

Debate and Diplomacy

The Louisiana Purchase

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Group Website

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We did our National History Day Project on the Debate and Diplomacy of the Louisiana Purchase because we are learning about Louisiana history in our Social Studies class. We decided to focus our topic on the debate and diplomacy in the Louisiana purchase because there were so many things our lessons did not explain. We know there was some negotiation involved in the purchase but we did not realize how much more than our history book explained. There were also issues with the treaty and the ratification of the treaty that we barely discussed in class.

We began our research looking at primary sources. Since English is our second language, we had to ask the ESL Coach and our English teacher for help and we also used Google Translate. We went to Founders Online and found many letters between Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, James Madison and James Monroe. It was difficult to decide what we should use since there was so much we were learning about the negotiations between the Americans and the ministers of France as we read the correspondence. We also learned that many congress members, especially the Federalists, opposed the purchase of more land. We went to the National Archives and to the Library of Congress where we found more primary sources to sort through. We read through each of the Articles of the Louisiana Treaty and decided to focus on the two we felt most important to the debate over the purchase. The New Orleans Historical Collection provided us with maps and images we could use regarding the people of Louisiana.

We chose to create a website because we felt that it would be fun. Since most of our education went virtual last year, we both felt confident that we could learn to manipulate a website. What we didn't realize is that it takes time and this year we were not allowed to take our laptops home. So we were only able to work on our project after school during tutoring time. We had a lot

of difficulty with the links and the navigation. We spent a lot of time trying to make sure it was organized.

We believe the Louisiana Purchase is a perfect example of Debate and Diplomacy. President Jefferson tasked Robert Livingston to negotiate the purchase of New Orleans but that process required persistence and cautious discourse in order to preserve peace and promote American expansion. The debate of the treaty also took careful consideration of each article as boundaries, slavery and citizenship would become great issues that would eventually impact the country in negatively.

Works Cited

Primary Sources:

Bettmann, and Epics. "Revolting Against the French in St. Dominique." *Getty Images*, <https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/bettmann-archive>.

This is an illustration depicting François Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture participating in the successful revolt against French power in St. Dominique (Haiti). Hand-colored engraving.

"Eli Whitney Museum." Eli Whitney Museum and Workshop. <https://www.eliwhitney.org>

We use a picture of Eli Whitney's Cotton Gin on our website. The cotton gin changed the economy of the country and increased the need for slaves. Cotton will become the King of the south. Many in the south believed that they could control the issue of slavery and the country's economy because everyone, including Europe was depended on cotton.

“Founders Online: To Thomas Jefferson from Robert R. Livingston, 14 April 1803.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-40-02-0146>.

We use a quote from Robert Livingston's letter to Thomas Jefferson, written 14, April, 180. The quote is on our Diplomacy page. Robert Livingston wrote this letter to Thomas Jefferson describing the negotiations in Paris.

Griswold, Roger. “Speech by Representative Roger Griswold, October 1803.” *Center for History Education Online Lessons* <https://www.umbc.edu/che/historylessondisplay>.

We use a quote from Roger Griswold speech to the senate on October 13, 1803, on our website. Roger Griswold was opposed to the Ratification of the Louisiana Purchase.

Jefferson, Thomas. “Founders Online: From Thomas Jefferson to Robert R. Livingston, 18 April 1802.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson>.

This is a letter from Thomas Jefferson to Robert Livingston. We use this letter in our website to emphasize the importance of the Port of New Orleans to the United States.

Jefferson, Thomas. “Founders Online: From Thomas Jefferson to Pierre Samuel Du Pont De Nemours, 25 ...” *National Archives and Records Administration*, <https://founders.archives.gov/?q=Thomas+Jefferson+to+Pierre+Samuel+Du+Pont>.

This is a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, on 25, April, 1802. We use a quote from this letter on the Diplomacy section of our website.

“The Historic New Orleans Collection: The Historic New Orleans Collection.” *The Historic New Orleans Collection* | *The Historic New Orleans Collection* <https://www.hnoc.org/>.

A view of New Orleans made months after the Louisiana Purchase depicts an eagle holding a scroll and an American flag. (THNOC, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1958.42)

King, CB. *James Monroe, L.L.D., President of the United States ...* <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3a19155/>.

We use this image of James Monroe, President of the United States seated, at White House; view of the Capitol in the background. background.

“The Louisiana Purchase.” *Monticello*, 1 Jan. 1682, <https://www.monticello.org>.

A message from Monroe and Livingston finally reached Washington D.C. in time for an official announcement on July 4, 1803. We use a quote from that announcement on our website. The purchase treaty still had to be ratified by the end of October,

which gave Jefferson and his Cabinet time to deliberate the issues of boundaries and slavery.

“THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE, TRANSCRIPTIONS.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, 1996, https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/louistxt.html.

We use a few quotes from the Louisiana Purchase transcriptions on our debate page. The quotes we use show the concerns that continued to impact the country long after the Louisiana Purchase.

McNamara, Robert. “Even Thomas Jefferson Was Surprised by the Louisiana Purchase.” *ThoughtCo*, ThoughtCo, 31 Dec. 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-louisiana-purchase-1773603>.

This is an article we read about the economic impact the Louisiana Purchase had on the country. We used this information to help us write our background page. No one at the time knew how the purchase would affect slavery.

