



Texas Studies Weekly

See Primary-Source
Related Media...

 s-w.co/TX4-24
GRADE
4

Looking Back: Texas Independence to Reconstruction

Santa Anna's Cruel Victory at the Alamo

In January 1836, William B. Travis and 30 other Texans entered the Alamo, a Spanish mission in San Antonio. Along with James Bowie, Travis took command of the Texas soldiers at the Alamo. They were determined to stand up to the Mexican army. When Bowie became ill, Travis was in command by himself.

General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, a Mexican dictator, had ordered 3,000 of his best soldiers to set up camp outside the Alamo. The Mexicans blasted bugles and cannons for days to threaten the Texans who were inside the mission. The last defender to have arrived at the Alamo was Gregorio Esparza. Travis and 150 brave men planned ways to hold off the threat. Davy Crockett, James Bonham and Jim Bowie helped make a battle plan. In the end, women and children were moved to safer areas of the mission.

Travis vowed the Texans would fight to "Victory or Death" even though they were outnumbered and starving. The Texans waited for help to arrive, but

on the morning of March 6, 1836, they knew that help would not come. The Mexican army attacked with cruel force. More than 1,500 Mexicans died in the battle, but every Texan man was killed. Afterward, Santa Anna burned the bodies of the Texas heroes.

Texas Independence Day

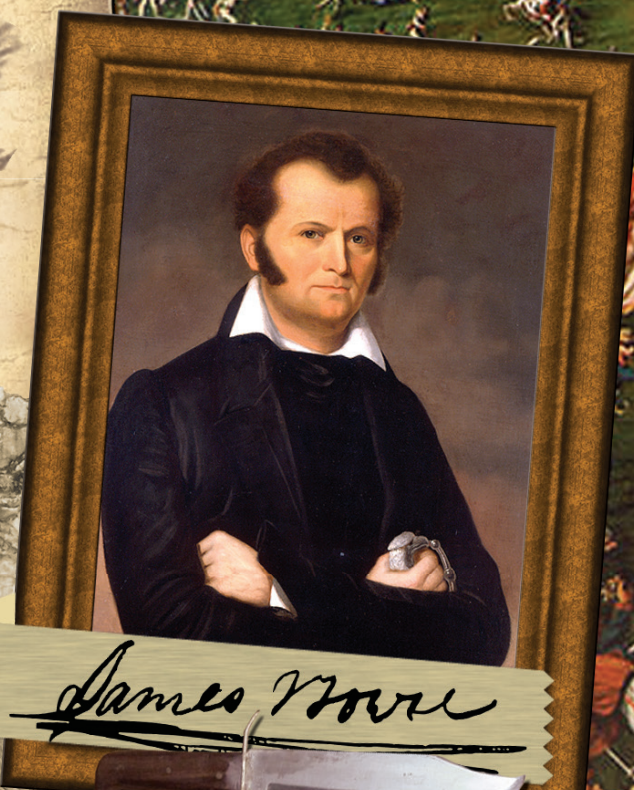
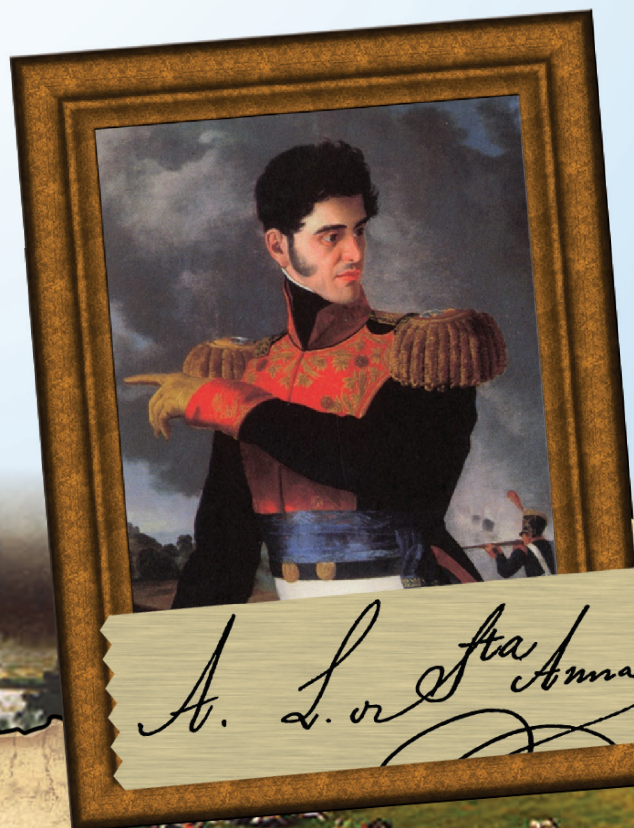
While at the Alamo in March 1836, William Travis ordered one of his men to sneak a letter past the Mexican soldiers. He explained the situation at the Alamo to another Texas leader, Sam Houston. He hoped the letter would make it in time for help to be sent.

