

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

The Greatest Real Estate Deal in History?

In 1803, the United States doubled in size when President Thomas Jefferson agreed to buy 828,000 square miles of land from France. This real estate deal came to be known as the Louisiana Purchase. Many scholars have called it the biggest feat in Jefferson's presidency because it so radically changed the United States.

It all started with Jefferson's plans to spread the U.S. territory and bolster trade of its goods. The population of the U.S. was skyrocketing, and the country had to expand to meet the geographical demands of its people. Specifically, people needed more land to graze livestock and raise crops. In addition to adding more land, Jefferson wanted to sell American goods all over the world. To do that, he needed a port because most goods were transported using boats. The port that U.S. wanted was on the Mississippi River in New Orleans. At the time, though, New Orleans was not owned by the United States. Thomas Jefferson wanted to change that.

Luckily for Jefferson, the Louisiana Territory that he purchased was enormous and included New Orleans. Its borders were the Mississippi River (east) and to the Rocky Mountains (west). It also went to Canada (north) and to the Gulf of Mexico (south). Before Jefferson bought it, the Louisiana Territory had changed hands a few times. France claimed it in 1682. After the French and Indian War (1754–63), France ceded it to Spain. Spain kept it until 1801 and then promised it to France in a secret deal.

When Spain owned the Louisiana Territory, the U.S. and Spain signed a deal in 1795 that said that the U.S. could use New Orleans for trade. Things changed when Spain gave the land back to France, though, because France had a strong emperor—Napoleon Bonaparte.

Napoleon wanted a huge empire that included land holdings in North America. When he took over France, he planned to stop the U.S. from using New Orleans. He also did not want the U.S. to move out west.

Jefferson decided to try to convince France to sell the Louisiana Territory to the U.S. Jefferson sent his right-hand man, James Monroe, to France to try to buy New Orleans and part of all of Florida. Monroe was authorized to spend up to \$10 million to make the deal a reality. Monroe was happily surprised when he got to France. Napoleon had changed his mind about allowing the U.S. to buy New Orleans. He offered Monroe the entire Louisiana Territory for \$15 million. Monroe immediately agreed because Napoleon was offering an enormous amount of land for a relatively low price.

Why would Napoleon offer this? He needed money badly because France was dealing with an outbreak of Yellow Fever as well as an imminent war with Great Britain. Napoleon, a strategic and intelligent leader, knew he needed to focus on his land in Europe. He also knew that he badly needed the money from the sale of the Louisiana Territory. With his sale to Monroe and Jefferson, Napoleon abandoned his plans for a massive empire in North America.

As a result of this monumental real estate deal between the U.S. and France, the Louisiana Purchase was drafted on April 30, 1803, and signed on May 2. When the land officially became part of the U.S. in December 1803, Jefferson sent explorers west almost immediately. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led the Corps of Discovery Expedition in 1804.

Some say that this real estate deal was the best thing Jefferson ever accomplished because it doubled the size of the country and secured ownership of New Orleans. At the time of the deal, though, many Americans believed the opposite was true about the deal. Those against the deal believed that the purchase of the Louisiana Territory was illegal because the Constitution did not give Jefferson the right to purchase land for the U.S. Technically, these detractors were correct. Jefferson was even aware of the fact that he did not have the right to buy land. Despite knowing that the law was technically not on his side in the deal, Jefferson decided to go ahead with the deal. He thought that passing up a deal like that would be ludicrous.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "The Greatest Real Estate Deal in History?".

The Louisiana Purchase changed the United States forever because it doubled the size of the U.S. at the time. It also eventually became part or all of 15 states. Some Americans may always think it was not legal. Others believe that doubling the country for only three cents per acre was the greatest real estate deal in history.

- 1** The reader can conclude that Jefferson did not want to wait to get permission to buy the Louisiana Territory because he felt he might not get such a good deal from Napoleon if he waited too long. Which evidence from the text *best* supports this conclusion? Select *three* that apply.
- A. Things changed when Spain gave the land back to France, though, because France had a strong emperor—Napoleon Bonaparte.
 - B. Monroe immediately agreed because Napoleon was offering an enormous amount of land for a relatively low price.
 - C. Why would Napoleon offer this? He needed money badly because France was dealing with an outbreak of Yellow Fever as well as an imminent war with Great Britain.
 - D. He also knew that he badly needed the money from the sale of the Louisiana Territory.
 - E. When the land officially became part of the U.S. in December 1803, Jefferson sent explorers west almost immediately.
 - F. Despite knowing that the law was technically not on his side in the deal, Jefferson decided to go ahead with the deal.
- 2** Write a one-paragraph objective summary of "The Greatest Real Estate Deal in History?". Support your summary with details from the text.

- 3** Which sentence *best* summarizes the central idea of the text?
- A. Thomas Jefferson was a great president.
 - B. Both Napoleon Bonaparte and Thomas Jefferson did things that were illegal to progress their causes.
 - C. The Louisiana Purchase changed the landscape, food production, and trade potential of the United States forever.
 - D. France, Spain, and the United States engaged in an extensive debate over which country should own the Louisiana Territory.
- 4** What conclusion can be drawn about how the text compares those who supported the Louisiana Purchase to those who did not? Support your answer with details from the text.
- 5** Read these sentences from the text.
- Those against the deal believed that the purchase of the Louisiana Territory was illegal because the Constitution did not give Jefferson the right to purchase land for the U.S. Technically, these detractors were correct.
- What is a detractor as used in the sentences above?
- A. a person who breaks the law
 - B. a person who buys land
 - C. a person who agrees
 - D. a person who is a critic

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "The Greatest Real Estate Deal in History?".

6 Which of the following *best* describes the author's purpose for writing this text?

- A. The author wanted to persuade the reader that the Louisiana Purchase was the best land purchase made in the history of the United States.
- B. The author wanted to inform the reader of the history and importance the Louisiana Purchase.
- C. The author wanted to inform the reader that the population growth in the early 1800's required the United States to need more land.
- D. The author wanted to persuade the reader that the Louisiana Purchase was not constitutional or legal.

7 Read the paragraph.

Why would Napoleon offer this? He needed money badly because France was dealing with an outbreak of Yellow Fever as well as an imminent war with Great Britain. Napoleon, a strategic and intelligent leader, knew he needed to focus on his land in Europe. He also knew that he badly needed the money from the sale of the Louisiana Territory. With his sale to Monroe and Jefferson, Napoleon abandoned his plans for a massive empire in North America.

Why did the author choose to start the paragraph with a question?

- A. The author wanted to present a question that is at the heart of an age-old debate.
- B. The author wanted to show that selling the territory for such a low price did not make sense when what Napoleon needed was more money.
- C. The author wanted to make it seem like he or she was curious to know what the reader was thinking.
- D. The author wanted to show how surprising Napoleon's decision was and then provide the logical explanation behind it.

8 Read the following sentence from the text.

It all started with Jefferson's plans to spread the U.S. territory and bolster trade of its goods.

What is the meaning of the word bolster?

- A. to make better or stronger
- B. to increase the price of
- C. to spread to every location
- D. to speed up the time it takes