

**DBQ: Grade 11**  
**Manifest Destiny: 1820-1860**  
**Robin Rawlins, Lake Region High School**

**Directions:** Analyze the following documents and answer the guided questions following each document. Using what you learn from the documents and background knowledge of the subject, answer the essay question:

**How did the idea of Manifest Destiny change the American landscape by the 1860's?**

**Document A: John L. O'Sullivan on Manifest Destiny, 1839**

The American people having derived their origin from many other nations, and the Declaration of National Independence being entirely based on the great principle of human equality, these facts demonstrate at once our disconnected position as regards any other nation; that we have, in reality, but little connection with the past history of any of them, and still less with all antiquity, its glories, or its crimes. On the contrary, our national birth was the beginning of a new history, the formation and progress of an untried political system, which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only; and so far as regard the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity.

1. What is John O'Sullivan's view on our connection with the past and future?
  
2. What does he think our country is destined to be?



**Document B: Manifest Destiny**

3. What appears to be the direction of movement in this image?

4. Contrast the image from right to left, who does the lady in white represent?

### Document C: Congress resolution to annex Texas, 1845

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, That Congress doth consent the territory properly included within, and rightfully belonging to the Republic of Texas, may be erected into a new State, to be called the State of Texas, with a republican form of government, to be adopted by the people of said republic, by deputies in convention assembled, with the consent of the existing government, in order that the same may be admitted as one of the States of the Union.

And be it further resolved, That the foregoing consent of Congress is given upon the following conditions, and with the following guarantees to wit:

First said state to be formed, subject to the adjustment by this government of all questions of boundary that may arise with other governments: and the constitution thereof, with the proper evidence of its adoption by the people of said Republic of Texas, shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, to be laid before Congress for its final action, on or before the first day of January, on thousand eight hundred and forty-six.

5. To what country is Texas being annexed to?
6. Who has the power to “adjust” boundaries questioned by other countries?
7. Which countries might question the boundaries of Texas?



Document D: Map of Disputed Texas Border

8. What natural geographic boundary marks the boundary of undisputed Texas?
9. What natural geographic boundary marks the disputed territory?



BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the Congress of the United States, by virtue of the constitutional authority vested in them, have declared by their act, bearing date this day, that, "by the act of the Republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that Government and the United States: "

Now, therefore, I, JAMES K. POLK, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the same to all whom it may concern; and I do specially enjoin on all persons holding offices, civil or military, under the authority of the United States, that they be vigilant and zealous in discharging the duties respectively incident thereto: and I do moreover exhort all the good people of the United States, as they love their country, as they feel the wrongs which have forced them on the last resort of injured nations, and as they consult the best means, under the blessing of Divine Providence, of abridging its calamities, that they exert themselves in preserving order, in promoting concord, in maintaining the authority and the efficacy of the laws, and in supporting and invigorating all the measures which may be adopted by the constituted authorities for obtaining a speedy, a just, and an honorable peace.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed to these presents. Done at the City of Washington the thirteenth day [L. s.] of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, and of the independence of the United States the seventieth.

JAMES K. POLK.

*By the President:*

JAMES BUCHANAN,  
*Secretary of State.*

**Document E:  
Declaration of  
War on Mexico  
by President  
James K. Polk,  
1846**

10. Who does President Polk call upon to preserve order?

11. According to Polk, who has blessed the abridging of its calamities?

12. Who does Polk blame for his declaration of war?

## **Document F: Article V of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**

The boundary line between the two Republics shall commence in the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, opposite the mouth of the Rio Grande, otherwise called Rio Bravo del Norte, or opposite the mouth of its deepest branch, if it should have more than one branch emptying directly into the sea; from thence up the middle of that river, following the deepest channel, where it has more than one, to the point where it strikes the southern boundary of New Mexico; thence, westwardly, along the whole southern boundary of New Mexico (which runs north of the town called Paso) to its western termination; thence northward, along the western line of New Mexico, until it intersects the first branch of the river Gila; (or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, then to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same); thence down the middle of the said branch and of the said river, until it empties into the Rio Colorado; thence across the Rio Colorado, following the division line between upper and Lower California, to the Pacific Ocean.

The southern and Western limits of New Mexico, mentioned in the article, are those laid down in the map entitled "Map of the United Mexican States, as organized and defined by various acts of the Congress of said republic, and constructed according to the best authorities. Revised edition. Published at New York, in 1847, by J. Disternell, " of which map a copy is added to this treaty, bearing the signatures and seals of the undersigned Plenipotentiaries,. And, in order to preclude all difficulty in tracing upon the ground the limit separating Upper from Lower California, it is agreed that the said limit shall consist of a straight line drawn from the middle of the Rio Gila, where it unites with the Colorado. To a point on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, distant one marine league due south of the southernmost Point of the port of San Diego, according to the plan of said port made in the year 1782 by Don Juan Pantoja, second sailing master of the Spanish fleet, and published at Madrid in the year 1802, in the atlas to the voyage of the schooners Sutil and Mexicana; of which plan a copy is hereunto added, signed and sealed by the respective Plenipotentiaries

