

Brunswick School Department  
Social Studies  
Grade 7 The Expanding Nation 1815-1850

**Unit Overview**

The period between 1815 and 1850 saw a large expansion of territory in the United States, along with many other significant changes.

**Essential Understandings**

- The geography of the expanding United States had a major effect on the relationship between the people and their country.
- Increasing the size of the nation greatly increased opportunity and freedom for citizens and had a major impact on Native Americans.

**Priority Standards and Performance Indicators**

(as based on the Maine Learning Results)

**P.S. SS -1 Conduct and present original research that utilizes primary and secondary sources in order to analyze, interpret and explain historical (and/or) contemporary social studies topics.**

- a. Locate relevant information that includes multiple perspectives from varied sources.
- b. Demonstrate facility with notetaking, organizing information, and creating bibliographies.
- c. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- d. Use information ethically and legally.

**P.S. SS-4 Utilize concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the United States and the world.**

- d. Describe the dynamic relationship between geographic features and various cultures, including the cultures of Maine Native Americans, various historical groups in the United States, and other cultures in the world.

**P.S.SS-5 Draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.**

- a. Explain that history is the study of the written record of the past, based on available evidence from a variety of sources.
- b. Trace and explain the history of democratic ideals and constitutional principles and their importance in the history of the United States and the world.
- c. Identify and analyze major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States and various regions of the world.

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**Examples of Formative / Summative Assessments**

- Oregon Trail, California Gold Rush, and Technology Projects (journals, maps, essays, photo essays, iMovies)
- Create and present an expansion (an opinion supported by evidence, some research, a primary source, a picture) related to the Expanding Nation
- Take two column notes on the Indian Removal, the Industrial Revolution, and westward expansion
- Analyze primary source material from Lowell Mill girl Lucy Larcom

**Sample Texts and Materials/Resources**

- Davidson, James West. America: History of Our Nation. New Jersey, published in 2007 by Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Sheinkin, Steve. Which Way to the Wild West? Macmillan, 2009. The Nebraska Project. <[Native Journey: Chief Standing Bear](#)>
- PBS - The West. <<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/>> Westward Expansion. <<http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/topic/viewdetailshis.aspx?TopicId=1000>>