



Name _____

Date _____

THE MEXICAN WAR

By the 1840s, territory in the United States was spreading in all directions. Some people felt that the country should not spread from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans and from Canada to the Rio Grande. But because of its economic and political superiority and growing population, many felt that it was the destiny of America to rule North America. This was known as the Manifest Destiny.

The president at the time was James Polk. He believed very strongly in the Manifest Destiny. He offered to buy the Mexican territory, which consisted of the California and New Mexico areas, which also included Arizona. Mexico refused. President Polk sent troops into a territory near the Rio Grande that both countries claimed as their own. American soldiers as well as Mexican soldiers were killed in the small conflict. President Polk claimed that American blood had been shed. He asked Congress to declare war on Mexico. Congress did so.

In 1848, Mexico and the United States signed a peace treaty. The treaty stated that the United States received all the land that today makes up California, Nevada, and Utah. It also received most of what is now the state of Arizona, parts of Wyoming, New Mexico, and Colorado. In return, the United States paid Mexico 15 million dollars. This is known as the Mexican Cession.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What land did the United States want to buy from Mexico?
 - a. Texas and the surrounding areas
 - b. The Southwest
 - c. San Diego
 - d. California and New Mexico areas
2. Which paragraph helps you answer the previous question?
 - a. first paragraph
 - b. second paragraph
 - c. last paragraph
 - d. none of the above
3. Which of the sentences below explains the outcome of the Mexican War?
 - a. It also received most of what is now the state of Arizona, parts of Wyoming, New Mexico, and Colorado.
 - b. In return, the United States paid Mexico 15 million dollars. This is known as the Mexican Cession.
 - c. In 1848, Mexico and the United States signed a peace treaty.
 - d. The treaty stated that the United States received all the land that makes up California, Nevada, and Utah today.



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FREE BLACKS JOIN UNION ARMY

At the beginning of the Civil War, there were many African Americans who volunteered to fight for the Union. However, the navy and the army denied these Americans the opportunity to fight in the Civil War. They were hired to drive wagons, cook meals, and work with shovels and other tools, but they were not soldiers.

But as the Civil War went on, more and more soldiers were needed. In 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation was passed and the army and navy decided to allow African Americans to join. These African Americans were encouraged to join the army in an effort to free the millions of slaves in the South. It was believed that if these Americans helped to fight, they would not be denied the right to citizenship.

By the end of the Civil War, there were approximately 185,000 African Americans fighting in the army and the navy. Some of them were free from the North, but the rest of them were men who had escaped the slave states. Black soldiers were not treated the same as other soldiers. In the beginning they only received half their pay. By the end they all received the same amount. Most white soldiers would not fight alongside them. But the fighting record of black soldiers was honorable. The country's highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, was given to 21 black soldiers.



STORY QUESTIONS

1. What jobs were black soldiers given at the beginning of the war?
 - a. They fought alongside white soldiers.
 - b. They served on ships in the navy.
 - c. They were able to fight but without weapons.
 - d. They were allowed to drive wagons, cook meals, and work with shovels.
2. What is the primary purpose of this reading passage?
 - a. to inform the reader about the Civil War
 - b. to explain the prejudice that people had during the Civil War
 - c. to explain the role that blacks played in the Civil War
 - d. to look for a better way of life
3. What is the meaning of the word *emancipation* as used in this passage?
 - a. initiation
 - b. freedom
 - c. registration
 - d. coronation



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THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

The United States is a nation of immigrants. Since the beginning, immigrants have come to America looking for a better way of life. In the late 1800s they came in large numbers. There had never been so many immigrants at one time. It was faster and easier to cross the Atlantic Ocean than ever before. It took just five days to cross the ocean from England.

Those who came after 1886 were greeted with the sight of the Statue of Liberty. The Statue of Liberty is 15 stories high. In one hand she holds the torch. In the other hand she holds the tablet bearing the date of the Declaration of Independence. The people of France presented this statue as a gift to the United States. It was meant to celebrate the friendship between the two countries.

Some immigrants became farmers in the West, but most immigrants moved to cities such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Boston. Here they looked for work to support their families. Members of the same immigrant groups often lived together in the same neighborhoods. This made it easier to communicate with one another and share similar customs and traditions.