**13. What does this portion of the treaty ending the War with Mexico seem to be setting up?**

**14. Why do you suppose the authors included such detail about the source maps and attached them to the document?**

## **Document G: Map, Lands of the Mexican Cession**

**15. What familiar states are included in this new territory?**

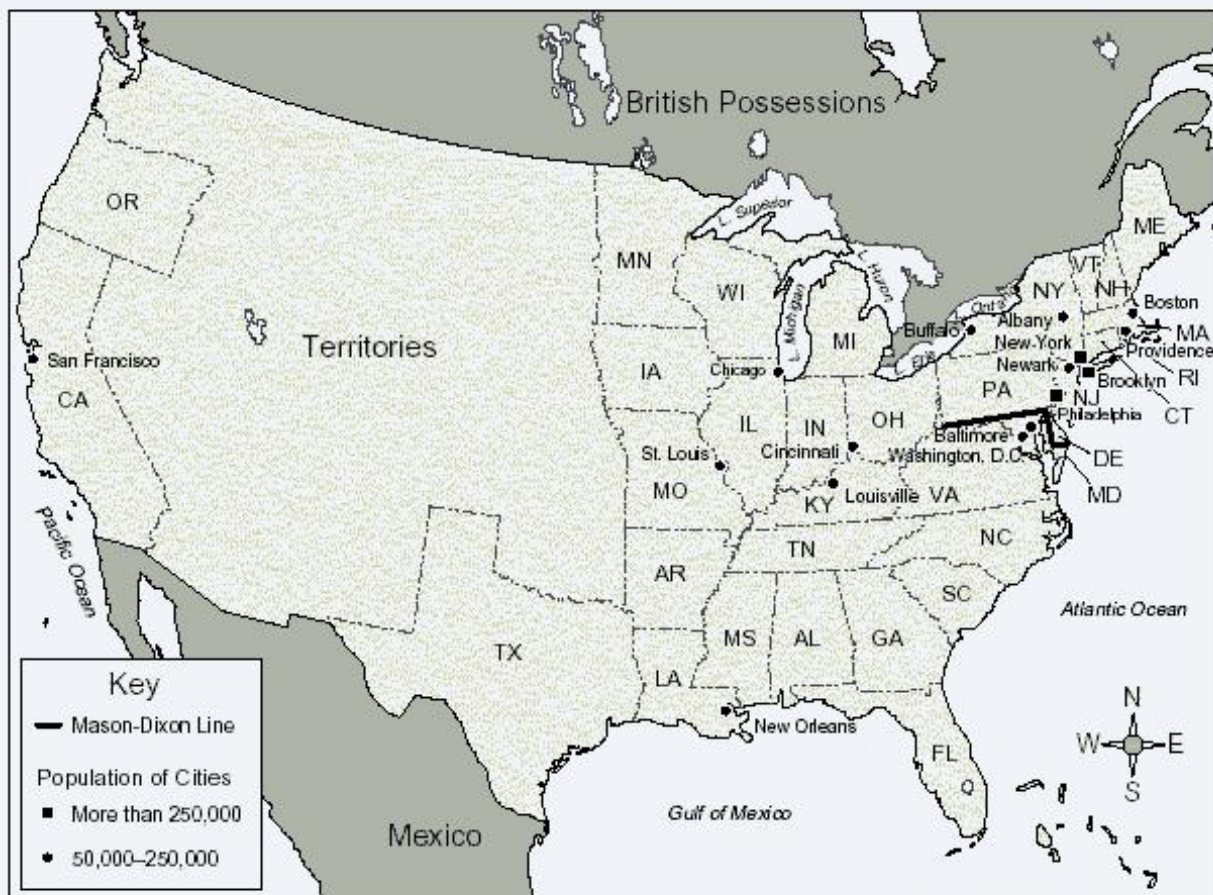
**16. Why do you think the US did not try to add more territory under the premise of the Manifest Destiny?**



The Mexican Cession

Document H: Map, the US by 1860

U.S. Cities, 1860



1. What limits US growth to the North, South, East and West?
2. Why do you think the idea of Manifest Destiny was limited by these boundaries?
3. What other conflicts might have limited US growth?

**Essay: How did the idea of Manifest Destiny change the American landscape by the 1860's?**

### **DBQ Rubric: Manifest Destiny**

#### **Excellent: 90-100**

Well written introduction, clear and sophisticated thesis statement, contains good conclusion, addresses all issues of question has balance, uses most of documents in sophisticated fashion, effective use of outside information, detailed, historically accurate, provides dates, names, examples, etc. Well organized, well written, varies sentence structure, few spelling and grammatical errors.

#### **Very Good: 80-89**

Effective introduction, clearly stated thesis, may not contain conclusion, addresses issues of the question, provides effective analysis, uses substantial number of documents, uses relevant outside information, detailed, may contain generalities, acceptable level of dates, names, examples, etc., may contain insignificant errors, clearly organized, may have repetitive sentence structure, grammatical errors do not detract from content

#### **Good: 75-79**

General and short introduction; rewritten question as thesis, treats on issue well, describes more than analyzes issues, uses some documents effectively, some relevant outside information, specific details, names, dates, etc., tends to generalize, minor errors, acceptable organization, grammatical and spelling errors, monotonous sentence structure

#### **Mediocre: 60-74**

Confused introduction, unclear thesis statement, too general, description of events, no analysis, uses one or two documents, little outside information, inaccurate or irrelevant outside information, serious historical errors, weak organization, weak writing, spelling and grammatical errors hinder understanding

#### **Poor: 0-59**

No evident thesis statement, little understanding of question, no or little use of documents, inappropriate or not outside information, no specifics, numerous errors, poor organization, serious spelling and grammatical errors