

Step 3

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R&T *Discovery*

American Cities

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Chapters 1 to 6 are recorded on the accompanying CD.

Chapters 7 and 8 are downloadable from our website: www.cideb.it or www.blackcat-cideb.com.



These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages linked to the listening activities.



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The Century of Urbanization¹

In less than a century pioneer settlements and sleepy villages became great cities and important business and industrial centers.

The United States, not including Hawaii and Alaska, covers about 3 million miles², or almost 8 million km². It is about the same size as the whole of Europe.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century most of America was a wilderness² and no American had ever traveled across the continent to the Pacific Ocean. At the end of the same century there were already forty-five of the present fifty states.

The late nineteenth century was called “the age of great cities” because between 1860 and 1910 the American urban³ population had grown from six million to forty-four million. By 1920 more than half of the population lived and worked in urban areas. The great speed with which America was settled and its

1. **urbanization** : when people build towns and cities in a country area.
2. **wilderness** : an area of land with no houses, towns or roads.
3. **urban** : of a town or city.



United States map depicting territorial acquisitions.

cities were created is amazing. How did all of this happen? In order to understand the fast growth and urbanization of America it is important to go back to the Founding Fathers.

The North Atlantic Coast

The first attempt at a colonial city in the New World was the British colony of Jamestown in Virginia in 1607, which failed. Between 1620 and 1630 the Pilgrims and Puritans, often called the Founding Fathers, left Great Britain and settled on the northeast coast of North America in the area that is now Boston in Massachusetts. Both the Pilgrims and Puritans were part of a Protestant religious group and went to the New World to practice their religion freely. Their strict religious opinions influenced every part of their life: social, political and economic. They were honest, thrifty⁴ and believed in hard work and a good

4. **thrifty** : they saved their money and spent it wisely.



The Pilgrim Fathers Boarding the “Mayflower”, color print after a painting (end of 19th century) by Bernard Gribble.

education for everyone. Success at work and making money were considered a sign of God’s favor. This became known as the American work ethic ⁵ and it strongly influenced the future growth of the nation.

Soon after their arrival in the New World the Founding Fathers set up the first British colonies and started successful businesses: the fish, fur, salt and timber trades. Businesses and factories quickly developed in and around Boston, which soon became an important city and seaport.

The work ethic of the Founding Fathers soon moved to the rest of New England and the North Atlantic Coast, where trading posts and businesses were set up, grew and became cities like New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

At this time the life and economy of the South Atlantic area were agricultural. Towards the end of the 1800s the South became more industrial, in particular Texas with its cotton, cattle ⁶ and oil industries.

5. **ethic** : rule, important idea.

6. **cattle** : cows and bulls.



After the American Revolution (1775-1781) the thirteen British colonies became the first thirteen states of America, and their inhabitants were ready to explore and settle the unknown continent.

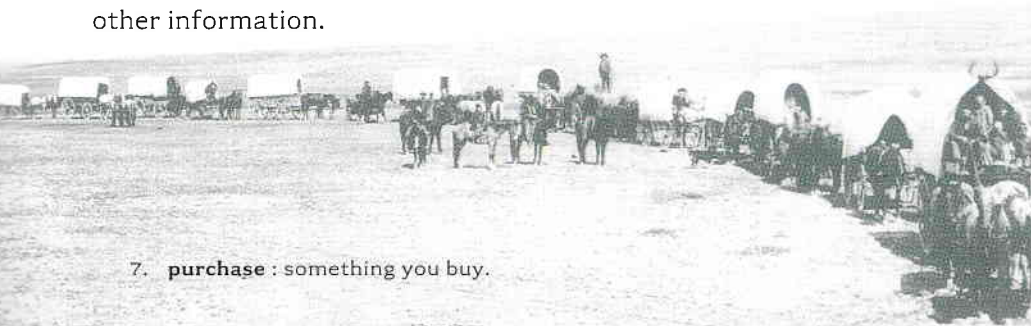
The first pioneers crossed the Appalachian Mountains and settled in what is now Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, all the way to the Mississippi River, the western limit of America at the end of the 1700s.

In 1803 Fort Dearborn, a U.S. military fort, was built where the city of Chicago stands today. The location on Lake Michigan, the building of the Erie Canal, which connected Lake Erie in the Midwest to New York, and the excellent railroad connections attracted thousands of settlers to Chicago, which became an important industrial city of the Midwest.

Other Midwest cities that grew in size and importance in the 1800s were Cleveland, Detroit and Milwaukee.

The Louisiana Purchase ⁷

In 1803 the American President Thomas Jefferson bought an enormous piece of land from France for \$15 million: this was called the “Louisiana Purchase”. No one knew exactly how big the land was so President Jefferson asked Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore it and bring back detailed maps and other information.



7. **purchase** : something you buy.

The journey of about 50 men, which began in St Louis, Missouri in 1804, traveled up the Missouri River, crossed the Rocky Mountains, and after many difficulties arrived at the Pacific Ocean in November 1805. They returned to Missouri in September 1806 with maps of the new area of land and very useful information. The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States and opened the doors to the West.

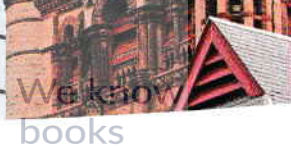
This was the beginning of the continental growth; hundreds of thousands of people moving from the Atlantic coast and the Midwest started looking for better economic opportunities in the enormous new area of land.

Manifest Destiny

“Manifest Destiny” was the idea that the future of the United States was to grow from the Atlantic to the Pacific, taking its culture, language and government across the continent, while building towns and cities where Americans could live, work and grow rich. The term “Manifest Destiny” means that the idea was obvious – “manifest”, and certain – “destiny”. It was first used in the 1840s by the journalist John O’Sullivan, but the project for continental growth was first mentioned by Benjamin Franklin in 1767 and by John Quincy Adams in 1811.



American Progress by John Gast (circa 1872), is an allegorical representation of Manifest Destiny. Here Columbia, the female personification of the United States, leads American settlers to the West.



The text and **beyond**

PET 1 Comprehension check

Read these sentences about Chapter One. Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect. If it is correct, mark A. If it is not correct, mark B.

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 By 1920 there were fifty states in America. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 The Pilgrims and the Puritans, also called the Founding Fathers, worked in the fish and salt industries in Massachusetts. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Their religious ideas became known as the American work ethic. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 The people of the South Atlantic area were influenced by the ideas of the Founding Fathers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 The pioneers fought the American Revolution in the Appalachian Mountains. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Fort Dearborn was built on Lake Michigan. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 American continental growth started with the Louisiana Purchase. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Benjamin Franklin was against the idea of Manifest Destiny. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 Every pioneer family was given free land to settle in the Great Plains. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 New kinds of transportation made horizontal growth in cities possible. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 Vocabulary

Circle the word that doesn't belong and explain why.

- streetcar ship railroad subway system
A ship travels on water, the other three involve travel on the ground or under the ground.
- business industry factory government
- thrifty honesty wealth education
- inhabitant pioneer journalist settler
- city town state village
- coast trail path road