

Moving West: The Louisiana Purchase and Exploration

DO NOW:

If you had received an invitation to join Lewis and Clark's Expedition to explore Louisiana, would you have joined them? Why or why not?

Acquiring Louisiana...




Pres. Thomas Jefferson wanted to buy New Orleans from the French. Why?

- Port for trading → \$\$
- Access to the Mississippi River → transport
- If Napoleon decided to close the port to Americans, thousands of farmers settling west of the Appalachian mountains would not be able to get their crops to market

In 1803, Jefferson sent James Monroe to France with \$7.5 million in order to purchase New Orleans.

Napoleon

- Was planning on settling Louisiana with farmers who would grow food for enslaved people on Caribbean sugar plantations
- Haitian Revolution, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture (the only successful slave revolution in the world) meant Napoleon had just lost major plantations
- France and Great Britain on brink of war - Napoleon needed money to finance war and might lose Louisiana to British



Napoleon offered to sell all of Louisiana to Monroe for \$15 million

Monroe panicked. The Constitution did not say anything about purchasing foreign territory so the sale was illegal, but it was too good an offer to pass up. Monroe and Jefferson called it an international treaty (which is within the duties of the Executive branch)

Louisiana Purchase

- Doubled the size of the US for under 3 cents an acre.
- Lewis & Clark explored with 45-member team, including African-American slave.
- Took 2 years and 4 months to get to Pacific and back, traveling over 8,000 miles
- Documented over 200 new plants and animals, started relationships with Native people
- Never found that elusive Northwest Passage
