Location, Location, Location: Arizona and the Gadsden Purchase

Students learn why the Gadsden Purchase was important to Westward Expansion and the geographic, economic & political factors associated with the purchase.

Author: Keith White
Grade Level: High School
Duration: 2 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS
4. The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places

Arizona Geography Strand

Concept 2: Places and Regions
PO 5 Examine how the geographic characteristics of a place affect the economics and culture (changing regional economy of the sunbelt).
PO 6. Identify how a region changes over time (e.g., US/Mexican border)

Other Arizona Standards

Strand 1: American History
Concept 5: Westward Expansion
PO 1. Trace the growth of the American nation during the period of western expansion:
a. Northwest Territory
b. Louisiana Territory
c. Florida
d. Texas
e. Oregon Country
f. Mexican Cession
g. Gadsden Purchase
h. Alaska

Strand 5: Economics
Concept 1: Foundations of Economics
PO 1. Analyze the implications of scarcity:
a. limited resources and unlimited human wants influence choice at individual, national, and international levels
b. factors of production (e.g., natural, human, and capital resources, entrepreneurship, technology)
c. marginal analysis by producers, consumers, savers, and investors

ELA Common Core Standards
Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies
Key Ideas and Details
11-12.RH.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
11-12.RH.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words)
Overview

The Gadsden Purchase is an example of an Arizona connection to the period of American migration called Westward Expansion. By studying the purchase, students gain insight into the political, geographic, and economic aspects in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes

11-12.WHST.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

a. Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.

c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Production and Distribution of Writing

11-12.WHST.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

11-12.WHST.9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
important to various groups during this period of American history.

Purpose

In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of the Gadsden Purchase, its key role in Western Expansion, the events leading up to the transaction, its opposition and final ratification, and the benefits the purchase provided to Arizona and the southwestern United States.

Materials

- Computer and projection method
- Gadsden Purchase PowerPoint
- Vocabulary Practice
- Student Copy of Time Line Organizer and Answer Key
- “Snapshot Timeline”
- Student Handout 1 (Time Line/Guided Lecture Notes) and Answer Key
- Student Handout 2 (Gadsden Purchase Treaty: December 30, 1853)
- Student Handout 3 (Student Activity Writing)
- Student Handout 4 (Economics Activity) and Answer Key
- Student Handout 5 (Gadsden Purchase Map)
- Student Handout 6 (Assessment) and Answer Key
- Map of Optional Boundary Lines as Conveyed to Gadsden
- Map of Gadsden Purchase of 1853

Objectives

The student will be able to:
1. Describe the primary reasons for the Gadsden Purchase and why it is important in Westward expansion.
2. Analyze the key economic, political, cultural, and resource benefits as a result of the Gadsden Purchase as well as why Mexico would sell their land.

Procedures

Prerequisite Skills: The vocabulary for this lesson may require prior preparation. Included in the lesson and the PowerPoint are key terms to learn. These could be given to certain students (ELLs, SpEd, etc) the day before the lesson so they could be more familiar with the terms.

Session One

Use the provided PowerPoint presentation to complete the procedures 1-6.

1. Bell work: Write down several reasons why some land (property) is more valuable than other land (property).
2. Essential Question: Why acquire more land?
3. Anticipatory set: Why would the United States want to purchase more land in the “desert” Southwest?
4. Review vocabulary terms that will be used in the lesson.
5. Distribute blank time line organizer for students to complete during power point presentation.
6. Distribute the Gadsden Treaty document. Students read aloud the document and add details to time line organizer.
7. Writing activity: Distribute Student Handout 3 (Student Activity Writing). Students will summarize Gadsden Purchase document and compose a press release that outlines the key benefits in a cost/benefit analysis concluding with economic and political support. This can be done as a homework assignment.

Session Two

8. Economics activity: Students compute the additional square miles and acres added and determine the cost per square miles and cost per acre. Students can adjust for inflation and reflect in today’s dollars using provided CPI (Consumer Price Index for 1854 and 2008) formulas.
9. Assessment: Use maps and student handouts to answer the discussion points on Student Handout 6 (Assessment). Students can work individually or in groups to complete the assessment.

Assessment

Assessment: Use maps and student handouts to answer the discussion points on Student Handout 6 (Assessment). Mastery will be considered 80% or higher.

For a more challenging assessment, add this writing component:

Write a 1-page summary that reflects the correlation of the Gadsden Purchase Treaty to the politics of slavery, describes the economic
opportunity costs, and gives the benefits of railroad transportation to the U.S.

**Extensions**

Civics (Government) classes may find several useful components to apply as appropriate in areas of slavery issues, appropriations, filibuster, powers of the legislature and executive branches, and ratification.

Addition of Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. territories could culminate the Westward Expansion lesson.

**Sources**


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