

# How and Why Did the U.S. Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s

Content Area		Grade Level		
English Language Arts	Science	<b>U.S. History</b>	<b>Middle School</b>	High School

**Approximate Time Needed: Four weeks**

UNIT OVERVIEW		KEY STANDARDS	
<p>In this unit, students investigate key events and ideas in westward expansion during the antebellum period. They first use maps and images to learn the progression of territorial expansion and learn about the idea of manifest destiny. They then delve into Texas independence and annexation and identify and consider contrasting perspectives on these events, before engaging in an LDC module focused on the debates around the Mexican-American War. This LDC module closes with an argumentative essay. The final activity in the unit requires students to consider the different ways land was acquired and the impacts of that expansion on different groups of people. Throughout the unit, students read and analyze varied primary and secondary sources to build evidentiary claims, identify multiple perspectives, and consider causal relationships.</p>		<b>Common Core</b> RH.6-8.1 RH.6-8.2 WHST.6-8.1	<b>Kentucky</b> SS-08-4.3.2 SS-08-2.3.1 SS-08-5.1.1 SS-08-5.2.3
		<b>Colorado</b> SS8.1.2.c SS8.1.2.d SS8.2.1.a SS.8.2.2.c	SS-08-5.1.2
COMMON ASSIGNMENTS		LDC TEACHING TASK	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructed Response: Texas independence and annexation</li> <li>LDC argumentative essay: Mexican-American War</li> <li>Moving West Summative Response</li> </ul>		Task Template A, Argumentation Task 2 Considering the historical perspectives on the Mexican-American War, was President Polk justified when he declared war in 1846? After reading primary and secondary sources given in class, write an essay in which you address the question and argue whether Polk was justified in his decision to declare war with Mexico. Support your position with evidence from the text(s). Be sure to (acknowledge; refute) competing views.	
<b>AUTHORS</b> Kristy Craven, April Deener, Jeremy B. Dulaney, Mike Emmons, Trudi Gesin-Bainbridge, Michelle Logan, Amanda Minnich, Patt Owen, Jill A. Prindiville, Erin L. Sienicki, and Daisy Martin			

## About the Common Assignment Study

The Common Assignment Study (CAS) represents an effort to strengthen instruction through the integrated development of curriculum, instructional supports, and embedded assessments. Led by teachers in Colorado and Kentucky, CAS produced multiple high-quality instructional units in science, history, and English language arts. As new academic standards and assessments are being adopted across the states, CAS showcases teachers' pivotal role in translating these larger initiatives into rigorous and relevant classroom experiences for their students.

The CAS instructional units—which include classroom activities, assessments, and rubrics for scoring student work—were developed using the Understanding by Design framework. Each unit was strengthened by integrating a Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) module to help scaffold and support the development of students' content literacy. Over a two-year period, the teachers developed, taught, and revised the units with the support and leadership of The Colorado Education Initiative and The Fund for Transforming Education in Kentucky; the subject matter expertise provided by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity; and the research support of the Center for Assessment. Throughout the study, which was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Westat provided technical assistance and support and collected student work samples and scores from each unit.

The units contain shared elements (“common assignments”) that were collaboratively developed and used by teachers in both states. However, teachers maintained flexibility and autonomy to tailor the units to meet local needs and make contextualized instructional choices. Teacher-leaders have taken active roles in facilitating the collaborative design process. Teachers have reported that newly developed tools and strategies have better engaged their students and provided them with richer opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the material. Research for Action has studied the implementation of the CAS units and gathered feedback to improve how districts and schools can use CAS resources to support the integrated use of teacher-developed curricula, instructional supports, and embedded assessments.



[www.commonassignment.org](http://www.commonassignment.org)

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5. **Common Assignment 3**  
**Moving West Summative Response**

# How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

## Desired Results

### Established Goals/Standards

#### Common Core State Standards

**RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

**RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source ... .

**WHST.6-8.1:** Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.

#### Colorado

##### History

**SS8.1.2.c:** Examine factors that motivated the military and economic expansion from the American Revolution to Reconstruction.

**SS8.1.2.d:** Evaluate the impact of different factors—on topics to include but not limited to gender, age, ethnicity, and class—on groups and individuals in this time period and the impact of these groups and individuals on the events of the time period.

##### Geography

**SS8.2.1.a:** Interpret maps and other geographic tools as a primary source to analyze a historic issue.

**SS.8.2.2.c:** Interpret from a geographic perspective the expansion of the United States by addressing issues of land, security, and sovereignty.

#### Kentucky

**SS-08-4.3.2:** Students will explain why and give examples of how human populations changed and/or migrated because of factors such as war, disease, economic opportunity and technology in the United States prior to Reconstruction. DOK 3

**SS-08-2.3.1:** Students will explain how conflict and competition (e.g., political, economic, religious, ethnic) occurred among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction. DOK 2

**SS-08-5.1.1:** Students will use a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources) to describe and explain historical events and conditions and to analyze the perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in U.S. history prior to Reconstruction. DOK 3

**SS-08-5.2.3:** Students will explain how the growth of democracy and geographic expansion occurred and were significant to the development of the United States prior to Reconstruction. DOK 3

**SS-08-5.1.2:** Students will explain how history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-and-effect relationships and give examples of those relationships. DOK 3

### Transfer

*Students will be able to independently use their learning to ...*

- Analyze primary and secondary accounts to form evidence-based interpretations of historical events.
- Consider and discuss multiple causes for historical events.
- Discuss how geographic and economic factors matter to understanding human settlement.

