



The Louisiana Purchase

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson bought the Louisiana Territory from the French for \$15 million. The purchase of this huge area of land west of the Mississippi River is known as the Louisiana Purchase. It was a significant event in United States history because it almost doubled the land size of the United States. It was also the single largest purchase of land the United States has ever made. The Louisiana Purchase included all of what is now South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Iowa, as well as portions of what is now North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Minnesota, and Louisiana,

Some of the leaders at the time didn't think Jefferson has the right to purchase the land, and the feared that doing so would spark a war with Spain. In fact, Congress almost cancelled the purchase, but it eventually gained approval by a very narrow margin of 59 votes for and 57 votes against.

When the purchase was complete, Jefferson hired the explorers Lewis and Clark to explore and map the new territory.

Imagine you are Thomas Jefferson. What would you say to the leaders of the day who were opposed to your making the Louisiana Purchase to convince them to support you?
