



TEKS 1A, 6E, 10A, 10B, 10C, 11A,
11B, 12D, 23D

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Many American settlers moved to Texas after Mexico achieved independence from Spain.
2. Texans revolted against Mexican rule and established an independent nation.



The Big Idea

In 1836, Texas gained its independence from Mexico.

Key Terms and People

Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, *p. 350*
 empresarios, *p. 350*
 Stephen F. Austin, *p. 351*
 Antonio López de Santa Anna, *p. 351*
 Alamo, *p. 352*
 Battle of San Jacinto, *p. 352*



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TAKING NOTES

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the events that led to the independence of Texas.

The Texas Revolution

If YOU were there...

You are the father of a large farm family in Missouri. There is not enough land for everyone, so you're looking for another opportunity. One day, a Mexican government official comes to town. He is looking for people to settle in Texas. The Mexican government is offering generous tracts of land to colonists. However, you have to become a citizen of Mexico and follow Mexican laws.

Would you decide to move your family to Texas? Why?

BUILDING BACKGROUND What do you already know about the history of Texas? Many towns in Texas have streets or neighborhoods named after early settlers and heroes of the Texas Revolution. Travis, Austin, Bowie, and Houston are all early Texas heroes. Use the knowledge you already have about Texas and Texas history to help you understand this section.

American Settlers Move to Texas

Mexico had a long, unprotected border that stretched from Texas to California. Mexico's Spanish rulers worried constantly about attacks from neighbors. They also were concerned about threats from within Mexico.

Their fears were justified. Mexicans moved to overthrow Spanish rule in the early 1800s. In September 1810 **Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla**, a Mexican priest, led a rebellion of about 80,000 poor Indians and mestizos, or people of Indian and Spanish ancestry. They hoped that if Mexico became independent from the Spanish monarchy, their lives would improve.

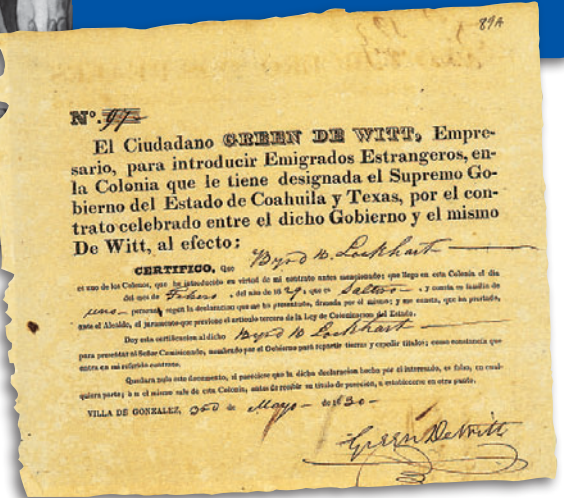
Hidalgo's revolt failed, but the rebellion he started grew. In 1821 Mexico became independent. In 1824 it adopted a republican constitution that declared rights for all Mexicans. The new Mexican government contracted with **empresarios**, or **agents**, to bring settlers to Texas. They paid the agents in land.



Settling Texas

Stephen F. Austin (standing, in black coat) and other settlers were *empresarios*—they received land from the Mexican government for the purpose of bringing settlers to Texas. Their holdings were guaranteed with a contract like the one below.

Why do you think the Mexican government wanted to attract settlers to Texas?



In 1821 one young agent, **Stephen F. Austin**, started a Texas colony on the lower Colorado River. The first 300 families became known as the Old Three Hundred. Austin's successful colony attracted other agents, and American settlers flocked to the region. The Anglo-American settlers became known as *Texians* and were often Protestant. The Mexican residents were called *Tejanos*, and were usually Catholic. The two groups lived in separate communities, but eventually Texas developed a culture that was distinct from the rest of Mexico as well as the United States.

In exchange for free land, settlers had to obey Mexican laws. But some settlers often **explicitly** ignored these laws. For example, despite the ban on slavery, many brought slaves. Concerned that it was losing control of the growing American population, Mexico responded. In 1830, it banned further settlement by Americans. Angry about the new law, many Texans began to think of gaining independence from Mexico.

Meanwhile, Mexico had come under the rule of General **Antonio López de Santa Anna**. He soon suspended Mexico's republican constitution and turned his attention to the growing unrest in Texas.

READING CHECK **Finding Main Ideas** Why did settlers move to Texas?

Texans Revolt against Mexico

In October 1835 the Mexican army tried to remove a cannon from the town of Gonzales, Texas. Rebels stood next to the cannon. Their flag read, "Come and take it." In the following battle, the rebels won. The Texas Revolution, also known as the Texas War for Independence, had begun.

Texas Independence

On March 2, 1836, Texans declared their independence from Mexico and adopted a constitution. The new Republic of Texas was born. Both the declaration and the constitution were modeled after the U.S. documents. The Texas constitution, however, made slavery legal.

Delegates to the new Texas government chose politician David Burnet as president and Lorenzo de Zavala as vice president. Another revolutionary, Sam Houston, was named to head the Texas army. Austin went to the United States to seek money and troops.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

explicit fully revealed without vagueness

Battle at the Alamo

The Texans' actions angered the Mexican government. Santa Anna began assembling a force of thousands to stop the rebellion. The force included both Texians and Tejanos.