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

<p><b>Meaning</b></p>	<p><b>Understandings/Big Ideas</b></p> <p><i>Students will understand ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events and ideas significant to westward expansion in the antebellum era.</li> <li>• How and why the United States acquired western lands.</li> <li>• That the use of authentic primary source documents enriches our understanding of historical events and ideas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Essential Questions</b></p> <p><i>Students will keep considering ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How and why were western lands acquired?</li> <li>• How does analyzing primary and secondary sources help us to understand the past?</li> </ul> <p><i>And to a lesser extent ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were expansion's impacts on varied groups?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Acquisition</b></p>	<p><b>Know (Content)</b></p> <p><i>Students will know ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The definition of manifest destiny.</li> <li>• Key events in westward expansion during the 1830s–50s, with emphasis on acquiring Texas and the Mexican-American War.</li> <li>• The connection between westward expansion and debates over slavery.</li> <li>• Westward movement impacted varied groups in multiple ways.</li> </ul>			
	<p><b>Do (Skills)</b></p> <p><i>Students will be skilled at ...</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="423 968 971 1230"> <p><b>Discipline Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and explaining multiple causation and cause-effect.</li> <li>• Identifying and understanding multiple perspectives.</li> <li>• Using maps and timelines to situate historical events in their time and space (context).</li> </ul> </td> <td data-bbox="971 968 1485 1230"> <p><b>Literacy Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately analyzing primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>• Citing and explaining specific textual evidence to support this analysis.</li> <li>• Argumentative writing.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><b>Discipline Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and explaining multiple causation and cause-effect.</li> <li>• Identifying and understanding multiple perspectives.</li> <li>• Using maps and timelines to situate historical events in their time and space (context).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Literacy Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately analyzing primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>• Citing and explaining specific textual evidence to support this analysis.</li> <li>• Argumentative writing.</li> </ul>
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## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

### Acceptable Evidence of Results

Assessments	Evaluative Criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Common Assignment 1: Texas Independence (and Texas Annexation)—Constructed Response Questions</li><li>2. Common Assignment 2: LDC Task: Mexican-American War Argumentative Task 2 <p>Prompt: Considering the historical perspectives on the Mexican-American War, was President Polk justified when he declared war in 1846? After reading primary and secondary sources given in class, write an essay in which you address the question and argue whether Polk was justified in his decision to declare war with Mexico. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).</p><p>Be sure to (acknowledge; refute) competing views.</p></li><li>3. Common Assignment 3: Moving West Summative Response</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Constructed Response Rubric (0–2)</li><li>2. LDC Argumentative Rubric</li><li>3. Summative Response Rubric (0–4)</li></ol>
<b>Supports/Scaffolding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modified primary sources</li><li>• Sentence starters</li><li>• Graphic organizers</li><li>• Group and partner work</li><li>• Vocabulary collection tool</li></ul>	

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

### Learning Experiences and Instruction

#### Unit Texts and Materials

#### For Instruction

- John Gast's painting of the story of the western frontier, 1872 ([http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/item.php?item\\_id=180](http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/item.php?item_id=180))
- Map that shows expansion and PowerPoint slides on expansion
- Lesson on Manifest Destiny (from [Reading Like a Historian](#) or [Digital History site](#))

#### For Common Assignments

- Texas Independence Constructed Response
  - [Texas Independence lesson from Reading Like a Historian](#)
    - Document A: Texas Declaration of Independence Document B: Letter by Manchola
    - Document C: Colonel Seguin's Burial Speech
    - Document D: Lundy's Pamphlet
    - Document E: John Quincy Adams
    - Document F: Joint Resolution of Congress to Annex Texas
  - Mexican-American War LDC sources
    - Document 1: Polk's Inaugural
    - Document 2: Thoreau
    - Document 3: Polk's Letter
    - Document 4: Polk's Special Message
    - Document 5: Giddings
    - Document 6: Sumner
    - Document 7: Historian Haynes
- See [CoreTools](#) for all resources.
- Moving West Summative Response
    - "America: The Story of Us" "Westward" episode, about 44 minutes
    - History Alive sources on groups moving westward

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

### Assessment Tasks

#### Mid-Assessment

##### Common Assignment 1: Texas Independence and Annexation Constructed Responses

Short answer questions on primary source documents that get at multiple causes of involvement in Texas.

##### Resources

- Documents A–F (primary sources representing perspectives for and against Texas independence and annexation)
- Discussion questions
- Graphic organizers for scaffolding reading of the six sources
- Rubric (0, 1, 2) adapted from KY SAQ rubric

##### Common Assignment 2: Mexican-American War

LDC Module: Argumentative task based on primary sources and one secondary source representing different perspectives on whether the United States should have entered the Mexican-American War.

##### Resources

- Documents 1–7
- Reading for understanding questions
- Graphic organizer for scaffolding reading of the seven sources
- Essay organizer for planning essay
- LDC Argumentative Scoring Rubric

##### Common Assignment 3: Moving West Summative Response

Summative Response Question

- Part A. Explain, in detail, how the United States acquired two territories.
- Part B. Choose two groups that were affected by westward expansion and describe the impact of expansion on those groups.

##### Resources

- “America: The Story of Us” “Westward” episode, about 44 minutes
- [“TCI History Alive! The United States through Industrialism”—Unit 5, Section 16: “Life in the West” minidramas](#) 
- Rubric for Summative Response adapted from Kentucky Extended Response Question rubric (0, 1, 2, 3, 4)

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Unit Overview*

### Learning Tasks

#### Introductory Activities: Setting Context

(Teachers craft specific lessons using these resources.)