During this time, another group of Texans was discussing freedom from Mexico. They realized the Texans at the Alamo were most likely doomed. They felt the best thing they could do was declare independence from Mexico. On March 1, the first day of the meeting, five men were chosen to write a document to explain the Texans' decision. They wrote the Texas Declaration of Independence overnight, and everyone agreed to it the next day. The document clearly explained that Texas

no longer wanted to be a part of Mexico. Texans wanted to be an independent nation.

They ended their meeting on March 17, 1836, when the Texans learned that Santa Anna and his men were heading their way. The Texans left with the wish to free themselves from Mexico once and for all. Each year on March 2, Texans celebrate Texas Independence Day.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





Texas: Republic to 28th State

Treaties of Velasco

When Gen. Houston and his volunteer Texas army defeated Mexico at San Jacinto, Gen. Santa Anna had no choice but to make a deal with Houston. Texas would get its freedom from Mexico.

On May 14, 1836, Santa Anna signed two peace treaties with Texas President

David G. Burnet. The Treaties of Velasco would send all of Santa Anna's soldiers back to Mexico. Santa Anna also secretly agreed to help Texas gain independence from Mexico without any further problems. Leaders agreed that the southern border of Texas would be the Rio Grande.

Not everyone was happy about the way the war ended or with the treaties. Many people wanted to see Santa Anna punished for all he had done to the Texans. Mexican leaders said the treaties were no good because Santa Anna had been a prisoner when he signed them. It was clear Texas was not completely free from troubles with Mexico.

A New Republic

People claimed that Texas was now a country, the Republic of Texas. Texans had the right to follow the Texas Constitution and choose leaders to represent them. An election was held to find the

first president of the Republic of Texas. Stephen F. Austin, Texas founder, ran for the office. However, the people elected war hero General Sam Houston. Mirabeau B. Lamar was elected as vice president. Austin took the job of secretary of state. He continued to work hard for Texas.

Texans were proud of their victory. They wanted to create a modern and successful nation. They found this was almost as difficult as winning their freedom in the first place. However, the people were determined to work hard to make their nation strong. There was a lot of good land on which people could settle, farm and build communities. They had a government in place. The presidency, congress and court system of Texas were modeled after the three-branch system of the United States. Many immigrants from other countries continued to settle in Texas. The population of the Republic grew and grew.

Unfortunately, the Republic of Texas also had problems. The new nation needed money. It had no savings and needed to repay money it had borrowed during the revolution with Mexico. Leaders decided to collect taxes and sell land to earn that money. Citizens continued to be concerned about their safety. They were afraid Mexico might attack again. In addition, settlers wanted to keep peace with American Indians. President Houston wanted to sign treaties with the American Indians.

Nation or State?

The people of Texas rebuilt communities after the long war with Mexico. Towns grew, and farms and plantations did well. However, many people feared Texas would not be strong enough to stand alone for long. Texas still had very little money. The next president, President Lamar, did not get along well with the American Indian tribes. In addition, Mexico was not sticking to the treaty terms. It often attacked Texas. Santa Anna even took control of several Texas towns for a short time again. Many Texans still thought of themselves as Americans. These people wanted Texas to join the United States. Others wanted Texas to grow as a nation.

