Section 1: Louisiana Becomes American

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:
—What were the reasons why Louisiana was purchased by America from France?

Louisiana Becomes American
- Louisiana Purchase (1803): one of the greatest real estate deals in history
  - Included Louisiana & all or parts of 13 states
  - Almost 900,000 square miles added to US
- 1800: Agreement between Spain & France (Louisiana given up by Spain)
- Island of Haiti given present name by Toussaint L'Ouverture
- 1802: French troops sent by Napoleon to regain Haiti
- Choice made by Napoleon (sale of Louisiana to United States

Spain to France to the United States
- January 18, 1803: Spanish order to transfer Louisiana to France
- The Louisiana Purchase (purchase of Louisiana territory from France by United States)
  - Cost: $15 million (about 4 cents per acre)
- United States’ claim to Louisiana announced by “Stars & Stripes”
- People released from ties of loyalty to France
- People of Louisiana became Americans

Louisiana as a Territory of the United States
- Size of United States (more than doubled by Louisiana Purchase)
- March, 1804: Creation of two territories by Congress
  - Territory of Orleans (most of present state of Louisiana)
  - District of Louisiana (within Indiana Territory)
- Territory of Orleans governed by William C.C. Claiborne (appointed by Thomas Jefferson)
- District of Louisiana (capital at St. Louis) governed by General James Wilkinson

The People of Louisiana
- French Creoles called the “ancient Louisianians” by Governor Claiborne
- Large established community in New Orleans (free people of color)
- Immediate statehood desired by some people in Territory of Orleans
- Time needed to learn about democratic government
- “Kaintucks” – some of 1st Americans to come to Louisiana (different language, strange culture)

Border Disputes
- Expeditions to survey & map Louisiana Territory
  - Lewis & Clark Expedition (most famous)
  - Red River Expedition (1806 – by Freeman & Custis – explored part of present-day Louisiana)
• Boundary problems created between United States and Spain (due to Louisiana Purchase)
• **1806: Neutral zone established between Louisiana and Texas**
  – No government control
  – Called Sabine Strip (lawless hideout for bandits)

**The Burr Conspiracy**
• Aaron Burr (a former US Vice-President): involved in power struggle in New Orleans
• Accused of planning his own empire & encouraging western states to separate from the US (arrested for treason)
• Stopped by General Wilkinson, governor of the District of Louisiana
• Burr officially acquitted
• Wilkerson a possible double agent for both US & the Spanish

**The West Florida Revolt**
• West Florida – not included in Louisiana Purchase (remained Spanish)
  – Included areas today called “the Florida Parishes” – New Orleans: only place east of Mississippi included in Louisiana Purchase
  – Ownership disputed by Spain & United States
• Revolt of English-speaking people (West Florida)
  – An independent nation (brief period)
  – 1810: area annexed by United States

**The Great Slave Uprising of 1811**
• **After 1808**: slaves still traded among states (could not legally be imported into US)
  – brought from other countries by smugglers
  – worked valuable Louisiana crops (sugar cane, cotton)
• **1812**: slave population in Louisiana (about 35,000)
• **1811**: a major slave uprising near present-day St. Charles Parish
  – killing of many slaves
  – later execution of other slaves

**Section 2: Louisiana Becomes a State**

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION**:  
How did Louisiana become a state in the union?

**Louisiana Becomes a State**
• Movement of more and more settlers into Louisiana
• Settlers pushing for statehood
  – Requirement by law for statehood (60,000 residents)
• Petition in 1809 for statehood (Territory of Orleans)
• April 30, 1812: Statehood declared for Louisiana

**Louisiana’s First Constitution**
• **Constitution of Kentucky (1799) used as a model**
  – Governor selected by legislature (from two leading candidates in popular election)
  – For voting / holding office (only white male property owners)
• Continuation of New Orleans as capital
• New state’s first governor (*William C.C Claiborne*)
Early Problems

• Continued conflicts between Creoles and newly arrived Americans
• Language and cultural barriers
• Smuggling – (goods seized from Spanish & British ships by privateers)

Section 3: The War of 1812

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:
— What was Louisiana’s participation in the War of 1812 and in the Battle of New Orleans?
• War of 1812 (sometimes called the “second war for independence”)
• United States not treated as an equal by British
• Conflicts between Americans and Native American tribes (encouraged by British)
• Americans angered by practice of “impressment” – forcing American sailors into service on British ships against their will

Protecting New Orleans

• Port of New Orleans blocked by British (War of 1812)
• End of 1814: Desire by British to capture city (Andrew Jackson – sent by US to protect city)
• Jackson’s army: state militia, Kentucky sharpshooters, Choctaw Indians, Jean Lafitte and his men
• Support sworn by French to Jackson

The Battle of New Orleans

• Last in series of battles beginning December, 1814
• January 8, 1815: meeting of British and American armies “on the plains of Chalmette” (Battle of New Orleans)
• December 24, 1814: Treaty of Ghent – signed, but arrival of ending of war delayed in US (weeks later)
• Statue of Andrew Jackson (as hero) in Jackson Square

After the War

• Boundary between Louisiana and Spanish Texas still unsettled
• February, 1819: Adams-Onis Treaty
  — set boundary at Sabine River
  — East Florida ceded to US
  — claims to Texas given up by US
• Fort Jesup (built 1822 – US military post) at boundary line between US and Spanish Texas
  — Reconstruction at its site in DeSoto Parish

Section 4: Growth and Progress

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:
— What was the effect of the steamboat on Louisiana?

Steamboats

• Prior transportation / travel means in New Orleans
  — flatboats (rafts – good for one trip downriver)
– Keelboats (could make return trip upriver – took three months)

• 1812: 1st steamboat in New Orleans
  – used steam power (travel up & down rivers)
  – carried cargo & passengers
• Became most popular way of travel
  – luxury steamboats (elaborate & decorated)
  – smaller steamboats (often crowded & dirty)

**Clearing the Red River Raft**

• River clogged by logjam (“the Great Raft”) for about 200 miles
• Snagboat designed by Captain Henry Miller Shreve to pull logs from river (project funded by United States government)
• City of Shreveport named for Shreve (site of trading post)

**Louisiana’s Pioneers**

• American cattle farmers attracted to Opelousas & old Attakapa region of St. Martinville
• One of first areas of settlement: old Spanish fort on Ouachita River
• Settlement Vidalia
• More pioneers in North Louisiana due to opening of Red River

**The Texas Connection**

• Included northwest corner of Louisiana
• 1820s: movement of Americans into region (Texas still held by Mexico)
• 1836: Declaration of Independence by Americans in Texas
  – Streets of town square of Shreveport named to honor Texans
  – Today’s Texas Street (in front of Caddo Parish Courthouse)

**notes from:**  [www.mystatehistory.com](http://www.mystatehistory.com)

[back](#)