#### Analysis of John Gast Painting

Resources

- John Gast's 1872 painting of the story of the western frontier, with set of questions to borrow/modify
- [More information about the painting](#) ↗

#### The What and When

- PowerPoint with progression of expansion
- Students fill in a blank map of the territories during the lesson to create a visual timeline of expansion.

Resources

- Blank map of the territories
- PowerPoint slides

#### Understanding Manifest Destiny

Manifest destiny (MD), policies influenced by MD, impacts of MD.

Resources

- To craft a lesson plan, see [Manifest Destiny lesson plan from Reading Like a Historian](#) ↗ or materials from [Digital History](#) ↗

#### Common Assignment 1: Texas Independence and Annexation

#### Common Assignment 2: Mexican-American War LDC Module

#### Common Assignment 3: Moving West Summative Response

Students learn about different groups who moved west and experienced conflicts with Native Americans. They explore varied motives for migration and varied outcomes for different groups, such as explorers, forty-niners, Californios, mountain men, missionaries, Mormons, pioneer women, and Chinese laborers.

# Introductory Activities

## Setting Context

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#### 1. Teacher Materials

- a. [Teacher Instructions](#)
- b. [John Gast Painting Analysis](#)
- c. The What and When of U.S. Territorial Expansion
  - i. [PowerPoint](#)
- d. Understanding Manifest Destiny
  - i. [PowerPoint](#)
  - ii. [Lesson plan from Reading Like a Historian](#)  or [materials from Digital History](#) 

#### 2. Student Materials

- a. [Westward Expansion Map](#)



## Teacher Instructions

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Listed below are the resources in this section with notes about how to use them. Use these resources and notes to craft lessons tailored for your students that will help set context for the subsequent learning activities.

1. Gast Painting Analysis: Introduce the unit using this engaging and rich image.  
See [here](#) for more information about this painting.
2. The What and When
  - a. PowerPoint: Use this PowerPoint in conjunction with the westward expansion map following it to help students track the progression of U.S. territorial expansion.
  - b. Westward expansion map
3. Understanding Manifest Destiny
  - a. PowerPoint
  - b. [Lesson plan from Reading Like a Historian](#) or [materials from Digital History](#). Use these two resources to craft a lesson plan on manifest destiny for your students.



## John Gast Painting Analysis



John Gast painted this picture in 1872. He painted it for a publisher who included it in a popular series of western travel guides.

### Possible Questions

#### Looking Closely

- Sketch what you see in the painting.
- What different groups of people do you see? List those that appear in order from left to right.
- What different modes of transportation do you see?
- What items is the woman holding?

#### Interpretation

- What might these symbolize?

#### Reading and Analysis

- Who created this painting? When? For what?
- Who was the audience for this painting?
- What message does this painting convey about the West and westward migration? Explain using details from the painting.
- Do you think this was a new message for the people who saw it? Why or why not?

### Standards

- Common Core: [RH.6-8.1](#)



## The What and When of U.S. Territorial Expansion PowerPoint

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**Growth of U.S.**

Access the full PowerPoint here: <http://collegeready.gatesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/BMS-Manifest-Destiny-2.ppt> 



## Understanding Manifest Destiny PowerPoint

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# Manifest Destiny

Manifest: clear or obvious

Destiny: future or fate

**Access the full PowerPoint here:**

<http://collegeready.gatesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Manifest-destiny.ppt> ↗



## EXPANSION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 1607-1853



# Common Assignment 1

## Texas Independence and Annexation Constructed Responses

### Table of Contents

#### 1. Teacher Materials

- a. [Texas Independence PowerPoint](#)
- b. [Key for Texas Independence Timeline](#)
- c. [Texas Independence and Annexation Lesson Plan](#)

#### 2. [Common Assessment Constructed Response Rubric](#)

#### 3. Student Materials

- a. [Texas Independence Timeline](#)
- b. Additional Documents for Texas Independence Lesson
  - i. [Document A: Texas Declaration of Independence](#) ↗
  - ii. [Document B: Letter by Manchola](#) ↗
  - iii. [Document C: Colonel Seguin's Burial Speech](#) ↗
  - iv. [Document D: Lundy's Pamphlet](#) ↗
  - v. [Document E: John Quincy Adams](#)
  - vi. [Document F: Joint Resolution of Congress to Annex Texas](#)
- c. [Texas Annexation Graphic Organizer](#)
- d. [Texas Independence and Annexation Questions](#)
- e. [Document for Further Study and Learning—Travis' Letter](#)