Americans were not sure if the annexation of Texas was a good idea. The U.S. would have to take over Texas' debts. Many people also worried about getting involved in disagreements between Texas and Mexico and American Indians. The biggest concern, however, was slavery. Texans, like people in southern U.S. states, were allowed to own other people as slaves. These enslaved people were forced to farm large Texas plantations. People in the U.S. weren't sure they wanted another slave state. President Polk, however, knew it would be bad if Texas fell back into the hands of an enemy. In the end, the U.S. decided Texas would be a good addition to the country.

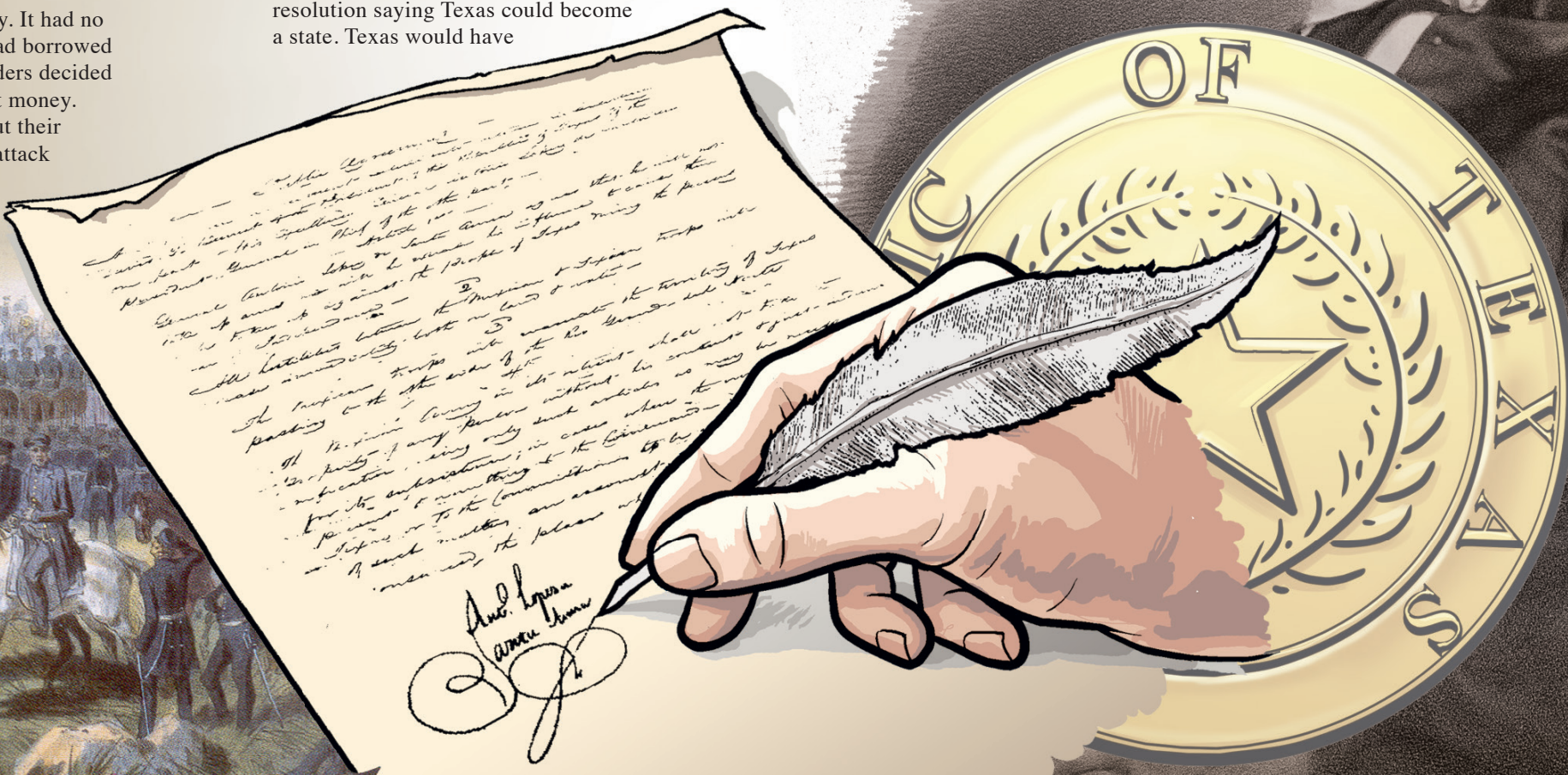
On Feb. 28, 1845, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution saying Texas could become a state. Texas would have