A hastily created army of Texas volunteers had been clashing with Mexican troops for months. Under Edward Burleson, a Texian force took the town of San Antonio. It then occupied the **Alamo**, a former mission near San Antonio that became an important battle site in the Texas Revolution. Texas settler Jim Bowie and volunteers from the United States, including frontiersman Davy Crockett joined the Alamo's defense.

The rebels, numbering about 200, hoped for reinforcements from the army that Sam Houston was assembling. For almost two weeks, from February 23 to March 6, 1836, the Texans held out against the large Mexican force. Colonel William Travis managed to get a message to other Texans through enemy lines:

“I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch [speed] . . . VICTORY OR DEATH.”

—William Travis, from a letter written at the Alamo, 1836

Before dawn on March 6, the Mexican army attacked. Despite heavy losses, the army overcame the Texans. All the defenders of the Alamo were killed, though some civilians survived. Following a later battle, at Goliad, Santa Anna ordered the execution of 350 prisoners who had surrendered. Texans were enraged by the killings.

Battle of San Jacinto

Santa Anna now chased the untrained forces of Sam Houston. Outnumbered, the Texans fled east. Finally, they reorganized at the San Jacinto River, near Galveston Bay. There, the Texans took a stand.

Santa Anna was confident of victory, but he was careless in choosing the site for his camp. On the afternoon of April 21, 1836, while Mexican troops were resting, Houston's forces swarmed the camp, shouting, “Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!”

The fighting ended swiftly. Santa Anna's army was destroyed. In the **Battle of San Jacinto**, the Texans captured Santa Anna and forced him to sign a treaty giving Texas its independence.



VIDEO

Independence
for Texas

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The Texas Revolution



An Independent Nation

Sam Houston was the hero of the new independent nation of Texas. The republic created a new town named Houston and made it the capital. Voters elected Sam Houston as president. Stephen F. Austin became secretary of state.

To increase the population, Texas offered land grants. American settlers came from nearby southern states, often bringing slaves with them to help grow and harvest cotton.

Most Texans hoped that the United States would annex, or take control of, Texas, making it a state. Some in Congress wanted to annex Texas, but President Andrew Jackson did not pursue the issue. Although he wanted to annex the area, he was concerned that admitting Texas as a slave state would upset the fragile balance of free and slave states. The president also did not want to have a war with Mexico over Texas.

Finally, Jackson did recognize Texas as an independent nation. France did so in 1839. Britain, which wanted to halt U.S. expansion, recognized Texas in 1840.

The Mexican government, however, did not recognize Santa Anna's forced hand-over of Texas. For this reason, in 1837 the

republic organized the Texas Rangers to guard its long frontier from Mexican and Native American attacks. Finally, in 1844 Texas and Mexico signed an armistice. Mexico never recognized Texas' independence, however.

READING CHECK **Finding Main Ideas** What issues did the new nation of Texas face?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW American settlers in Texas challenged the Mexican government and won their independence. In the next section you will learn about the war between Mexico and the United States.

Section 2 Assessment



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ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Identify** What role did **Stephen F. Austin** play in the settlement of Texas?
b. Make Inferences Why did Mexican officials want to bring more settlers to Texas?
c. Evaluate Do you think Mexico's requirements for foreign immigrants were reasonable or unreasonable? Explain.
- a. Describe** What were the important battles in the War for Texas Independence? Why was each important?
b. Make Inferences Why did Texas offer land grants to settlers?
c. Predict What problems might the Republic of Texas face?

Critical Thinking

- 3. Sequencing** Review your notes on American settlement in Texas. Then copy the graphic organizer below and use it to show the significant events in the history of the Republic of Texas.

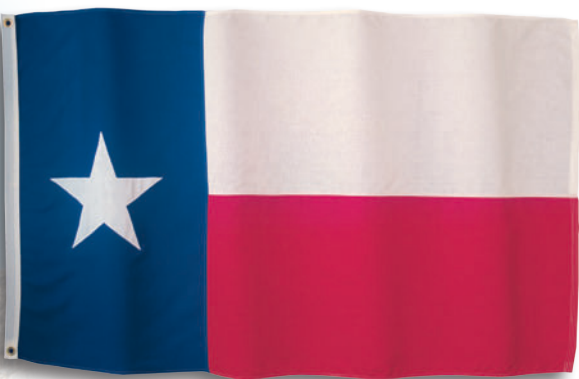
Significant Events

1. Houston is founded and made the capital.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

FOCUS ON WRITING

myWriteSmart

- 4. Explaining the Texas Revolution** Make a list of the most important players and events in the story of how Texas gained independence from Mexico. Consider also how you will present information about these people and events to your film's audience. What words, images, and sounds will make the story of the revolution come alive for the audience?



On March 6, 1836, Texans fought and lost the Battle of the Alamo. A rallying cry for the Texans at the Battle of San Jacinto was "Remember the Alamo!" The single star of the flag represents the Republic of Texas, also called the Lone Star Republic.

Why do you think "Remember the Alamo!" was a rallying cry for Texas troops at San Jacinto?