

SHAPING America

LESSON 13:

“JEFFERSON’S VISION OF AMERICA”

Lesson Assignments

You are encouraged to be very attentive while viewing the video program. Review the video objectives and be prepared to record possible answers, in abbreviated form as you view the video. The topics and time periods may differ somewhat from the chapters of the textbook your school system is using. Each video program chronicles a wide array of events and personalities during a specific time period of American history prior to 1877. Keep in mind that one of the overarching goals of each lesson is to help you understand how past historical events and actions by historical personalities did not occur in a vacuum, and that they are inextricably interwoven in your society today.

Activities:

Your teacher may assign one or more activities for each lesson. Refer to your course syllabus for details.

OVERVIEW

Thomas Jefferson championed a strict interpretation of the Constitution and wrestled with his conscience when the opportunity arose to purchase the Louisiana territory. Nowhere in his beloved Constitution did it give the president the authority to acquire land. While Jefferson felt his action was unconstitutional, the senators were less finicky and enthusiastically approved the transaction. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were selected to head an expedition to explore the new piece of real estate that more than doubled the size of the United States. The purchase boosted national unity and presented the United States with a potential storehouse of treasures. Lewis and Clark also reported that the majority of the Native Americans they encountered were friendly and had rendered assistance to them during critical times in their journey.

Unfortunately, the westward movement of the United States settlers soon provoked the Native Americans and conflict became the norm. A group of young men dubbed the “war hawks” were intent on expansion and thirsted for a war with the British. Their march westward into the Ohio country brought them into conflict with the Native Americans and alarmed the British who controlled Canada. Two remarkable Shawnee brothers, Tecumseh and the Prophet, concluded that a united



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Indian front, with assistance from the British, was the only way to stop the human wave of settlers who threatened to drown them. Tecumseh forged an Indian confederation of numerous Indian tribes that was unique in Indian warfare. Tecumseh argued eloquently that Indians should not recognize the white man's views of land ownership nor adopt the white man ways. After some initial successes, Tecumseh was killed at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811 by General Harrison's forces and the Indian confederacy died with him.



The War of 1812 soon followed as the "war hawks" sought control of Canada and loudly voiced their support of freedom of the seas, which they insisted was being violated by the arrogant British government. The "war hawks" and their followers seem to have overlooked the fact that the French were also guilty of violating the rights of a neutral nation during the Napoleonic Wars. The Federalists living in New England did not support "Mr. Madison's War," and a perilously divided nation plunged into a war that would have horrified George Washington if he had lived to witness the event.



But the sectional crisis was not to be between the west and the northeast, but rather the south and the north. The so-called "Era of Good Feelings" was announced with the election of James Monroe in 1816. Unfortunately, it was something of a misnomer as sectionalism was creeping into the national fabric over issues such as the tariff, the U.S. Bank, internal improvements, and the sale of public lands. However, the most serious issue by far was slavery, and it was beginning to raise its hideous head. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 was an attempt to resolve the slavery issue that was looming larger and larger on the horizon with the addition of each new state. Unfortunately, neither the Missouri Compromise nor others that followed were able to resolve the issue; rather they simply postponed the final military solution.

VIDEO OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are designed to assist the viewer in identifying the most significant aspects of the video segment of this lesson. You should take succinct notes while viewing the video.

1. Analyze the significance of Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana territory.
2. Evaluate Tecumseh's Indian confederation and integrate the following into the discussion: "war hawks," the British, and General Harrison.

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- Integrate the following into a discussion of the growth of sectionalism in the United States: War of 1812 and the Missouri Compromise.

WEB ACTIVITIES

These activities are assigned at the discretion of your teacher. They are offered as suggestions to help you learn more about the material presented in this lesson.

Activity 1: The Louisiana Purchase

- Access and review the following web sites:
The Constitution Community: <http://www.nara.gov/education/cc/main.html>
Documents for the Study of American History:
http://www.ukans.edu/carrie/docs/amdocs_index.html
Letter from President Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis:
<http://www.mt.net/~rojomo/landc.htm>
National Archives and Records Administration Document Analysis Worksheets: <http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/analysis/analysis.htm>
- Write an analysis of Jefferson's letter to Lewis and use the National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.

Activity 2: Treaty of Ghent

- Access and review the following web sites:
Documents for the Study of American History:
http://www.ukans.edu/carrie/docs/amdocs_index.html
The Avalon Project at the Yale Law School:
<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/br1814m.htm>
Treaty of Ghent 1814:
<http://www.nelson.com/nelson/school/discovery/cantext/british/1814trea.htm>
- Write an analysis of the Treaty of Ghent document and use the National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.



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PRACTICE TEST

After watching the video and reviewing the objectives, you should be able to complete the following Practice Test. Access the Answer Key to score your answers after you have completed the Practice Test.

Multiple Choice:

Select the single best answer. It will be indicated if more than one answer is required.

1. Jefferson was conscience-stricken about the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France because:
 - A. The Federalists supported his action.
 - B. He believed that the purchase was unconstitutional
 - C. He felt that the purchase was not a fair deal for France.
 - D. War with Spain might occur.
2. As a result of the Missouri Compromise:
 - A. There were more slave than free states in the Union.
 - B. Slavery was outlawed in all states north of the forty-second parallel.
 - C. Slavery was banned north of 36° 30' in the Louisiana Purchase territory.
 - D. Missouri was required to free its slaves when they reached full adulthood.
3. The War of 1812 was one of the worst fought wars in American history for which of the following reasons:
 - A. Disunity was widespread.
 - B. Only a zealous minority supported the war.
 - C. The army was very unprepared and inadequate.
 - D. All of the above
4. Of the following, the only argument not put forward by the “war hawks” as a justification for a declaration of war against Britain was that:
 - A. The British armed the Indians and incited them to raid frontier settlements.
 - B. British impressments policies were an affront to American nationalism.
 - C. Britain’s commercial restrictions had come close to destroying America’s profitable New England shipping business.
 - D. British Canada and Spanish Florida were attractive and easily obtainable prizes of war.

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5. Tecumseh argued that Indians should:
 - A. Give control of their land to the whites, if they were compensated.
 - B. Move west of the Mississippi River.
 - C. Form an Indian Confederation.
 - D. Exchange traditional buckskin clothing for cloth garments.

6. The Louisiana Purchase:
 - A. Tripled the size of the United States.
 - B. Boosted national unity.
 - C. Threatened to promote sectionalism at the expense of the union.
 - D. Is the only instance in American history in which land was purchased from a foreign government.



Essay Questions:

1. Discuss the consequences of Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory.
2. Analyze the causes and effects of the War of 1812.



Answers to the Practice Test:

The correct answer is indicated first, followed by the objective (s) that correlate with the test question.

1. B: 1
2. C: 3
3. D: 3
4. D: 2
5. C: 2
6. B: 1

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TEACHER'S NOTES

