

The Louisiana Purchase has been described as the “greatest real estate deal in history.” In 1803, The United States government purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon I of France for 60 million Francs, or, about \$15,000,000. \$11,250,000 was paid directly and the remainder was covered by French debt to U.S. citizens.

The Louisiana Purchase was consummated in order to secure free navigation of the Mississippi River. President Jefferson sent two negotiators – James Monroe and Robert Livingston to France to convince Napoleon I to sell the city of New Orleans. Time was of the essence because many viewed Napoleon’s acquisition of the Louisiana Territory as a means to invade the United States. Surprisingly, Napoleon offered not only New Orleans, but the entire Louisiana Territory for sale. Because a constitutional amendment authorizing the acquisition would take too long, and because Napoleon wanted the deal finalized quickly, Jefferson held the issue to a vote. Americans overwhelmingly voted in favor of purchasing the Louisiana Territory. Its 800,000 square mile area quickly doubled the size of the United States. Soon after the acquisition, Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on an expedition through the new lands in which hundreds of new animals were discovered as well as Native American tribes and a route to the Pacific Ocean.

1. What was surprising about the Louisiana Purchase?

- A. Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark to explore it
- B. Napoleon offered New Orleans and the entire Louisiana Territory
- C. Americans overwhelmingly supported the purchase
- D. It was called the “greatest real estate deal in history”

2. Which of the following was not true?

- A. The Louisiana Territory doubled the size of America
- B. The Louisiana Purchase was made so that America could secure free navigation to the Pacific Ocean
- C. The United States government purchased the Louisiana Territory for \$15 million.
- D. Thomas Jefferson believed a constitutional amendment would take too long.

3. What are “negotiators” as used in the following sentence?

President Jefferson sent two negotiators – James Monroe and Robert Livingston to France to convince Napoleon I to sell the city of New Orleans.

- A. People who are sent to other countries
- B. People who bring gifts to the leaders of other countries
- C. People who serve in the military
- D. People who try to make the best deals possible

4. What was the effect of the Louisiana Purchase? Circle all that apply.

- A. Lewis and Clark documented the Native Americans and wildlife of the region
- B. The United States became a much larger country
- C. Napoleon Bonaparte wanted the deal to be finalized quickly
- D. A constitutional amendment was eventually made

5. Why was the timing of the Louisiana Purchase so important?

- A. Some believed that Napoleon would invade the United States through the Louisiana Territory
- B. It was important that Lewis and Clark begin their journey
- C. The United States needed to find a way to the Pacific Ocean as soon as possible
- D. The French debt to American citizens was growing

6. Why did the Americans originally want to purchase New Orleans?

- A. To find a path to the Pacific Ocean
- B. They preferred not to negotiate with Napoleon
- C. To have full navigation of the Mississippi River
- D. So that Lewis and Clark could explore the Louisiana Territory

7. Why is the Louisiana Purchase sometimes called the “greatest real estate deal in history?”

- A. Because the United States acquired a lot of land for a big price
- B. Because the United States acquired a small amount of land for a big price
- C. Because the United States acquired a small amount of land for a little price
- D. Because the United States acquired a lot of land for a little price