

READING FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Making Generalizations—Multiple Choice

Directions: Read the passage about the War with Mexico. Use the information in the passage and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer the questions.

The treaty that ended the Mexican War in 1848 added a large amount of territory to the United States. Not counting Texas, whose annexation in 1845 had been one of the causes of the war, the area of the U.S. grew by almost a third. The territory added was larger than the Louisiana Purchase. The West, including the Southwest, would become a place for expanded settlement, a supplier of basic resources, and a market for manufactured goods. The discovery of gold in northern California in 1848 launched the gold rush of 1849. Another precious metal, silver began to be mined in Nevada, while Arizona and Utah opened copper mines.

Not everyone had been in favor of this expansion of American territory. Many in the North had opposed the war, fearing that the annexation of Mexican territory would open the way for expansion of slavery. Even John C. Calhoun, a southerner, had warned that territorial conquests did not always yield totally positive results. In fact, the expansion of slavery in the federal territories, would become an issue of deep sectional division, leading ultimately to the Civil War.

Many generals who would fight on different sides in the Civil War, fought together in the Mexican War under the leadership of Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott. Some of these were William Tecumseh Sherman, Stonewall Jackson, George Meade, Franklin Pierce, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee. In addition, three military heroes later became presidents of the United States, namely Taylor, Grant, and Pierce.

1. Which generalization is NOT supported by the passage?
 - A Everyone in the United States supported the Mexican War.
 - B The Mexican War brought the U.S. a large amount of territory.
 - C The Mexican War had direct links to the American Civil War.
 - D Gaining territory is not always a totally positive thing.
2. Which statement is a generalization of the information in the passage?
 - A Gold was discovered in California in 1848.
 - B Robert E. Lee fought in the Mexican War and the Civil War.
 - C Texas was annexed to the United States before the Civil War.
 - D The Mexican War completely transformed the United States.

Test Your Knowledge

What generalizations could you make that reflect the differing points of view about the Mexican War?