

Inquiry Journal

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: Manifest Destiny Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>How did political, economic, and social factors combine to drive U.S. expansion across North America?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 2	<i>Whose stories are told—and whose are left out—when we learn about westward expansion?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 3	<i>What types of challenges did women face in the West as American migration increased?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 4	<i>How did Manifest Destiny shape both U.S. immigration patterns and the government's role in westward expansion?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 1: Manifest Destiny
Compelling Question

Was Manifest Destiny a story of opportunity, oppression, or both?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: War with Mexico Supporting Questions	
LESSON 5	<i>How did Manifest Destiny influence the different methods used to acquire new territory?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 6	<i>What factors contributed to the increase in tension between Mexico and the United States?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 7	<i>In what ways did the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo change rights, land, and identity for people in the Southwest?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 2: War with Mexico
Compelling Question

How did the idea of Manifest Destiny affect foreign relations, rights, and land in the 1800s?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Sectional Division Supporting Questions	
LESSON 8	<i>How did the land gained from the Mexican Cession intensify debates over slavery and reshape American politics?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 9	<i>How did American politicians attempt to compromise about slavery during the Antebellum Period?</i>
	K:
	W:
LESSON 10	<i>How did people and events in the 1850s increase tension between the North and South over slavery?</i>
	K:
	W:



Topic 3: Sectional Division
Compelling Question

Why did efforts to compromise over slavery fail to hold the nation together?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Essential Question

How did the interplay of territorial expansion, regional differences, and political ideologies fuel the sectional crisis?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.



Paragraph Template

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

CLAIM (Your argument)	
EVIDENCE #1 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #1 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	
EVIDENCE #2 (Facts, examples, sources)	
REASONING #2 (Explanation of how the evidence supports the claim)	



Unit 8: Sectional Tensions (1820–1860)

Inquiry Journal (Exemplar)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 1: Manifest Destiny Supporting Questions	
LESSON 1	<i>How did political, economic, and social factors combine to drive U.S. expansion across North America?</i>
	K: When Americans moved west, it usually led to conflict with American Indians.
	W: Did moving west get easier over time?
LESSON 2	<i>Whose stories are told—and whose are left out—when we learn about westward expansion?</i>
	K: I know that usually American Indian stories weren’t recorded or aren’t included in main narratives.
	W: What types of sources are available to learn about western migration?
LESSON 3	<i>What types of challenges did women face in the West as American migration increased?</i>
	K: In the 1800s, people thought women weren’t as tough or capable of handling difficulties.
	W: Did as many women as men migrate to the West?
LESSON 4	<i>How did Manifest Destiny shape both U.S. immigration patterns and the government’s role in westward expansion?</i>
	K: Immigration increased in the antebellum period.
	W: Where did immigrants arrive from in this time period?



Topic 1: Manifest Destiny Compelling Question

Was Manifest Destiny a story of opportunity, oppression, or both?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Manifest Destiny was a story of both opportunity and oppression. While many Americans saw westward expansion as a chance to gain land, wealth, and freedom, others experienced loss, violence, and discrimination. For example, women like Catherine Haun faced dangerous travel conditions and emotional hardships but also found independence and new roles in frontier life. At the same time, Native Americans like Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins described being forced from their lands and experiencing trauma and betrayal as settlers moved west. Chinese immigrants, who helped build the Transcontinental Railroad, also faced dangerous working conditions and racist treatment, as seen in the 1867 strike and Pun Chi's petition to Congress. These examples show that Manifest Destiny created new possibilities for some groups while bringing destruction and inequality to others. Understanding both sides of this history helps us see how national growth can include both progress and injustice, depending on whose experience we focus on.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 2: War with Mexico Supporting Questions	
LESSON 5	<i>How did Manifest Destiny influence the different methods used to acquire new territory?</i>
	K: Manifest destiny was the idea that it was the fate of the U.S. to expand from coast to coast.
	W: What were the different methods used to acquire new territory?
LESSON 6	<i>What factors contributed to the increase in tension between Mexico and the United States?</i>
	K: Mexico and the U.S. shared a large border in the southwestern region.
	W: Was there one country who was more at fault than the other for the increasing tensions?
LESSON 7	<i>In what ways did the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo change rights, land, and identity for people in the Southwest?</i>
	K: There were many different Native American tribes and Mexicans living in the Southwest.
	W: Who agreed to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo?



