

## Oregon Country Act-It-Out

Follow the narration below to create an act-it-out about Oregon Country. When your teacher says *Action!*, the actors will move, act, and speak as described. When your teacher says *Audience!*, the audience members will say “All of Oregon or none!” loudly and in unison.

**Locations:** Your teacher will point out the locations of the Rocky Mountains, Washington, D.C., and Oregon on the floor map.

**Characters and starting places:** Jedediah Smith (Rockies), three settlers (near Washington, D.C.), James K. Polk (Washington, D.C.)

### Narration

- In the early 1800s, many nations claimed Oregon Country. By 1825, however, only two nations held firm in their claim. The United States and Great Britain agreed to a peaceful joint occupation of Oregon. Circumstances would soon change, however, and some Americans would call for more. (*Audience!*)
- It was very difficult to reach Oregon in the early 1800s. In 1824, a trapper named **Jedediah Smith** was excited to find a low, flat passage through the Rocky Mountains. (*Action!*)
- Now the way was wide open for **settlers**. They heard that Oregon was a “pioneer’s paradise,” and many of them packed up their belongings and moved from the East to Oregon. (*Action!*)
- When **settlers** arrived in Oregon, they were thrilled by the fertile soil, amazed by the tall trees, and excited by the sunny weather. (*Action!*)
- In 1844, a man named James K. Polk ran for president. He wanted the nation to expand across North America. One of his campaign slogans was repeatedly heard throughout the nation. (*Audience!*)
- **James K. Polk** stood in front of voters and promised that the United States would one day own all of Oregon Country, even if it had to fight Great Britain for it. (*Action!*)
- Later that year, **Polk** was elected president. Americans who favored expansion celebrated. (*Audience!*)
- Once in office, Polk changed his mind. He decided it wasn’t worth a war to gain all of Oregon Country. Instead, he made a deal to divide Oregon Country between the United States and Great Britain. The **settlers** in Oregon cheered for the diplomacy that secured their land. (*Action!*)