

History, Year 10, Term 1b
The early settlement of the West, c1835-c1862
Grade 5 (compulsory)

Introduction to Plains Indians, Week 1:

The Great Plains	The central part of North America, much of which was grassland.
Plains Indians	The collective name for the tribes that lived on the Great Plains.
Band, Tribe, Nation	The names for groups of Plains Indians. Bands ranged from 20 to 100 people. Tribes were several bands, nations were several tribes.
Chiefs	The male leaders of Plains Indian society. Each tribe could have many chiefs, e.g. a war chief.
Warrior brotherhoods	Groups within a tribe which young men joined after proving their bravery and fighting skill.
Tipis	Tent-like homes of the Plains Indians, made from buffalo.
Buffalo	Large cow-like animals which played a key role in the way of life of the Plains Indians.
Nomadic	Constantly moving around and never settling in one place.

Problems with farming on the Plains, Week 6:

Low rainfall	It was too dry for most crops and livestock, and there were frequent droughts.
Few trees	No timber for building houses or making fences, no wood for heating or cooking.
Extreme climate	Very hot summers and extremely cold winters. This killed crops and made life very hard.
Prarie fires	Caused easily in the dry plains, these burned crops and could kill livestock and people.
Grasshoppers	Some years grasshoppers swarmed and destroyed everything in their path. Some claimed that they blacked out the Sun.
Ploughing	The ground was too hard and dry to farm.

Migration, Week 2:

USA/US	The United States of America. A collection of states that wanted to take over all of North America.
Frontier	The border between the Plains Indians and the USA.
Reservations	An area of land set aside for use by Plains Indians and managed by the US government.
White settlers	People from the US or Europe who wanted to settle on the Great Plains or in the West.
Migration	Moving from one place to another.
Trails	The routes used by settlers to reach the West.
Trappers	The first people to find routes to Oregon, as they hunted animals for their fur.
Missionaries	People who went West to try and convert the Plains Indians.

Problems of migration, Week 5:

Winter	Migration during the winter months would lead to death due to freezing temperatures and lack of grass for their animals.
Supplies	Migrants needed to take enough good to live on for the whole journey, as well as essentials for settling in a new home.
Working together	It was important to travel in large groups including with people who were skilled in carpentry, hunting or medicine.
Accidents	Many people died along the trail through drowning or falling, or being crushed by wagons.
Diseases	Migrants used rivers for drinking water, but also to go to the toilet in. This spread diseases like cholera.
Plains Indians	Many migrants dreaded attacks by Plains Indians, but these were very unlikely. Plains Indians were more likely to help migrants than attack them.

Key dates, Week 3:

1803	Louisiana Purchase: The USA purchases more land from France and doubles in size.
1830	Indian Removal Act: Forced all Plains Indians to move west of the Mississippi river.
1834	Trade and Intercourse Act: Set up the Permanent Indian Frontier and banned the sale of alcohol and guns to Plains Indians.
1836	First successful migration along the Oregon Trail by missionaries.
1843	The Great Migration: 900 people travel along the Oregon Trail.

Key dates, Week 4:

1846	The Donner Party fail to reach Oregon, while the Mormon migration to Utah succeeds.
1848	Mexican War: The USA gains even more territory, now surrounding Indian Territory.
1849	California Gold Rush: 100,000 people left the East in the hopes of finding gold.
1851	Fort Laramie Treaty: Aimed to secure peace between Plains Indians and white settlers migrating along the Oregon Trail.
1851	Indians Appropriation Act: The beginning of the US government's efforts to move Plains Indians on to reservations.

Law and order, Week 7:

Mass migration	When very large numbers of people migrate to one area at the same time.
Claim	A legal declaration of ownership of land.
Road agents	Criminals who robbed travellers by the roadside.
Territory	Part of the USA which was not yet a full state, so was controlled by the US federal government.
State	A fully integrated part of the USA with its own state government.
US Marshal	Responsible for law enforcement in territories.
Sheriff	Elected by a community to keep law and order.
Vigilantes	Ordinary citizens who take the law into their own hands.
Lynching	Murdered by a mob for a crime without a trial.

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Grade 9 (optional)

Buffalo uses, Wk 2 + 3:

Raw hide	Bags, harnesses, shields
Tanned hide	Robes, tipi covers, shoes, leggings
Tail	Fly whisk, ornaments
Dung	Fuel
Bladder	Food bags
Intestines	Buckets, cooking pots
Fat	Soap
Tendons	Strings, cord, sewing thread
Sinews	Bow string, thread
Horns	Head dresses, spoons, powder flasks, cups
Skull	Religious rituals
Tongue	Hair brush
Fur	Blankets, mittens, saddle covers
Hair	String, pillow stuffing
Bones	Knives, sledge runners
Hooves	Glue, tools
Ribs	Sledges
Meat	Food, religious offerings.

