

## The First Measured Century

Lesson Plan 1, Handout 2:

### **The Demise of the Great American Frontier: *Westward Spread of American population from 1790 to 1900***

#### **Materials Required**

1. One spreadsheet or printout containing population and population density data for each state from the first census in 1790 through 1900.
2. Twelve outlined maps of the continental United States.
3. Crayons or colored pencils in varying shades of one color (such as light blue, blue and deep blue).

#### **Activity**

1. Label each map with the year of decennial census from 1790 onward (1790, 1800, 1810 and so forth to 1900).
2. Look at the state data on population density and answer the following questions:

- How does the data vary over time? Why is there no data for many of the states?

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- How does the data vary by state?

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- What is population density?

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3. Assign colors to different ranges of population density. For example, use light blue for 2-8, blue for 9-32, and dark blue for 33 and higher. Leave areas with less than 2 people per square mile uncolored.

Population Density

Color Assigned

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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4. Class Activity: On the first outlined map (for 1790) color each state according to its population density.
5. Individual or Paired Activity: For each census from 1800 to 1900, color another map in the same way.
6. Examine the westward progression of the U.S. population by looking at the sequence or maps you have created.