## Texas Independence PowerPoint

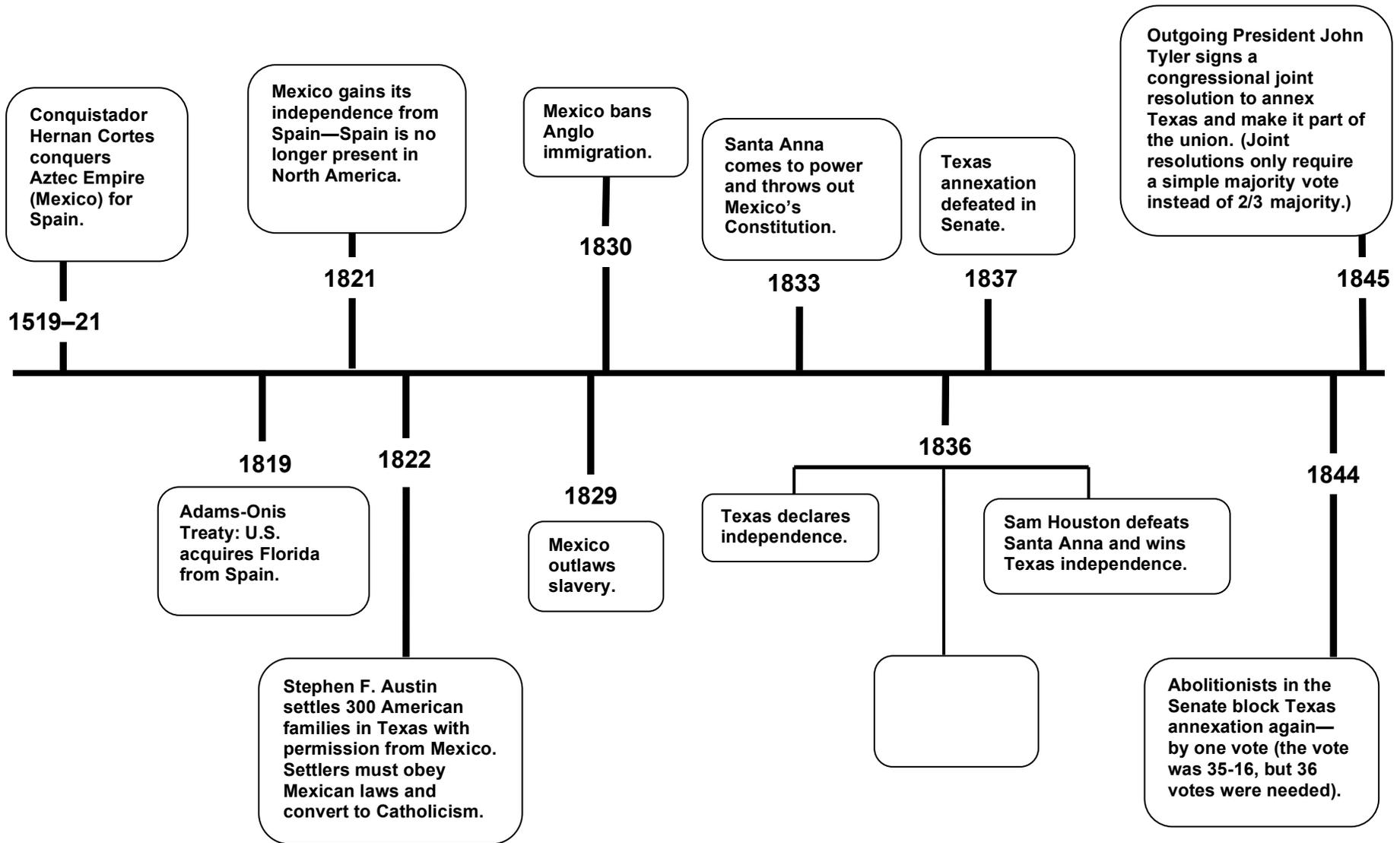
Use this PowerPoint to walk students through territorial expansion. Students fill out their own “Texas Independence Timeline” (included below) from the information in this PowerPoint presentation.



Access the full PowerPoint here: <http://collegeready.gatesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CAS-TEXAS-INDEPENDENCE-copy.ppt> ↗



## Key for Texas Independence Timeline





## Texas Independence and Annexation Lesson Plan

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*Note: Use [the lesson](#) produced for the Stanford History Education Group's (SHEG) Reading Like a Historian curriculum. Then modify and extend that lesson as is noted in this document.*

First, download directions and documents for the SHEG plan at <https://sheg.stanford.edu/texas-independence>. (You will need to create a free account.) Then read through that plan. Finally, see our modifications and extensions to that plan explained below. These additions extend the plan to include the annexation of Texas.

**Modification:** Substitute the United Streaming Video segment that is available only through subscription with:

- The History Channel's "The Founding of Texas" Part 1 (a segment of "The Real West")  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RA3smbU2b4k>

and/or

- The History Channel's "The Founding of Texas" Part 2 (a segment of "The Real West")  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFJIR0YYI2A>

**Extension:** Use additional documents, tools, and instructional steps provided.

These are:

- Documents E and F
- Texas Annexation Graphic Organizer
- Additional instructional steps that follow Step 4 in the SHEG lesson

### Additional Instructional Steps

Implement the SHEG lesson and then continue with the following instructional steps. Step 4—discussion questions—is the last step in the SHEG lesson, and the additional instructional steps follow.

4. Discussion questions
  - Why did Texans declare independence?
  - Were Texans justified in declaring independence?
  - Were these honorable men, fighting for freedom or greedy slaveholders?
  - What evidence from the documents supports your position?
  - Which of these pieces of evidence do you find more/less trustworthy? Why?
  - Why do historians still debate this question?
5. Hand out documents E and F. Students read documents and fill out Texas annexation graphic organizer.
6. Annexation discussion questions
  - Once Texas declared and won its independence, is the United States free to annex it? Why would Mexico object to the American annexation of Texas?
  - Why was Texas' annexation denied twice before becoming a reality?
7. Students independently write answers to two constructed response questions.

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Common Assignment 1*



### 8. Ideas for further study and learning

- Have students discuss the situation in the Alamo and write a letter to the people of Texas asking for help in defending the Alamo and stopping or delaying Santa Anna's army.
- Show students William Barret Travis' primary source to compare to their letter.
- Show clips from two Hollywood movies of the Alamo where Travis' letter is used.
  - These two movies are John Wayne's "The Alamo" and John Lee Hancock's, "The Alamo," starring Billy Bob Thornton.
  - Both movies use a version of Travis' letter with reference to the underlined sentences. In John Wayne's version, the Mexican army comes to the fort and reads a message from Santa Anna demanding surrender, and Travis uses his cigar to light a cannon in response to the demand. In the Billy Bob Thornton version, Jim Bowie is in a discussion with Mexican officers who are demanding surrender when Travis fires the cannon in his general direction.