Reasons for tension between US and Plains Indians, Week 4:

White fear	White settlers got caught up in conflict between Plains Indian tribes and thought the war parties were planning on attacking them. They demanded government protection.
Racism	White settlers believed they were naturally superior to the Plains Indians and treated them as such.
Lack of knowledge	Plains Indians and white settlers knew very little of the other's lifestyle, and often made no effort to learn, leading to misunderstandings.
Threat to food supply	Large numbers of migrants that travelled along the Oregon Trail during the Gold Rush killed many buffalo and their oxen ate the grass, limiting the food available for the buffalo.

Significance of the Fort Laramie Treaty, Wk 6:

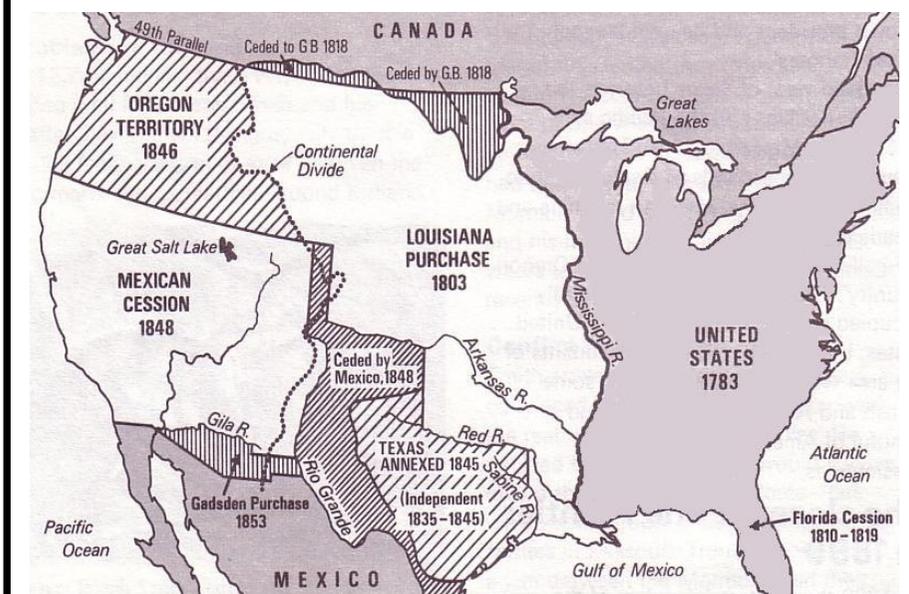
Step towards reservations	Identified areas of territory for each tribe, beginning to limit their nomadic lifestyle.
Migrant safety	The Treaty stated that migrants must be able to travel safely across the Plains. This violated the Permanent Indian Frontier.
Annuities	These were payments, even in food or products, to compensate Plains Indians for allowing migrants on their lands. This made them more reliant on the US government.
Incursions into Plains	Railroad surveyors were permitted to plan railroad routes across the Plains. The government also set up military forts along the Trail.
Lack of trust	Neither the US government nor the Plains Indians made significant efforts to keep to the Treaty, leading to a breakdown in trust between the two.

Plains Indian beliefs, Week 1:

Nature	Everything in nature had a spirit, which would sometimes help humans. Humans were a part of nature and should work with the spirits through rituals.
Land	Land was seen as sacred – the mother of the Plains Indians. Farming or mining were seen as disrespectful to the land.
Property	Most Plains Indians did not believe that anyone could own land. It couldn't be bought/sold.
War	Plains Indians raided other tribes over resources. The counting coup was a way of showing off fighting skill without killing an opponent.
Leadership	Chiefs were respected, but individuals did not have to follow their guidance.

Reasons to go West by land, Week 5:

Economic conditions in the East	In 1837, there was an economic crisis in the East. Banks collapsed, businesses failed and thousands lost their jobs.
Farmland in Oregon	Traders and trappers had been travelling to Oregon for many years, and had passed back news of the rich farming land west of the Rocky Mountains.
Expensive sea route	It cost \$300 to go via sea to Oregon from the East coast – farm labourers earned \$11 a month.
The Oregon Trail	A relatively safe, tried and tested route across Indian Territory and through the Rocky Mountains to Oregon.
Government help	The US government wanted to colonise Oregon and paid John Fremont and others to convince migrants that the journey was worth doing.
The Gold Rush, 1849	Thousands travelled along the Oregon Trail in order to find gold in the Sierra Nevada mountains. A few became rich, but most stayed to be farmers, leading to the rapid growth of California's population.
Manifest Destiny	White Americans believed that it was their destiny to populate all of America from coast to coast. This was encouraged by the US government.



Map of North America, showing the expansion of the United States up to 1853