

The Louisiana Territory Act-It-Out

Follow the narration below to create an act-it-out about the Louisiana Territory. When your teacher says *Action!*, the actors will move, act, and speak as described. When your teacher says *Audience!*, the audience members will gasp loudly and in unison.

Locations: Your teacher will point out the locations of Washington, D.C., the Louisiana Territory, Appalachian Mountains, Mississippi River, and New Orleans on the floor map, as well as France east of the map.

Characters and starting positions: two American farmers (east of the Appalachians), President Jefferson (Washington, D.C.), James Monroe (stay seated), French foreign minister (France)

Narration

- In the year 1800, France controlled the territory of Louisiana, which included the port city of New Orleans. Many **American farmers** were moving into and settling the region between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. (*Action!*)
- These **farmers** worked hard tending and harvesting their crops. (*Action!*)
- When it came time for **farmers** to sell their crops, they would load them on boats and float them down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. (*Action!*)
- Once in New Orleans, the **farmers** would load the crops onto ships and send them to markets in cities on the East Coast or in Europe. (*Action!*)
- France had plans to settle Louisiana on the other side of the Mississippi with their own farmers. (*Audience!*)
- **American farmers** looked across the Mississippi, where French farmers might someday settle, and began to panic. They feared that only French farmers would be allowed to use the port of New Orleans to transport their crops. (*Action!*)
- **President Jefferson** understood the farmers' concerns. He called for **James Monroe** and said, "Go to France and offer to buy New Orleans for \$7.5 million." (*Action!*)
- **Monroe** set sail for France. When he arrived, he presented his offer to the **French foreign minister**. (*Action!*)
- To **Monroe's** surprise, the **foreign minister** said, "I will sell all of Louisiana to you for \$15 million." (*Action!*) (*Audience!*)
- **Monroe** was stunned. Instead of just one city, the nation would gain a piece of land as large as the entire country. "I'll take it!" he said. (*Action!*)
- Days later, **Monroe** signed the treaty that gave our nation the Louisiana Territory. (*Action!*)