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?**  
**The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 1*

### Common Assessment Constructed Response Rubric

Why did Texans declare independence from Mexico in 1836? Use evidence from the texts to support your answer and explain your reasoning.

<b>Score Point 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You complete all components of the question and communicate ideas clearly.</li><li>Evidence (specific information or quotations from the document) is accurately explained to support a claim.</li></ul>
<b>Score Point 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You provide a partially correct answer to the question and/or address only a portion of the question.</li><li>Evidence (specific information or quotations from documents) is included to support a claim but not explained.</li></ul>
<b>Score Point 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Evidence is absent, inaccurate, or not relevant to the argument or prompt.</li></ul>

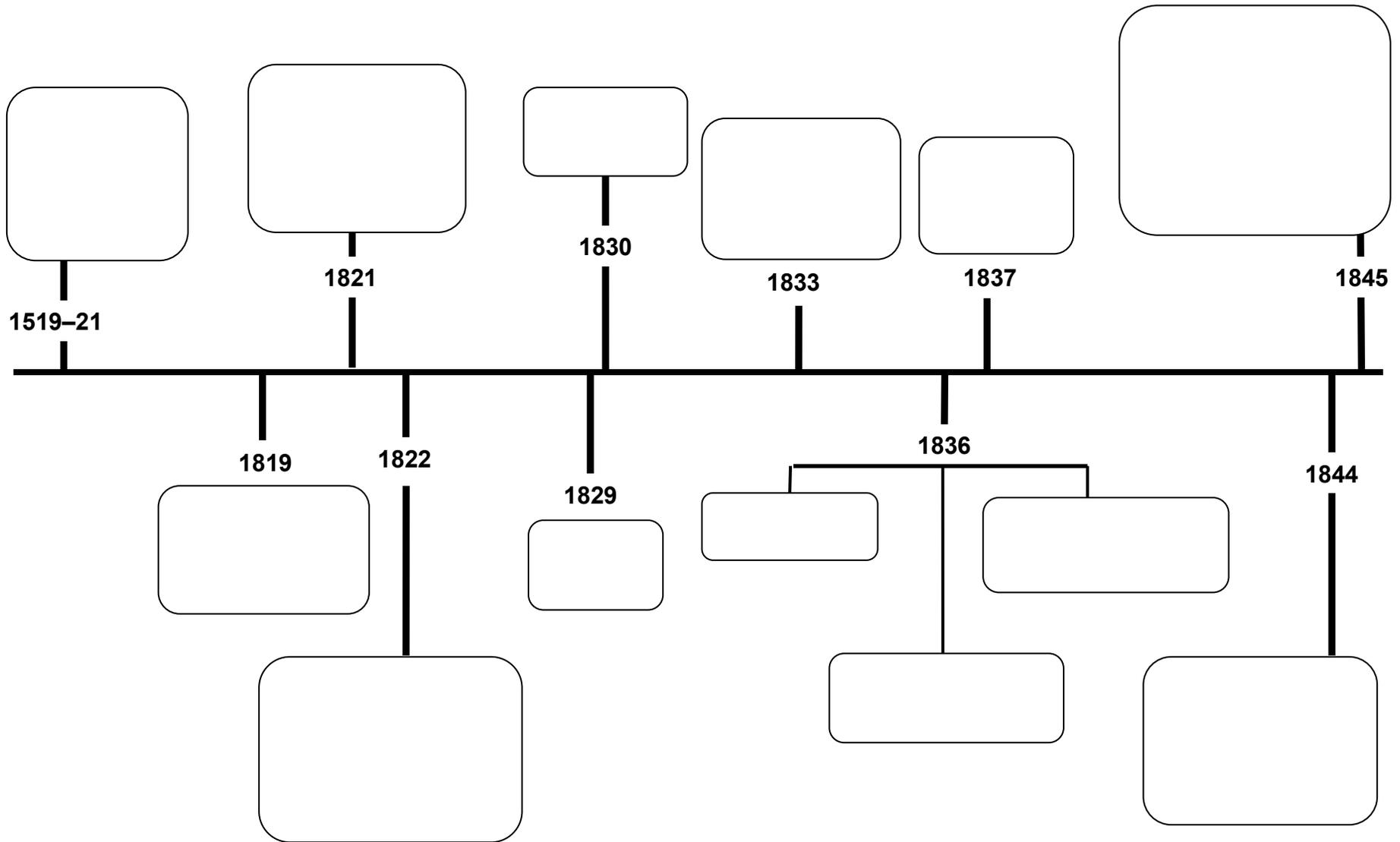
### Common Assessment Constructed Response Rubric

Texas declared and won its independence and applied for statehood. Using evidence from the texts and logical reasoning, why did Mexico and some Americans object to Texas annexation?

<b>Score Point 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You complete all components of the question and communicate ideas clearly.</li><li>Evidence (specific information or quotations from the document) is accurately explained to support a claim.</li></ul>
<b>Score Point 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You provide a partially correct answer to the question and/or address only a portion of the question.</li><li>Evidence (specific information or quotations from documents) is included to support a claim but not explained.</li></ul>
<b>Score Point 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Evidence is absent, inaccurate, or not relevant to the argument or prompt.</li></ul>



## Texas Independence Timeline





## Document E: John Quincy Adams

The treaty for the annexation of Texas to this Union was this day sent in to the Senate; and with it went the freedom of the human race.

