

Westward Movement Questions

1. Westward expansion in the United States was driven by the concept of Manifest Destiny. Did this concept justify the manner in which the U.S. government secured land west of the Mississippi River?
2. How did the design of the Conestoga wagon make it the favored vehicle for moving families West?
3. What impact did the geography of the Western United States have on the ability of pioneers to reach the Pacific coastal region?
4. The Westward Movement would not have been possible without the assistance of the United States government. How would you justify the truth of this statement?
5. What would have been your motivation to leave behind a fairly civilized life in the East to brave the dangers of a journey West? How would you convince your family to travel with you?
6. Why was it so difficult to establish justice and the rule of law in Western settlements and towns? What is the relationship between violence and the sense of adventure that led people West?
7. Women were indispensable to the settlement of the West. What is your reaction to this statement? How would you defend or dispute it?
8. Would you argue that the California Gold Rush had a positive or negative effect on the Westward Movement? On the state of California?
9. How did the transcontinental railroad change the way that Americans thought about their country? How did it change foreign attitudes about America?
10. What is the relationship between the completion of the Oregon Trail and life for Native Americans? Between the transcontinental railroad and life for Native Americans?

More questions: