

Texas – Prelude to Civil War

Lesson 1: Settling Texas and the War for Texan Independence

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US History to 1865 (5th or 6th grades)

One 55 minute class period

Lesson Overview	This lesson introduces students to reasons for the settling of Texas by American colonists. It also teaches students why the War for Texan Independence occurred, the role of the Alamo in this war, and the impact of the war on America and the world. Students will learn background information through direct instruction and will then work with a primary source written by Col. Travis to analyze the importance of the Alamo in this war. Students will finally learn about the impact of this war on America and the world. Students will then complete an assignment from the three choices provided on the wrap-up menu.
Guiding Questions	1. Why did American immigrants move to and settle in Texas in the 1820s and 1830s? 2. What was the impact of American immigration to Texas? 3. What role did the Alamo play in the War for Texan Independence? 4. How did the War for Texan Independence impact America and its relationship with Mexico and Europe?

Objectives

1. The student will be able to explain the motivations of Americans to settle in Texas.
2. The student will be able to explain the origins of the War for Texan Independence.
3. The student will be able to illustrate the role of the Alamo in the War for Texan Independence and appraise the war's impact on America, Texas and Mexico.

Standards of Learning

Explicitly Taught:

- USI.8a The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in America from 1801-1861 by
- a) describing territorial expansion and how it affected the political map of the United States, with emphasis on the Louisiana Purchase, Lewis and Clark expedition, and the acquisitions of Florida, Texas, Oregon and California.

Supports:

- USI.9a The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes, major events, and effects of the Civil War by
- a) describing the cultural, economic, and constitutional issues that divided the nation.

Historical Skills

Skills – (as defined by the Organization of American Historians)

- Chronological Thinking
- Historical comprehension
- Historical Analysis and Interpretation

Skill-based objectives -

4. The student will be able to interpret and analyze primary sources.
5. The student will be able to sort through various events and place them in a timeline demonstrating knowledge of chronology of the subject.

Assessment Tools

Remember the Alamo: Menu assignment

Materials/Resources

- Whiteboard/chalkboard/smartboard
- LCD projector and screen (optional)
- Texas background powerpoint and teacher notes.
- Colonial William Travis letter and analysis questions.
- Wrap-up menu assignment handout.

Modifications

- Col. Travis letter may be modified for struggling readers. Analysis questions may also be modified.
- Students may work individually, in pairs or in groups.

Instructional Procedures/Process

1. Distribute starter handout to students. Instruct students to read the quotes provided and respond to the questions on the handout.
2. Discuss starter responses. Look for specific advantages and disadvantages or benefits and risks of immigrating to Texas in the mid 1800s.
3. Provide direct instruction on motivations of American immigration into Texas and the War for Texan Independence. (Lecture/Discussion – see lecture notes and questions.)
4. Students complete graphic organizer while listening to presentation.
5. Distribute a copy of Colonial William Travis' Alamo letter and analysis handout. Students work individually, in pairs or in small groups to complete the questions. Class may read the source together or individually. Teacher may model the answer to the first question depending on the class' experience analyzing primary sources.
6. Share letter analysis with class in a class discussion.
7. Distribute Remember the Alamo menu assignment handout.
8. Instruct students to choose **one** assignment to complete as their wrap-up (may be completed in student notebook or on separate paper).

Closure

Students will choose one menu assignment to complete, demonstrating an understanding of material and accomplishment of learning objectives.

Remember the Alamo - menu assignments:

1. Write an editorial that would appear in a US newspaper. Your editorial should briefly recap what happened at the Alamo, however you should focus most of your writing on the impact of the Alamo. How will this event affect Texas? Mexico? America?
2. Write a first-hand account from the perspective of a Mexican soldier and describe the events that occurred at the Alamo. Be sure to include information about previous failed attacks, how the Mexicans were able to get into the Alamo, what happened there and its impact on the Texans, Mexicans and the war.
3. Draw an illustration of the attack on the Alamo. Write a caption (at least three sentences) that explains the impact of the Alamo on Texas, Mexico and the war.

Students will complete menu assignment in class or for homework. See rubric for grading information.