

Vocabulary

Vocabulary

Study the vocabulary words and definitions below.

assimilation a minority group's adoption of beliefs and way of life of the dominant culture

barbed wire fence wire having sharp, evenly spaced points

Battle of the Little Bighorn 1876 battle at the Little Bighorn River in Montana in which the Sioux defeated the United States Army

Battle of Wounded Knee 1890 battle at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota in which 300 unarmed Native Americans were massacred by United States soldiers

boom town a town that grows very fast (a phrase usually affiliated with mining towns)

Dawes Act..... a law that gave Native Americans the right to own property

dry farming a way of plowing to preserve water in soil

fifty-niners people who went to Colorado in search of gold in 1859

forty-niners people who went to California in search of gold in 1849

Ghost Dance a Native American ritual to help restore tribal life, popular among the Sioux prior to the Battle of Wounded Knee

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- Great Plains** vast area of land in the west-central United States, broad grasslands on relatively flat land with very fertile soil
- Homestead Act** 1862 law that gave 160 acres of land to a person who would improve it
- homesteader** a person who received land from the United States government in return for farming it
- long drive** herding cattle from the Texas plains to railroads in Missouri and other Midwest states for shipping to eastern cities
- manifest destiny** belief that the United States would one day extend its borders from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean
- massacre** a ruthless killing of a large number of people
- Morrill Land Grant Acts** laws made in 1862 and 1890 to create agricultural colleges by giving federal land to states
- open range** a vast area of unfenced land
- pioneers** early American settlers in the West
- prospector** individual who searches for large deposits of gold, silver, copper, and other valuable minerals

Vocabulary

reservations special homelands set aside for Native Americans

transcontinental reaching across a continent

wagon trains covered wagons, pulled by horses or oxen, that traveled west together

Who's Who in Westward Expansion

Crazy Horse

Helen Hunt Jackson

Chief Joseph

Sitting Bull

General George A. Custer