

Chapter 13 Guided Reading Questions
Expansion, War, and Sectional Crisis: 1844-1860

Identify the Big Idea: What were the causes of the Mexican War, and in what ways did it bring about a growing sectional crisis during the 1850s?

1. Did the idea of Manifest Destiny actually cause events, such as the political support for territorial expansion, or simply justify actions taken for other reasons?
2. Why did some Great Plains peoples flourish between 1750 and 1860 while others did not?
3. Why did party politicians initially oppose the annexation of Texas, and how did this view change during the election of 1844?
4. How was the American acquisition of California similar to, and different from, the American-led creation of the Texas Republic (discussed in Chapter 12)?
5. What did conscience Whigs, David Wilmot, and free-soilers have in common, and why did they all rise to prominence between 1846 and 1848?
6. What were the main changes caused by the huge increase in California's population and its composition between 1849 and 1870?
7. How did the Compromise of 1850 resolve the various disputes over slavery, and who benefitted more from its terms?
8. Why did the Fugitive Slave Act fail?
9. What were the main policy objectives of the Republican and American parties?