to pay off its own debts, but people would still be allowed to own enslaved people. Texas would also have the right to divide itself into five states if it chose to do so. The people of Texas agreed to the terms of annexation. On Dec. 29, 1845, Texas President Anson Jones lowered the Republic of Texas flag for the last time. Texas was now the 28th state in the United States of America.

The U.S. at War with Mexico

When the U.S. accepted Texas as a state, Mexico believed it was an act of war. Mexican leaders still believed Texas belonged to them. U.S. President James K. Polk offered to buy land from Mexico. Unfortunately, Mexico would not sell. In addition, U.S. and Mexico disagreed on the boundary between the two countries. On May 13, 1846, the U.S. declared war against Mexico. It was just what many Americans had feared when Texas was annexed. Texas Rangers knew the Texas land well. They were excellent scouts and fighters. Like other Texans, they wanted the Mexican threat to be over at last. The war ended after the U.S. invaded Mexico City in

February 1848. Leaders signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The Rio Grande would be the boundary between the countries. The U.S. also gained more than half a million square miles of land. The U.S. paid Mexico \$15 million. The Mexican-American War had come to an end.



The Runaway Scrape

Gen. Santa Anna was proud of his victory at the Alamo. He had killed nearly every Texan who had been fighting. Some women and children survived. One of these was Susanna Dickinson. Santa Anna freed her and told her to let Texans know he and his troops were coming for the rest of them. Sure enough, Santa Anna led his troops toward the Texas coast. They raided and burned every settlement in their path.

Texas leader Sam Houston ordered all Texans to head toward the Colorado River to keep away from the Mexican army. Families left their homes quickly, sometimes with just the clothes on their backs. The Runaway Scrape proved the Texans knew the advancing Mexicans were angry and dangerous.



American Indians Depended on the Buffalo

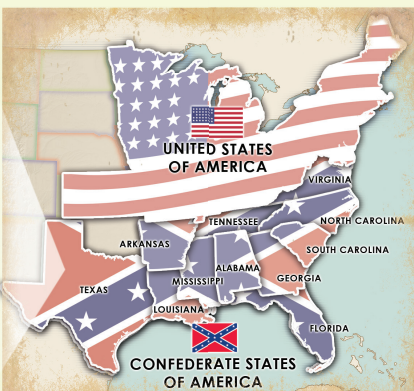
As Texas grew, white settlers claimed more and more land. They invaded territory where the Plains Indians had lived and hunted for generations. American Indians who relied on the buffalo/bison found themselves in a terrible situation. Many of them fought with settlers. Some U.S. leaders wanted to work with the American Indians, but others wanted to force them to live on reservations. White settlers began hunting buffalo. Large herds grazed on land the settlers wanted for farming, ranching and railroads. American buffalo hunters killed thousands of animals only for the hides. They left the carcasses to rot on the plains. The buffalo neared extinction, which caused the way of life for the Plains Indians to change forever.