Monroe, James. “Home: *Library of Congress*” The Library of Congress, Library of Congress. Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC. <https://loc.gov/>

This image is of James Monroe who in 1803, helped negotiate The Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the United States. James Monroe was named Envoy Extraordinary to France;

“Robert B. Livingston 1746-1813.” *The Library of Congress*, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003679652/>.

This is an image of Robert Livingston. He was resident minister at the court of Napoleon. It and James Monroes negotiated the Louisiana Purchase from the French. Livingston died on the 26th of February, 1813, at the age of sixty six.

“The Historic New Orleans Collection” <https://www.hnoc.org/>.

A view of New Orleans made months after the Louisiana Purchase depicts an eagle holding a scroll and an American flag. We use this image on our website. (THNOC, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1958.42)

“The Historic New Orleans Collection” <https://www.hnoc.org/>.

This is an image of a decoded line of numerals in Robert Livingston's letter revealing France's original asking price for Louisiana. Livingston disguised sensitive parts of his letter to Secretary of State James Madison with a numerical code. (THNOC, 78-56-L)

“Treaty Project,” The Louisiana Purchase and Proceedings,” *Library of Congress* <https://loc.gov.com>

This is an image of the Project Treaty which was the temporary treaty that was signed before the ratification and acquisition of Louisiana.

Secondary Sources:

Brooks, Philip C. "Spain's Farewell to Louisiana, 1803-1821." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, vol. 27, no. 1, [Organization of American Historians, Oxford University Press], 1940, pp. 29–42, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1896570>.

This book gave us a short summary of how Spain reacted to the Louisiana Purchase as well as how long the diplomatic negotiations took before they ceded Florida to the United States.

"E Pluribus Unum : The Story of an Eagle." *Smithsonian Libraries*, 1 Jan. 1970, <https://library.si.edu/image-gallery/104934>.

We use this image of Portraits of James Madison, James Monroe, Thomas Jefferson, Livingston; Napoleon signing Louisiana Purchase on our home page. We thought it was appropriate for our topic because all of the people involved in the purchase are in the illustration.

Feldman, Noah. "Noah Feldman Quote". Quotesia. 2 Apr. 2022: <https://quotesia.com/noah-feldman-quote/546788>.

We use a quote about the Louisiana Purchase written by Noah Feldman on our homepage. The quote emphasizes the Louisiana Purchase impact on the role of the President.

"See How the Louisiana Purchase Led to the Forcible Removal of Indian Tribes and Fueled the Slavery Debate." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/video/167171/Overview-Louisiana-Purchase>.

We use a few clippings from this video to show how the United States created laws to oppress both Native Americans, Freemen of Color and the Slaves after the Louisiana Purchase.

Feinberg, Michael H. "Landscapes of Napoleon's Dreams in Haiti." *Edge Effects*, 12 Oct. 2019, <https://edgeeffects.net/saint-domingue>.

We use this image of Napoleon Bonaparte, military general in Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti). We liked the image because it provides a sense of defeat. He is pointing toward the battle and seeing his dream of an empire crumble.

Morris, Bilal. “Dictatorship Masked as Democracy: A Timeline of the 1915 U.S Invasion and Occupation of Haiti.” *NewsOne*

**NewsOne, 8 Oct. 2021,
<https://newsone.com/42144/invasion-and-occupation-of-haiti/>. This is an image of the revolt in Saint Domingue and the French trying to retake the island.**

News, Europa Press, et al “Charles II of Spain in Hunting Costume, Oil on Canvas by Goya, 1786-1788 from Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

We found this image of King Charles together with a map of Louisiana online and we thought it would work great for our background page because it shows the King of Spain. At first the King was furious about the Purchase but later he went into negotiations concerning Florida.

“Pinckney’s Treaty” October 1795. <https://thereaade.com>

This is an image of Pinckney’s Treaty, also known as the Treaty of San Lorenzo. It defined the border between the United States and Spanish Florida. The treaty guaranteed the navigation rights on the Mississippi as well as the right of deposit.

**“Signing of the Louisiana Purchase Featuring the Treaty by Marbois .” *Louisiana Digital Library*,
<https://louisianadigitallibrary.org/islandora/object/state-lhp%3Acollection?page=1>. B/W photo, date unknown.**

This is a drawing of the signing of the Louisiana Purchase treaty. French Foreign Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand is on the left, Robert Livingston is center, and James Monroe is on the right. We use this drawing in order to show the diplomacy required to purchase Louisiana.

**“Thomas Perkins Abernethy Papers--Addition.” *Thomas Perkins Abernethy Papers--Addition | ArchivesSpace Public Interface*,
https://archives.lib.virginia.edu/repositories/uva-sc/accessions/thomas_perkins_bernethy_papersaddition.**

We use a quotation from Thomas Perkins Abernathy on our Diplomacy Page. Thomas Perkins Abernath is a historian and author.

**Warren, Rebecca. *PDX Scholar - Portland State University*. Portland State University,
https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3586&context=open_access_etds.**

We read this dissertation and thesis to help us write our section on Diplomacy. We learned how Robert Livingston spent more than a year trying to negotiate with French Foreign Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand in order to secure the purchase of New Orleans. He was constantly frustrated with setbacks. He was very surprised when Talleyrand offered the whole of Louisiana.