Geography Skills
Analyze the maps in “Setting the Stage”. Then answer the following questions and fill out the map as directed.

1. Label the Louisiana Territory on your map and highlight its borders. What year was it added to the United States? How did adding this region change the size of the nation?

2. Highlight the borders of Texas and the Mexican Cession and label these two regions. When was each region added to the United States?

What other territory was acquired from Mexico? Label it on your map.

3. What three trails crossed the Louisiana Territory from Independence, Missouri? Draw and label each trail.

Locate and label the cities at the ends of each trail. Also locate and label the city of Independence.

4. Label and lightly shade Oregon Country. When did it become part of the United States?

5. Draw and label the Old Spanish Trail. Locate and label its western end.

6. Which rivers and mountain ranges did settlers have to cross when following the Santa Fe Trail and the Old Spanish Trail to California? Label those rivers and mountains.

7. Locate and label Sacramento. Where did the trail that settlers took to reach this city leave the Oregon Trail? Locate and label that place on your map.

8. Locate and label South Pass. Which three trails crossed the Rocky Mountains at South Pass? Label and name those trails.
Critical Thinking

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

9. Why do you think the Mormon, Oregon, and Santa Fe trails each followed rivers for such a long distance? What benefit would such a route have for travelers?

10. Why would travel by wagon through the mountains have been slower than travel across desert or plains?

11. How might the United States’ purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France have helped encourage American settlers to later travel to Oregon and California?