Culture

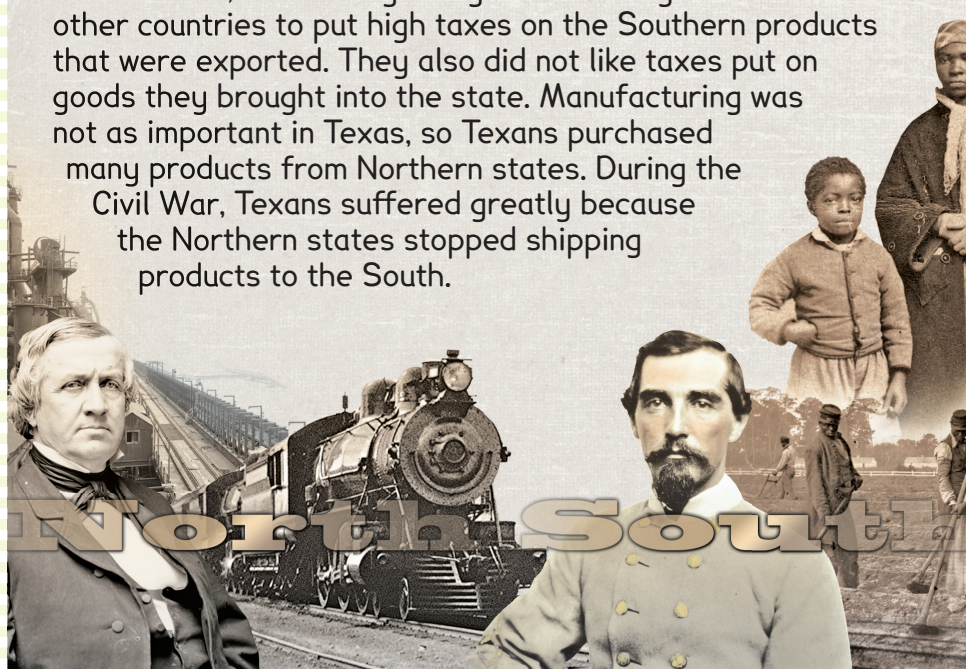
Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas

When Texas became a state, the practice of slavery continued. People in different states disagreed on many issues, including slavery. Seven states decided to secede from the U.S. and form a new country. Texas was one of these states and helped form the Confederate States of America. In all, 11 states left the U.S. Soon, the U.S. was in the middle of a Civil War. Approximately 90,000 Texans fought in the war. Some Texans helped at home. When the war ended, Texans had to rebuild homes and businesses during the Reconstruction period. People freed from slavery had to find jobs and homes. Texas rejoined the U.S. in 1870 and elected new leaders. A new Texas Constitution gave leaders much less power than before.



Making a Living in Texas

Before the Civil War, most Texans earned their livings off the land. Many Texans were farmers and ranchers. Cotton and tobacco were popular crops. These farms required large amounts of land, so farmers used slave labor for their businesses. Goods were sold and shipped to other states and countries. Texans, like other Southerners, were charged high taxes. They did not want other countries to put high taxes on the Southern products that were exported. They also did not like taxes put on goods they brought into the state. Manufacturing was not as important in Texas, so Texans purchased many products from Northern states. During the Civil War, Texans suffered greatly because the Northern states stopped shipping products to the South.

