

January 26, 1837 Michigan Becomes a State

The area that is now the state of Michigan had a difficult beginning. It was part of the area that was claimed for France in the later part of the 1600s. It then passed to Britain when the treaty was signed that ended the French and Indian War. After the Revolutionary War, although the territory was to belong to the newly formed United States, the British did not want to leave the Michigan territory and continued to show their influence for another thirteen years. Finally, the British influence ended and Michigan became part of the territories of the United States. Michigan became a state while the United States was trying to negotiate between the free and slave state groups prior to the Civil War. This was a very trying time in the history of the United States. Unfortunately for the country and its citizens, it ended in the Civil War instead of being solved peacefully. The regiment from Michigan was the first western regiment to reach Washington during the war in which 90,000 Michigan soldiers served. Some famous people from Michigan include Edna Ferber, Ben Carson, Larry Page, Charles Lindbergh, and Henry Ford.

Look at the map of Michigan below. Label the capital of Michigan. Locate the cities of Kalamazoo, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Cadillac, Saginaw, Sault St. Marie, and Mackinaw City and label them on the map. Now label the Menominee Mountains, the Porcupine Mountains, and the Huron Mountains, along with Mount Arvon and Mount Curwood, the two highest mountains in Michigan. Also, locate Ford River, Menominee River, the Straits of Mackinac, Grand River, Lake St. Clair, and the Muskegon River and label them. Lastly, label the states, provinces, or bodies of water that border Michigan. When you have finished, move on to the timeline of Michigan history on the next page and the research prompts that follow.



Timeline of Michigan History

1668

1671

1701

1763

1778

1785

1795

1805

1813

1825

1834

1837

1846

1847

1875

1899

1909

1920

1941

1974

1. Fighting on the northwestern American border eases with Commander Oliver Perry's victory on Lake Erie and other military victories in the region
2. Daniel Boone is made a prisoner and brought to Detroit during the Revolutionary War
3. Michigan is the first English-speaking legal authority in the world to abolish capital punishment
4. Under the Jay Treaty, the British finally give up control of the Michigan area, which they have tried to retain since the end of the Revolutionary War
5. Michigan becomes known as the "Arsenal of Democracy" as auto plants are changed to produce war materials
6. Detroit is founded as a fort by Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac; later that year, the first European women arrive in the area
7. The first mile of concrete road in the world is built in Detroit
8. Gerald R. Ford of Michigan becomes President of the United States
9. Congress is petitioned to allow formation of a state government; boundary line disputes with Ohio are ongoing; a second cholera epidemic at Detroit kills one-seventh of the inhabitants
10. Jacques Marquette starts the first permanent settlement in Michigan at Sault Ste. Marie
11. Mackinac Island becomes the second national park in the United States, with Yellowstone being the only national park established before it
12. Detroit becomes the capital of the newly created Territory of Michigan
13. The first factory for the production of automobiles is built in Detroit as the Olds Motor Works
14. For the first time, Michigan is shown on a map as a part of the land owned by the United States
15. The world's first four-way traffic signal having red, yellow, and green lights, is used in Detroit
16. Michigan is admitted to the Union as a free state at the same time Arkansas is admitted to the Union as a slave state
17. St. Ignace, founded earlier the same year, is the site of the first fort in Michigan, Fort de Buade (later known as Fort Michilimackinac)
18. Lansing becomes the new, permanent capital of the state of Michigan
19. When the Erie Canal in New York is opened, settlement of Michigan and movement of farm products to the East becomes easier
20. With the final acceptance of the treaty ending the French and Indian War, the Michigan area becomes an English possession

Research Prompt #1

The first steam locomotive in the state of Michigan began operations on the Erie & Kalamazoo Railroad. It was the first railroad west of New York State to operate. How would this fact, along with the beginning of daily stagecoaches carrying mail and passengers from Detroit and the beginning of construction of a railroad between Detroit and Jackson, have helped the growth and prosperity of Michigan?

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Research Prompt #2

In 1836, an underground railroad was set up to bring slaves into Cass County, Michigan. Do a little research and find out who started this underground railroad, how it was set up to work, and whether it was able to help many escaped slaves find freedom.

[illegible]

Research Prompt #3

In 1855, the Soo Ship Canal and Locks were completed and turned over to the state. Do some research and find out how this marvel of engineering works, how it helps the economy, and how goods were transported before the locks were created.

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Timeline of Michigan History

Answer Key

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