War is Brewing!

Bayou Bridges 17-20

CONFLICT WITH MEXICO & THE ALAMO

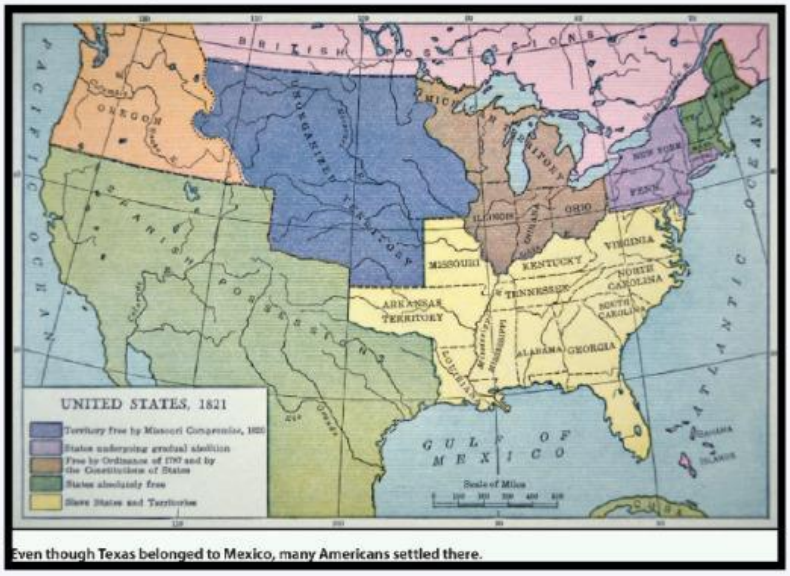
Conflict out West!

In the early **1800s**, the people of Mexico rebelled against Spain, which had ruled their country for nearly three hundred years. Mexico won its independence in **1821** and took over all the Spanish lands in North America, including Texas. At that time, three thousand **Tejanos** (/teh*hah*nohs/), or Spanish Mexicans actually lived in Texas. The new government of Mexico wanted to build up the area, but it was unable to persuade many Mexicans to move there. A decade later, **Anglo settlers** greatly outnumbered Tejanos.

When **Stephen Austin**, an American, offered to start a settlement inhabited by American settlers in Texas in exchange for land, the Mexican government gladly accepted. Stephen Austin founded most of the main Anglo settlements in Texas while that region was still part of Mexico. His father, Moses Austin, had obtained a land grant from Mexico to colonize Texas but died before he could carry out the project. Stephen traveled to Texas to put his father's plans into action. In the early 1820s, Austin brought three hundred settlers from the United States into Texas on the Brazos River. Later, he brought several hundred more. The Mexican government soon made a similar deal with other Americans, and like Stephen Austin, they, too, started settlements in Texas. Though they legally became Mexican citizens, culturally they were more American than Mexican.

It wasn't long before the Mexican government realized it had made a big mistake. Before settling in Texas, the Americans had promised to adopt the Roman Catholic religion of Mexico, become loyal Mexican citizens, and free any enslaved workers they brought to Texas. The settlers did not keep any of these promises. Instead, they ignored some of Mexico's laws and asked for more **self-government**. Some even talked about making Texas independent from Mexico.

In **1830**, the Mexican government announced it would not allow any more Americans to settle in Texas. But it was too late. There were already more than sixteen thousand Americans living there, far more than the five thousand Spanish-speaking Mexican residents.



Even though Texas belonged to Mexico, many Americans settled there.

1.How did Mexico gain control of the American Southwest, including Texas, in 1821? Explain.

2. Why did Mexico encourage Americans to settle in Texas? What conditions did Mexico place on American settlers moving to Texas?

3. What role did Stephen Austin play in the development of the Texas region?

4. Why did Mexico's policy toward Texas settlement turn out to be a mistake?

Why were Americans more willing to settle in Texas once Mexico won independence from Spain?

LIVEWORKSHEETS