Topic 2: War with Mexico

Compelling Question

How did the idea of Manifest Destiny affect foreign relations, rights, and land in the 1800s?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The idea of Manifest Destiny led to conflict with other nations and the displacement of many people. For example, Manifest Destiny helped fuel the Mexican-American War. The U.S. believed it had the right to expand westward and take land from Mexico. After the war, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave the U.S. a large amount of land, but the promised rights for Mexican residents were often ignored. Indigenous peoples were also pushed off their land, and their sovereignty was not respected. This shows that Manifest Destiny didn't just lead to more land for the U.S.—it also harmed relationships with Mexico, caused war, and led to broken promises and loss of rights for many people already living in those areas. It shaped how the U.S. acted toward other nations and how it treated the people within its growing borders.



Directions: Read each of the supporting questions. For each “K,” write what you already **KNOW** about the topic. For each “W,” write what you **WONDER** about the topic.

Topic 3: Sectional Division Supporting Questions	
LESSON 8	<i>How did the land gained from the Mexican Cession intensify debates over slavery and reshape American politics?</i>
	K: With the new land, people may disagree over whether slavery should be allowed in it or not.
	W: Why would land impact politics?
LESSON 9	<i>How did American politicians attempt to compromise about slavery during the Antebellum Period?</i>
	K: There were a lot of changes in the U.S. in the Antebellum Period including transportation developments and technological innovations.
	W: What made the topic of slavery more heated in this time period?
LESSON 10	<i>How did people and events in the 1850s increase tension between the North and South over slavery?</i>
	K: Some people in the North were abolitionists. Some people in the South enslaved African Americans.
	W: What was the final event before the Civil War?



Topic 3: Sectional Division

Compelling Question

Why did efforts to compromise over slavery fail to hold the nation together?

Directions: Read the compelling question. Explain what you **LEARNED** throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

Efforts to compromise over slavery failed because they didn't solve the root conflict and instead made the divide between North and South even deeper. The Mexican Cession, land gained after the U.S. defeated Mexico in 1848, added huge new territories like California and Utah. This raised a big question: would slavery be allowed there? In 1850, Senator Henry Clay helped pass a compromise to ease tension, but it included the Fugitive Slave Act, which forced Northerners to help return escaped enslaved people. The Kansas-Nebraska Act let new states vote on slavery, which led to violence in Kansas. Even the Dred Scott decision in 1857 made things worse by saying that enslaved people were not citizens and that Congress couldn't ban slavery in the territories. People like John Brown and Harriet Beecher Stowe also increased tensions as their words and actions fueled an increase in abolitionist attitudes. All of these actions were meant to keep the peace, but they just made each side more upset. The North didn't want slavery to spread, and the South didn't want anyone telling them they couldn't have it. Because these compromises didn't fix the root problem, they failed to hold the country together and pushed it closer to war.



Essential Question

How did the interplay of territorial expansion, regional differences, and political ideologies fuel the sectional crisis?

Directions: Read the essential question. Explain what you LEARNED throughout the unit with a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph.

The sectional crisis intensified because territorial expansion brought new land into the United States, forcing the North and South to confront their deep regional and political differences—especially about slavery. As Americans embraced Manifest Destiny in the 1840s—the belief that the United States was meant to expand across the continent—thousands of settlers moved west. Migration into Texas, Oregon, and California created pressure for the government to acquire new territories. After the Mexican-American War, the U.S. gained the Mexican Cession, including California and the Southwest. This expansion restarted debates about whether slavery should spread west. Northern politicians, like David Wilmot, introduced the Wilmot Proviso to ban slavery in the new territories, while Southern leaders argued that blocking slavery violated their rights. The South feared that losing political power in the Senate would threaten their economy and way of life, which relied heavily on enslaved labor. Political compromises, like the Compromise of 1850, temporarily calmed tensions by allowing California to enter as a free state, but the stronger Fugitive Slave Act angered many Northerners. Migration also triggered violence, especially after the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which allowed settlers to vote on slavery. This resulted in bloody conflict in “Bleeding Kansas” as pro- and anti-slavery groups clashed. As the country grew through westward expansion, the divide between North and South became impossible to ignore. The North, with its growing cities and free labor system, increasingly opposed the spread of slavery, while the South felt that its entire way of life was under attack. Political compromises failed because they didn’t address these deeper differences. The spread of Manifest Destiny and increased migration west only brought the issue of slavery into every new piece of land, making the nation’s divisions wider until war became unavoidable.