Source: *Excerpt from John Quincy Adams, former president and Representative from Massachusetts, writing in his diary on April 22, 1844.*

## Document F: Joint Resolution of Congress to Annex Texas (Modified)

Note: *This is an excerpt from a Resolution that was passed by the U.S. Congress on March 1, 1850. It approved the admission of Texas as a state to the United States. It also laid out the requirements of that admission. Below is one of those requirements.*

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Joint Resolution for annexing [adding] Texas to the United States.

. . .

2. Be it further resolved, that the consent of Congress is given upon the following conditions, and with the following guarantees: . . .

New states, of convenient size, not exceeding four in number, in addition to the state of Texas, and having sufficient population, may hereafter, be formed out of the territory, which shall be entitled to admission under the provisions of the federal constitution. And such states as may be formed out of that portion of this territory lying south of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes north latitude, commonly known as the Missouri compromise line, shall be admitted into the Union with or without slavery, as the people of each state asking admission may desire. And in such state or states as shall be formed out of this territory north of said Missouri compromise line, slavery, or involuntary servitude, (except for crime,) shall be prohibited.



## Texas Annexation Graphic Organizer

	<b>Who wrote it?</b> 1. Name of author/document 2. Mexican or American? 3. Year document was written	<b>What is the view of annexation represented by this document?</b>	<b>Provide a quote to support your answer.</b>
<b>Document E</b>			
<b>Document F</b>			



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Texas Independence and Annexation**

**Directions:** Using the documents and completed graphic organizer (documents A, B, C, D), answer the following question using evidence from the text.

Why did Texans declare independence from Mexico in 1836? Use evidence from the texts to support your answer and explain your reasoning.

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?**  
**The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 1*



**Directions:** Use the documents and completed graphic organizer (documents D, E, F) to answer the following question using evidence from the text and logical reasoning.

Texas declared and won its independence and applied for statehood. Why would Mexico and some Americans object to Texas annexation?



## Document for Further Study and Learning—Travis' Letter

Commandancy of the Alamo  
Bexar, Fby. 24th, 1836

To the People of Texas & all Americans in the world

Fellow Citizens & Compatriots,

I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise the garrison are to be put to the sword if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender nor retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, & of everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily & will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country.

Victory or Death  
William Barret Travis  
Lt. Col. Comdt.

P. S. The Lord is on our side. When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn. We have since found in deserted houses 80 or 90 bushels & got into the walls 20 or 30 head of Beeves.

Travis



## Common Assignment 2

# LDC Argumentative Essay: Mexican-American War

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#### 1. Teacher Materials

- a. [Notes to the Teacher](#)
- b. [Incorporating Quotes PowerPoint](#)

#### 2. [LDC Argumentation Rubric](#)

#### 3. Student Materials

- a. LDC Documents (Excerpts)
  - i. [Polk's Inaugural](#)
  - ii. [Thoreau](#)
  - iii. [Polk's Letter](#)
  - iv. [Polk's Special Message](#)
  - v. [Giddings](#)
  - vi. [Sumner](#)
  - vii. [Historian Haynes](#)
- b. Reading Tools
  - i. [Mexican War LDC Documents 1–7 Comprehension Reading Questions](#)
  - ii. [Vocabulary Collection Tool](#)
- c. [Graphic Organizer](#)
- d. [Introducing Quotes Practice](#)
- e. [Essay Organizer: Outline](#)
- f. [Peer Review Tool](#)



## Notes to the Teacher

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Find all materials and more detailed instructions in [CoreTools](#) .

If students need help with understanding the LDC documents, use the **Reading Tools** (Comprehension Reading Questions and Vocabulary Collection Tool) to help them understand the main points of each document and learn difficult vocabulary. After using these tools, students should use the Graphic Organizer to help them analyze the documents in relation to the prompt.

Use the **Introducing Quotes PowerPoint** with the **Introducing Quotes Practice Tool** to help students with this skill. Emphasize that the information a student includes to introduce a quote should help the reader understand the authority or perspective of the source. Use these tools after reading activities and before writing activities.

Before writing the essay, students create an outline or graphic organizer based on their notes and reading in which they state their claim, sequence their points, and note their supporting evidence. The **Essay Organizer: Outline** is a tool that can support this, or use a tool of your own.



## Incorporating Quotes PowerPoint

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### Introducing and Incorporating Quotes In Text

- When using quotes/research/evidence, you need to introduce them.
- You cannot just “drop” in quotes without explaining who and where it came from.



Access the full PowerPoint here: <http://collegeready.gatesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Incorporating-Quotes-Practice-ppt..pptx> ↗

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?**  
**The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 2*

**LDC Student Work Rubric - Argumentation**

	Not Yet	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced
	1	2	3	4
<b>Focus</b>	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.	Addresses prompt appropriately and establishes a position, but focus is uneven. D: Addresses additional demands superficially.	Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus. Provides a generally convincing position. D: Addresses additional demands sufficiently	Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately with a consistently strong focus and convincing position. D: Addresses additional demands with thoroughness and makes a connection to claim.
<b>Controlling Idea</b>	Attempts to establish a claim, but lacks a clear purpose.	Establishes a claim.	Establishes a credible claim.	Establishes and maintains a substantive and credible claim or proposal.
<b>Reading/Research</b>	Attempts to reference reading materials to develop response, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.	Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness.	Accurately presents details from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt to develop argument or claim.	Accurately and effectively presents important details from reading materials to develop argument or claim.
<b>Development</b>	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, but lacks sufficient development or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.	Presents appropriate details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim, with minor lapses in the reasoning, examples, or explanations.	Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim.	Presents thorough and detailed information to effectively support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim.
<b>Organization</b>	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.	Uses an appropriate organizational structure for development of reasoning and logic, with minor lapses in structure and/or coherence.	Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address specific requirements of the prompt. Structure reveals the reasoning and logic of the argument.	Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt. Structure enhances development of the reasoning and logic of the argument.
<b>Conventions</b>	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.	Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.	Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using appropriate format with only minor errors.	Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format.
<b>Content Understanding</b>	Attempts to include disciplinary content in argument, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.	Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.



