

California Gold Rush (1848-1849)

Flags:

California Bear Flag

In 1846 Americans living in California proclaimed California independent of Mexico and sought to establish a republic. They hoisted this crude flag in Sonoma, California, and from June 14th to July 9th 1846 California was a self-styled independent nation.

31-Star U.S. Flag

On July 9th the US Navy took control of Sonoma and hoisted a 28-star U.S. flag. The California Republic came to an end after 25 days. In 1848 gold was discovered in California and in 1849 the California Gold Rush started. In 1850 California was made the 31st State.

California Gold Rush (1848-1849) Attributes:

- After the Mexican War California was under military rule
- Gold was discovered in California by James Marshall
- Gold seekers called 49ers came west seeking their fortune.
- The population grew rapidly and California quickly petitioned for statehood
- In 1850 California entered the Union as a free state.
- Native American Indians suffered greatly from both loss of habitat and disease.

“[This U.S.] flag is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose of a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation, the choice is ours.”

Woodrow Wilson 1917

Suggestions for Culminating Activities

Slogan/Symbol Activity:

Flags are symbols that send a message. Today we often see messages displayed as bumper stickers or posters. Consider any of the attributed messages of Manifest Destiny and design a bumper sticker for that event or era. Think about what slogans, sayings or mottoes might have been placed on the back of a wagon, slapped on the bow of a canoe, painted on a keelboat, plastered across the rump of a mule or hung on a saddle. Think about a slogan, motto or saying that might stand for any of the events that occurred during the 19th century and craft a bumper sticker, or poster using your slogan or motto. You may use different colors and drawings: but remember, in the 19th century it would have been the words that would have been the most important. Conversely, students may think of Manifest Destiny from the perspective of France, Spain, Mexico, Texas, or Native American Indians, and craft a similar slogan or saying representing another view of Manifest Destiny. Students will then present their creation to the class.

Alternative Activities:

Students can be divided into small groups for each of the aspects of Manifest Destiny and craft several bumper stickers or posters for their aspect or era. This could also be done as a take home assignment. Students can identify research, craft reproductions and further explain the significance of any of the flags that apply to one of the selected events in the Manifest Destiny unit.

Cross Curricular Activities:

These materials on Manifest Destiny suggest several activities that can be used across several curriculums. Geography can be used to reinforce the lesson, as well as consider both historical and political events as they relate to geography. English language Arts in terms of contemporary versus historical language may be considered in when the culminating bumper sticker or poster is created and presented to the class. Art is also a possibility as students may choose to also decorate their bumper stickers with relevant images.

Community Connections:

This concept of Manifest Destiny has direct application for the western United States, as most of it was a part of the territory included in the Mexican Cession. Portions of the all pioneer trails traverse the American West and had their terminus on the West Coast. The Donner Party is perhaps the most infamous immigrant group, and all of the transcontinental ‘49ers ended up in the Golden State. This migration had profound effects on the establishment of most western states, as well as the building of the Trans-Continental Railroad.

Teachers may organize a field trip to an appropriate State or National Park or local historical markers to further strengthen their lesson on Manifest Destiny.