

JOHN C. FRÉMONT



BIOGRAPHY

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John C. Frémont was born in Savannah, Georgia, on January 21, 1813, but he moved to South Carolina as a child after his father died. Frémont became a surveyor, and he mapped the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and then later the land between the Mississippi River valley and the Pacific Ocean.

By this point, many people were migrating west to settle the land in the Oregon area, and Frémont was sent to survey the area and plot the route west in Wyoming. He later went on expeditions to Colorado and New Mexico to look for potential railroad routes.

Frémont also explored the Sierra Nevada area on the border between Nevada and California, much of which was controlled by the Mexicans at the time. When Frémont published a report of his experiences, it made his name. He became known as the 'Great Pathfinder'.

After the Mexican-American War broke out, Frémont became involved in taking control of California. But he fell out with General Stephen W. Kearny, who was trying to form a government there. Kearny tried to have Frémont dismissed from the army, but in the end Frémont resigned anyway.

Frémont had bought land in the Sierra Nevada mountains, and he returned there during the Gold Rush. Gold was found on Frémont's land, and he became rich. He also became one of the first two senators of California when it became a state in 1850.

Then Frémont went to explore Utah Territory in 1853, which made him even more famous. He was also popular because of his involvement in the Free Soil movement in Kansas. He was then nominated for presidency as an anti-slavery candidate for the Republican Party, but he lost out to James Buchanan.

During the Civil War, Frémont played a role in Ulysses S. Grant's capture of Paducah, Kentucky, which led to Kentucky staying in the Union. President Lincoln made Frémont a Union major general in Missouri. Frémont set about taking away the property of anybody who rebelled against his side. But Lincoln thought this would turn the whole state against their cause, so Frémont lost his command.

After that, Frémont was stationed in Virginia. In 1862, he fought against General 'Stonewall' Jackson at the Battle of Cross Keys, but failed to defeat him. He was also in command of Mountain Departments in Tennessee and Kentucky during the Civil War.

Later on, Frémont promoted new railroads, but they went bankrupt and Frémont lost nearly all of his money. Frémont was appointed governor of the Arizona Territory in 1878. He retired to New York City, and died in 1890.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'mapped'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'mapped' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'mapped'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'mapped'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'mapped' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: dismissed	expelled

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Frémont started surveying the land so that settlers could move west across America.

During the Civil War, Frémont was involved on the Union side.

John C. Frémont was born in Georgia in 1813, but moved around a lot as a child.

During the Mexican-American War, Frémont was involved in taking over California.

Later on, Frémont was governor of the Arizona Territory.

After Frémont published a report about his experiences, he became famous, and people called him the 'Great Pathfinder'.

The Gold Rush in California made Frémont rich for a time.

Get to the facts

1 When was John C. Frémont born?

2 What did Frémont become known as?

3 What was found on Frémont's land in the Sierra Nevada?

4 Who made Frémont a general in Missouri?

5 When was Frémont appointed governor of the Arizona territory?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Gold Rush

Imagine you were around in the time of the Californian Gold Rush. You are working on your land when you find gold... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'mapped'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'mapped' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'mapped'.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – dismissed

Synonym – expelled

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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