

Westward Expansion

Lewis & Clark

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson made the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon. This piece of land made the United States twice as big as it had been before. Jefferson wanted someone to explore this new land. He chose **Meriwether Lewis and William Clark**. Lewis and Clark wanted to travel all the way to the Pacific Ocean. They were able to cross the Rocky Mountains with the help of **Sacajawea**.



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The Gold Rush

In 1848, James Marshall found **gold** in a California river. This was the start of the Gold Rush. Many people came to California to find gold. They were called **prospectors**.



The Homestead Act

In 1862, the U.S. Government passed the Homestead Act. This gave free land to people who would live in the Great Plains. It was hard to live in the plains. There were no trees to build houses with so the

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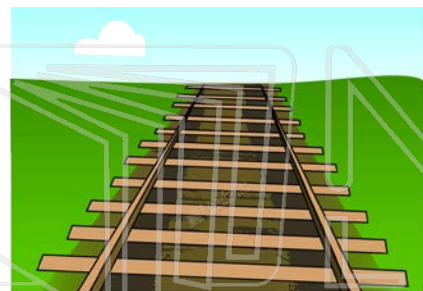


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railroad line to California. **Immigrants** did much of the work for this railroad. By 1869, the first **transcontinental** railroad was finished. It connected the eastern railroad with California.



Try This!

Circle reasons that people traveled west.

Explore easier life gold adventure
Prairie fires free land to be lonely to work

What was the name of the large purchase the Thomas Jefferson made in 1803?

- A] California Purchase
- B] The Alamo
- C] Louisiana Purchase
- D] Oregon Purchase

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Did Thomas Jefferson steal land from Napoleon?

Did people die on the Oregon Trail?

Has the United States always been the same size?