These immigrants were often poor. They did not speak English and they were unskilled workers. They would usually take any jobs they could get. They had to work hard with very low pay. Often the entire family, including the children, were required to work to make ends meet.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. What is the main idea of paragraph three?
 - a. to inform the reader about the Statue of Liberty
 - b. to explain the struggles immigrants had getting into the United States
 - c. to explain the role that the government played in donating the statue
 - d. to explain where immigrants went for work once they arrived
2. Which country presented the United States with the Statue of Liberty?
 - a. Russia
 - b. France
 - c. Germany
 - d. Ellis Island
3. Which of the following statements is an opinion?
 - a. These immigrants were often poor.
 - b. Here they looked for work to support their families.
 - c. The Statue of Liberty is a beautiful reminder of the purpose of this country.
 - d. Those who came after 1886 were greeted with the sight of the Statue of Liberty.



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HAWAII BECOMES A STATE

Hawaii is a group of islands west of the Pacific Coast of the United States. These islands are about 2,000 miles from the continental United States. In the early 1800s, American ships began arriving in Hawaii to stop for supplies on their way to and from Asia.

Before long, missionaries arrived in Hawaii to teach religion and to try to convert people. Some of these missionaries became business people. They began purchasing land for sugar plantations. These Americans soon took over and began running the islands. In 1891, Liliuokalani was named the new queen of Hawaii. She made the decision that a foreigner could not rule Hawaii. The plantation owners were concerned. The queen was overthrown by the people who then asked the United States government to take over Hawaii.

President Grover Cleveland was president of the United States at the time. He didn't think it was right to overthrow the queen and take over another country. But as time went on, William McKinley became president of the United States. He felt differently about Hawaii. President McKinley and Congress agreed to make Hawaii a territory of the United States. Many years later, in 1959, Hawaii became a state. In fact, Hawaii became the 50th state of the United States.



STORY QUESTIONS

1. Originally, why did people stop in Hawaii?
 - a. They were helping the native people there.
 - b. They used Hawaii as a summer residence.
 - c. They bought land and set up sugar plantations.
 - d. They stopped for supplies on their way to and from Asia.
2. Why did President Cleveland refuse to take over Hawaii?
 - a. He believed that Hawaii had economic as well as political superiority.
 - b. He felt like it was a poor business deal.
 - c. He didn't feel it was right to overthrow the queen.
 - d. He believed that Hawaii belonged to Asia.
3. What is the meaning of the word *overthrown* as used in the passage?
 - a. thrown overboard
 - b. arraigned
 - c. removed from power
 - d. none of the above



Name _____

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THE GREAT WAR

In 1914, war broke out in Europe. The countries of Europe were divided against each other. The two main sides during World War I were the Allied Powers and the Central Powers. The Allied Powers consisted of Great Britain, France, and Russia. The Central Powers consisted of Germany, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary. The colonies of these nations in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Pacific were soon drawn into the war as well.

World War I was known as the Great War because this conflict was the first war that involved so many countries worldwide. Many felt that this would be the war to end all other wars. History shows that this would not be the case. This war was also different in that the weapons used were new and more deadly. Armies had never used tanks, airplanes, or gas grenades. Losses in each battle were greater than ever. Another effective weapon was the submarine. Submarines could sink large ships carrying troops and supplies.

Trench warfare was a new concept introduced during World War I. Soldiers dug long, deep trenches, or ditches in the ground, and lived in them for long periods of time. These trenches were used as a place to stay and also as a form of protection.

The war finally ended after the German leader Kaiser Wilhelm resigned. On November 11, 1918, an armistice halted the fighting and a peace treaty followed.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Which countries formed the Central Powers?
 - a. Germany, Russia, Great Britain
 - b. Germany, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary
 - c. Germany, Turkey, and France
 - d. Germany and France
2. How were trenches used during World War I?
 - a. Soldiers used them to store their weapons.
 - b. Trenches were dug to capture the enemy and for protection.
 - c. Trenches were used to store supplies and for protection.
 - d. Soldiers dug trenches to live in them and use them as a means of protection.
3. Based on the reading passage, why was this called the Great War?
 - a. It was the first war to ever divide Europe.
 - b. It was a great war for both sides.
 - c. It was the largest war that had ever been fought in the world.
 - d. It would be the last war ever fought.