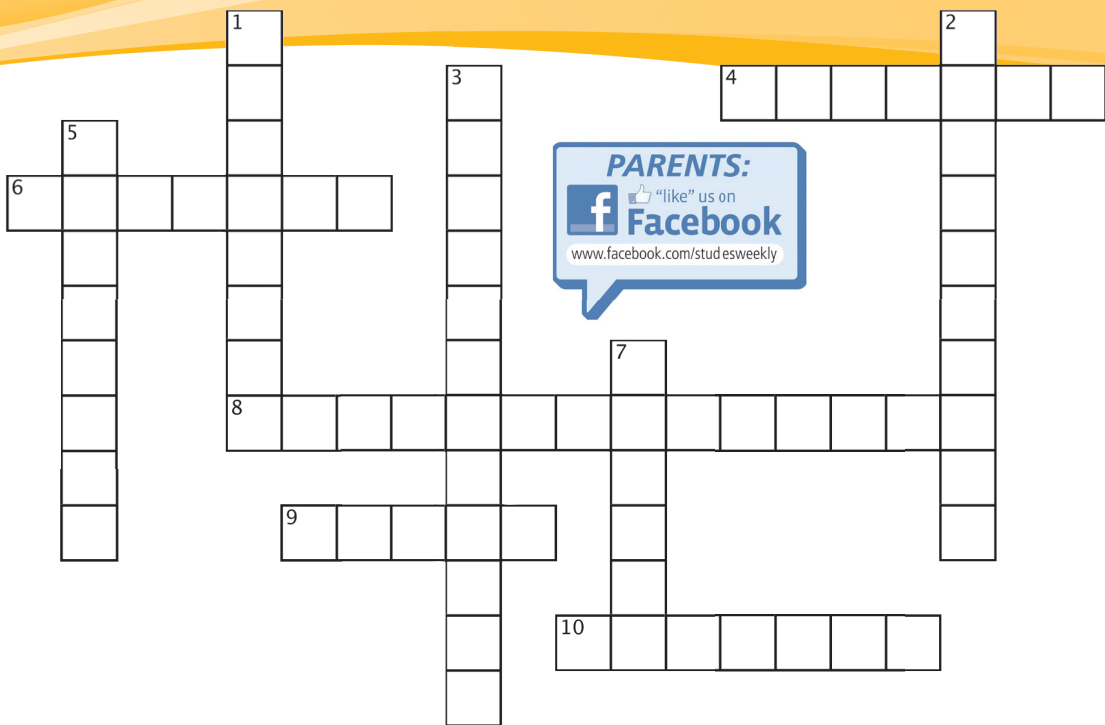


History

History

Economics

Name _____



- ACROSS**
- 4. American Indian necessity
 - 6. Texas Major General
 - 8. time period following the Civil War
 - 9. last president of the Republic of Texas
 - 10. last defender to arrive at the Alamo
- DOWN**
- 1. Gen. Santa Anna, Mexican
 - 2. 18-minute battle
 - 3. written on March 1, 1836: Texas Declaration of _____
 - 5. river destination during Runaway Scrape
 - 7. Texan leader at the Alamo

Cause and Effect



Use your knowledge of the annexation of Texas and information from this week’s review issue to complete the cause and effect graphic organizer.

Causes



**The
Annexation
of Texas**

Effects

- 1. Draw conclusions about the kind of man Gen. Santa Anna was. Support your ideas with evidence from this week’s issue.
- 2. Why do you think no one answered Travis’ call for help at the Alamo?
- 3. Make inferences about why the Mexicans decided to take an afternoon nap at San Jacinto, even though they knew the Texans were nearby.
- 4. Predict what might have been the outcome for Texas if the U.S. did not annex the Republic as the 28th state.
- 5. Based on what you know about Gen. Santa Anna, do you think Houston’s order to run from the Mexicans was the right decision? Why or why not?
- 6. What evidence can you find that proves the white settlers did not value the buffalo as much as the Plains Indians did?
- 7. Based on what you know about large plantations in the South, how do you think these plantation owners justified slavery?

Think&Review

Let’s Write

Expository Writing/ Informative: Cause-Effect

Authors often write to inform readers of certain facts. This type of expository writing can be done using several different formats. One of these is the cause-effect format. Use information from this week’s issue, including the Page 4 activity, to help you write. Write three paragraphs explaining the annexation of Texas, its causes and its effects. Write in complete sentences, and support all of your ideas with specific facts and details. Be sure to use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Looking Back: Texas Independence to Reconstruction

Victory for the Texans

After the Battle of the Alamo, Texans suffered another loss when the Mexican army surrounded Colonel James W. Fannin’s troops in Goliad. Fannin was forced to surrender, and he agreed his troops would give up weapons and become prisoners of war. Santa Anna had another plan. He ordered the Texans to be killed. Mexican soldiers executed 332 Texans that day. Texans were furious.