## Document 1: Polk's Inaugural

Source: *Excerpt from President James K. Polk's inaugural address, March 5, 1845*

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[E]ighty years ago our population was confined on the west by the ridge of the Alleghenies. Within that period . . . our people . . . have filled the eastern valley of the Mississippi, adventurously ascended the Missouri to its headsprings, and are already engaged in establishing the blessings of self-government in valleys of which the rivers flow to the Pacific. The world beholds the peaceful triumphs of the industry of our emigrants. To us belongs the duty of protecting them adequately wherever they may be upon our soil.

## Document 2: Thoreau

Source: *Excerpt from Henry David Thoreau's book, Civil Disobedience. He wrote it in prison between 1846-1848 and it was originally published in 1849.*

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... Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure ...

... In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army...

Thoreau: <http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil1.html> 

## Document 3: Polk's Letter

Source: *Excerpt from Letter from President James K. Polk to his agent in Mexico, John Slidell. November 10, 1845.*

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I am extremely desirous to acquire California.... If unfortunately, you should fail to effect a satisfactory adjustment of the pending differences between the two countries...I will call on Congress to provide the proper remedies.



## Document 4: Polk's Special Message (Modified)

*Source: Excerpt from President James K. Polk, to the Congress of the United States: a special message calling for a declaration of war against Mexico, Washington D.C., May 11, 1846.*

*Note: President Polk attempted to end the disputes with Mexico through diplomacy. He sent a representative to Mexico, but the Mexican government refused to speak with the representative and bloodshed began. Both the U.S. and Mexico claimed land between the Nueces and Del Norte rivers and both saw the other military as invading their land.*

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Mexico has repeatedly threatened to make war upon us, for the purpose of reconquering Texas. In the meantime, we have tried every effort at reconciliation. The cup of forbearance [restraint] has been exhausted, even before the recent information from the frontier of the Del Norte. But now, after repeated threats, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war. . . .

We are called upon, by every consideration of duty and patriotism, to defend the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country.

## Document 5: Giddings (Modified)

*Source: Excerpt from Congressman Joshua Giddings speech during the Debate on the Mexican War, House of Representatives, Washington D.C., May 13, 1846.*

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Sir, no man regards this war as just. *We know*, the country knows, and the civilized worlds are conscious that it has resulted from a desire to extend and sustain an institution on which the Almighty [does not approve]. Mexico has long since abolished slavery and purified herself from its crimes and its guilt. Slaves now find asylum in the southwest and it has therefore become necessary to extend our people into Mexico in order to render slavery secure. . . .

This war is waged against an unoffending people, without just or adequate cause, for the purpose of conquest, with the design to extend slavery; in violation of the Constitution, against the dictates of justice, of humanity and the sentiments of the age in which we live and the [beliefs] of the religion we profess. I will not aid, no support whatever. I will not bathe my hands in the blood of the people of Mexico, nor will I participate in the guilt of those murders which have been and which will [later] be committed by our army there. For these reasons, I shall vote against the bill under consideration and all others calculated to support this war.



## Document 6: Sumner

Source: *Excerpt from a speech Representative Charles Sumner delivered about the Mexican War at Tremont Temple in Boston, MA, on November 5, 1846.*

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The Mexican War is an enormity born of slavery. Base in object, atrocious in beginning, immoral in all its influences, vainly prodigal of treasure and life, it is a war of infamy, which must blot the pages of our history.

### Glossary

- Enormity: outrageous evil, wickedness
- Base: dishonorable, low
- Atrocious: extremely, shockingly wicked, cruel, or brutal
- Prodigal: wasteful
- Infamy: fame or being well known for a bad thing

## Document 7: Historian Haynes

Source: *Excerpt from “Manifest Destiny” written by Historian Sam W. Haynes for PBS.org’s series, “U.S.-Mexican War” in 2006.*

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Expansionists were also motivated by more immediate, practical considerations. Southerners anxious to enlarge the slave empire were among the most ardent champions of the crusade for more territory. New slave states would enhance the South’s political power in Washington and, equally important, serve as an outlet for its growing slave population. For American commercial interests, expansion offered greater access to lucrative foreign markets. Washington policy-makers, anxious to compete with Great Britain for the Asia trade, had long been convinced of the strategic and commercial advantages of San Francisco and other ports on the Pacific coastline of Mexican-owned California. The disastrous Panic of 1837, which had resulted in huge surpluses and depressed prices for American farm products, also focused attention on the need to develop new foreign markets.

Haynes: [http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/prelude/md\\_manifest\\_destiny.html](http://www.pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/prelude/md_manifest_destiny.html) 



## **Mexican War LDC Documents 1–7**

### **Comprehension Reading Questions**

#### **Document 1: Polk’s Inaugural**

1. What movement is Polk referring to in the first two sentences?
2. Why does Polk use the term “emigrant” instead of “immigrant”?
3. What have “our people” brought to the West?
4. What duty belongs to the United States?

#### **Document 2: Thoreau**

1. What “nation” is Thoreau referring to when he says, “a sixth of the population of this nation”?
2. Which country is Thoreau referring to when he says, “a whole country is unjustly overrun”?
3. Which foreign army is Thoreau referring to when he says, “conquered by a foreign army”?

