Westward Expansion
Timeline

1767: Daniel Boone explores Kentucky for the first time.

1803: Louisiana Purchase - President Thomas Jefferson buys the Louisiana Territory from France for $15 million. This doubles the size of the United States and provides a large area to the west of the country for expansion.

1805: Lewis and Clark reach the Pacific Ocean - Explorers Lewis and Clark map out areas of the Louisiana Purchase and eventually reach the Pacific Ocean.

1830: Indian Removal Act - Congress passes a law to move Native Americans from the Southeast to the west of the Mississippi River.

1836: Battle of the Alamo - Mexican troops attack the Alamo Mission killing all but two Texans. This spurs the Texans on in the Texas Revolution.

1838: Trail of Tears - The Cherokee Nation is forced to march from the east coast to Oklahoma. Many thousands die along the way.

1841: Oregon Trail - People begin to travel west in wagon trains on the Oregon Trail. Around 300,000 people would take the trail over the next 20 years.

1845: Manifest Destiny - Journalist John O’Sullivan first uses the term "Manifest Destiny" to describe the westward expansion of the United States.

1845: Texas becomes a U.S. State - The United States officially claims Texas as a state, eventually leading to the Mexican-American War.

1846: Brigham Young leads 5,000 Mormons to Utah - After experiencing religious persecution, the Mormons move to Salt Lake City, Utah.

1846-1848: The Mexican-American War - A war fought over the rights to Texas. After the war, the United States paid Mexico $15 million for land that would later become California, Texas, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and parts of several other states.

1846: Oregon Treaty - England signs the Oregon Treaty handing over the Oregon Territory to the United States.

1848: Gold Rush begins - James Marshall discovers gold at Sutter's Mill. Soon word is out and people rush to California to strike it rich.

1849: Around 90,000 "Forty-niners" move to California to find gold.
1860: The Pony Express begins to deliver mail.

1861: The First Transcontinental Telegraph line is finished. The Pony Express shuts down.

1862: Pacific Railroad Act - The United States government agrees to help fund a railroad from California to Missouri.

1862: Homestead Act - The U.S. government offers up free land to farmers who agree to live on the land for five years and make improvements to the land. Many people rush to places like Oklahoma to claim their land.

1869: The Transcontinental Railroad is completed - The Union Pacific Railroad and the Central Pacific Railroads meet at Promontory, Utah and the railroad is completed.

1872: Yellowstone National Park is dedicated as the nation's first national park by President Ulysses S. Grant.

1874: Black Hills Gold - Gold is discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

1874: Barbed wire invented - Ranchers can now use barbed wire fences to keep their cattle from ranging free.

1876: Wild Bill Hickok is shot and killed while playing poker in Deadwood, South Dakota.

1876: Battle of Little Bighorn - An American Indian army composed of Lakota, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapahoe defeat General Custer and the 7th Calvary.

1890: The U.S. Government announces that the Western lands have been explored.