Major General Sam Houston had only 750 men left in his army. Houston felt his men needed time to rest and train. The men camped on the banks of the Buffalo Bayou on an open plain known as San Jacinto. Houston sent scouts to spy on the

Mexicans. He learned that Santa Anna and his troops were headed their way for battle.

On the morning of April 21, 1836, 1,200 Mexicans arrived. They settled in and built a barricade, but the Texans didn’t attack at first. The Mexicans began to relax. Many of the men took an afternoon nap, including Santa Anna. Houston took this moment to start his surprise attack. The Battle of San Jacinto lasted only 18 minutes. About 650 Mexicans were killed. Only nine of Houston’s men died. Santa Anna was captured the next morning, and the revolution came to an end. The Texans had earned their independence and were free of the Mexicans, at least for the time being.

If you’d like to make any editorial comments about our paper, please write to us at feedback@studiesweekly.com.

Name: _____

Date: _____

**Studies Weekly
Week 24 Test**

1. How did most early Texan settlers make a living?

- a - farming and ranching
- b - construction workers
- c - as soldiers
- d - working in factories

Answer this question after reading the articles about History, Culture and Economics.

2. Which detail from the article "American Indians Depended on the Buffalo" supports the author's statement that "The buffalo neared extinction, which caused the way of life for the Plains Indians to change forever."

- a - American Indians had lived and hunted on the same land for many years.
- b - Large herds grazed on land that settlers wanted for farming, ranching and railroads.
- c - Some people wanted to move American Indians to reservations.
- d - American buffalo hunters killed thousands of animals for their hides and left the meat to rot.

Answer this question after reading the articles about History, Culture and Economics.

3. What caused many families to leave their homes in Texas quickly during the Runaway Scrape?

- a - They wanted to return to their families living in the United States.
- b - The American Indians in Texas had joined the Mexican army to fight Texas settlers.
- c - Sam Houston warned them that the Mexican army was raiding settlements.
- d - They had no food or water, so they headed to the Colorado River.

Answer this question after reading the article "Texas: Republic to 28th State."

4. Who was the first man elected vice president of the Republic of Texas?

- a - Sam Houston
- b - Mirabeau B. Lamar
- c - Stephen F. Austin
- d - Gregorio Esparza

Answer this question after reading the article "Texas: Republic to 28th State."

5. Which sentence helps the reader understand the meaning of the word annexation?

- a - Texas was now the 28th state in the United States of America.
- b - Slaves were forced to farm large Texas plantations.
- c - Americans were not sure if the annexation of Texas was a good idea.
- d - Texas still had very little money.

Answer this question after reading the article "Texas: Republic to 28th State."

6. What was an important outcome of the Treaties of Velasco?

- a - Santa Anna was put in a Mexican prison for the rest of his life.
- b - Texans no longer had to worry about being attacked by Mexican soldiers.
- c - The Rio Grande River was established as the southern border of Texas.
- d - All Texans approved of the terms and conditions in the treaties.

Answer this question after reading the article "Looking Back: Texas Independence to Reconstruction."

7. The author organizes this article by _____.

- a - listing the events from most important to least important
- b - putting the events in order by the dates in which they occurred
- c - interviewing an eyewitness of each event
- d - telling a story about each event

Answer this question after reading the article "Looking Back: Texas Independence to Reconstruction."

8. What problem did Sam Houston and his committee face while writing the Texas Declaration of Independence in March of 1836?

- a - Santa Anna had returned to Mexico to get more soldiers.
- b - Most people in Texas did not want independence.
- c - Santa Anna and his soldiers were closing in on them.
- d - Houston thought the Alamo defenders could defeat Santa Anna's army.

Answer this question after reading the article "Looking Back: Texas Independence to Reconstruction."

9. One reason that William B. Travis became the leader of all the Texan forces at the Battle of the Alamo is because _____.

- a - Gen. Santa Anna had set up camp outside the Alamo
- b - there were 3,000 Mexican soldiers and less than 200 Texan defenders
- c - Susanna Dickinson was inside the Alamo walls
- d - James Bowie became ill