

Lesson: Bent's Fort

Topic/Unit: Westward Migration: Manifest Destiny

Grade Level: 6-12

Class Time: 55 minutes x 2-day Lesson

CDE State Standards:

H1A: Evaluate a historical source for point of view and context.

H1B: Gather and analyze historical information to support or reject a hypothesis.

H2E: Analyze continuity and change over time.

H2G: Analyze the complexity of events during United States history.

G1A: Gather data, make inferences and draw conclusions from maps and other visual aids.

G2B: Create and interpret graphs, charts, and thematic maps.

Lesson Goal:

TSW determine why Americans wanted to move west in the 1800s

TSW evaluate how westward migration affected America's relationship with other countries and native peoples?

TSW will explore the role Bent's Fort played in Westward expansion?

Objectives:

- 1) TSW examine and appraise the impact of expansion on America, neighboring countries, and native cultures.
- 2) TSW analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources to critically analyze historical information

Evaluation/Assessment: Journal entry, create a situation/strip map, plot location from primary sources onto current maps

Lesson Materials:

- 1) Computer, Access to Internet
- 2) HD Map of "Bent's Old Fort" (CSPM)
- 3) HD NPS map of "Old Fort Bent" (<https://www.loc.gov/item/co0001/>)
- 4) Lesson background essay (CSPM)

Background Information: In 1800, approximately 387,000 white settlers lived west of the Appalachia Mountains. By 1820, that number had grown to more than 2.4 million, and the numbers continued to rise rapidly. By the time the Civil War began, more Americans lived west of the Appalachians than lived in states along the Atlantic Coast.

Some Americans moved west for religious reasons. Others were lured by the chance to own their own farms. While most settled east of the Mississippi River, more than 250,000 Americans continued farther west, across the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains to California and the Pacific Northwest.

In 1845 a magazine editor named John Louis O'Sullivan declared that it was the "manifest destiny" of Americans to overspread the continent allotted by Providence." Many Americans

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believe in this concept of **Manifest Destiny** – The idea that God had given the entire continent to the Americans and wanted them to settle the west.

Instructional Strategies:

Day 1:

- 1) Direct Instruction: (20 minutes)
 - a. Lecture material will consist of the following topics:
 - i. Western Pioneers
 - ii. The Hispanic Southwest
 - iii. Texas Independence
 - iv. War with Mexico
- 2) Historical Reading (20 minutes) CSPM Bent's Fort history
 - a. Potential Document Based Questions:
 - i. What is the significance of getting input from Cheyenne leaders before building the fort?
 - ii. Why do you think the fort was important to the Army during the Mexican-American war?
 - iii. How is Bent's Fort similar to trading posts along the Silk Road?
- 3) Discussion of document based questions (remainder of period)

Day 2:

- 1) Primary Source Analysis (30 minutes)
 - a. TSW analyze historic Bent's Fort map
 - i. Break students into 3 or 4 groups.
 - ii. Assign each group a section of the map to analyze and record:
 1. What information does your section contain?
 2. Where is your section located in relation to the fort?
 3. What is the significance of the section?
 - b. Groups will present the information in their section
 - c. Discussion of significance of this map.
 - d. TSW compare historic Bent's Fort map with NPS map (as a class)
 - i. What is different on these maps?
 - ii. What information is the same?
- 2) Assignment/Assessment (remainder of period) Choice of assignment:
 - a. TSW draw a strip map of the school noting significant locations
 - b. TSW write a journal entry of a day in the life of a pioneer at Bent's Fort
 - c. TSW plot location of Bent's Fort on Google maps. Note direction and distance and travel time to 10 major landmarks.

Additional Resources:

- The National Park Service's website for Old Bent's Fort can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/beol>
- Explore History Colorado's interactive, online Bent's Old Fort exhibit at http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/bentsfort/bents_home.html#mountainMen
- Additional Readings: Bent's Old Fort National Historic Guide by Mark L. Gardner
- Life of George Bent: Written From His Letters by George E. Hyde

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- Halfbreed: The Remarkable Story of George Bent—Caught Between the Worlds of the Indian and the White Man by David Fridtjof Halaas and Andrew E. Masich
- Bent's Fort by David Lavender
- Bent's Old Fort: An Archeological Study by Jackson W. Moore Jr.
- The Southern Cheyennes by Donald J. Berthrong
- Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin by Susan Magoffin and edited by Stella M. Drumm
- Wah-to-yah and the Taos Trail by Lewis Garrard

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