#### **Document 3: Polk’s Letter**

1. What does Polk mean by “extremely desirous”?
2. What two countries is Polk talking about?
3. What pending differences is Polk referring to?
4. What could Polk mean by calling on Congress to “provide the proper remedies”?

#### **Document 4: Polk’s Special Message**

1. Why is Polk concerned for the people living in the West?
2. According to Polk, what has Mexico done that the United States must respond to?

#### **Document 5: Giddings**

1. How does Giddings feel about slavery?
2. According to Giddings, what are the reasons for going to war with Mexico?

#### **Document 6: Sumner**

1. What is Sumner’s view of the Mexican-American War?

#### **Document 7: Historian Haynes**

1. How is this source different from the other sources in this set?
2. What are three things that motivated Expansionists to support westward settlement?



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary Collection Tool

Vocabulary Term	Definition	Picture



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Should the United States have gone to war with Mexico?

	Who wrote it? 1. Name of author 2. Month and year document was written 3. Audience for document	What is this source's point of view on western lands or the Mexican-American War?	Write one piece of evidence from the document (quote or information) that shows this point of view.
<b>Document 1</b>			
<b>Document 2</b>			
<b>Document 3</b>			
<b>Document 4</b>			
<b>Document 5</b>			
<b>Document 6</b>			
<b>Document 7</b>			

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?**  
**The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 2: Graphic Organizer*



<b>Sources that support the Mexican-American War</b>	<b>Sources that oppose the Mexican-American War</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introducing Quotes Practice

**Directions:** Using the authors, publications, and quotes given, write a sentence in which you incorporate all pertinent information. Remember, you can introduce a quote at the beginning or the end of a sentence.

Instead of “said,” try:

Explained	Described	Emphasized	Acknowledged	Agreed	Claimed
Stated	Proclaimed	Illustrated	Suggested	Argued	Announced

### Example:

Mr. Cosby, an 8th grade teacher, *Beaumont Gazette*, “Although I do enjoy reading about princesses and dragons, my favorite kinds of stories are mysteries.”

In the *Beaumont Gazette*, Mr. Cosby, an 8th grade teacher, explained, “Although I do enjoy reading about princesses and dragons, my favorite kinds of stories are mysteries.”

1. Mrs. Owen, construction worker, letter to the editor of the *Herald Leader*, “Building a garage is not as easy as it looks. It takes a lot of math, determination, and teamwork.”
2. Mrs. Friedlander, gardening enthusiast, *Home and Gardens Magazine*, “Flowers bring a smile to everyone’s face. I can’t help but smile when I look out at my garden and see my hard work blooming.”
3. Mr. Goff, World Fit leader, in an email to parents, “World Fit has been a great addition to our school. Our students are able to have a movement break and exercise, which improves their academics and behavior.”
4. Ms. Nelson, dog lover, *Horse and Hound Online*, “I believe everyone should own at least two dogs. They bring joy to every family, and I think we should make owning dogs a requirement in our country.”



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Mexican-American War LDC: Outline**

### **First Body Paragraph: One reason for your side of the argument**

Topic sentence or claim:

Evidence (information and/or quotes):

Explanation of how evidence supports your argument:

### **Second Body Paragraph: Second reason for your side of the argument**

Topic sentence or claim:

Evidence (information and/or quotes):

Explanation of how evidence supports your argument:

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?  
The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 2: Essay Organizer*



**Third Body Paragraph: Opposing argument**

Topic sentence or claim:

Explanation of opposing argument:

Evidence that supports opposing argument:

Reason and explanation detailing why your argument is stronger than this opposing argument:





### Writer's Checklist: LDC

Element	Your Own Check	Partner Check
Does the introductory paragraph include necessary background information?		
In your thesis statement, do you clearly state your view of Polk's justification for going to war with Mexico?		
Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence or claim?		
Is each reason developed so that the reader has a clear understanding of your ideas?		
Are specific details and quotations included?		
Do you explain how details and quotations support your argument?		
When using quotes, are the sources of those quotes identified?		
Do you include a counterclaim or contrary view?		
Does the conclusion mirror the introduction and restate key points of your essay?		
Does the paper use correct grammar and punctuation?		
Does the paper flow—does it seem organized?		
Give this paper a score: 1–5 (5 being the best)		

1. Give your partner two compliments about his or her paper. What were areas of strength?
2. Write at least one helpful comment. What can be changed in the essay to strengthen the argument?

### Writer's Checklist: LDC

Element	Your Own Check	Partner Check
Does the introductory paragraph include necessary background information?		
In your thesis statement, do you clearly state your view of Polk's justification for going to war with Mexico?		
Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence or claim?		
Is each reason developed so that the reader has a clear understanding of your ideas?		
Are specific details and quotations included?		
Do you explain how details and quotations support your argument?		
When using quotes, are the sources of those quotes identified?		
Do you include a counterclaim or contrary view?		
Does the conclusion mirror the introduction and restate key points of your essay?		
Does the paper use correct grammar and punctuation?		
Does the paper flow—does it seem organized?		
Give this paper a score: 1–5 (5 being the best)		

1. Give your partner two compliments about his or her paper. What were areas of strength?
2. Write at least one helpful comment. What can be changed in the essay to strengthen the argument?

## Common Assignment 3

# Moving West Summative Response

### Table of Contents

#### 1. Teacher Materials

- a. [Teacher Instructions](#)
- b. [“America: The Story of Us” “Westward” Episode](#) 

#### 2. [Summative Response Rubric](#)

#### 3. Student Materials

- a. [Moving West Summative Response](#)

## How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward? The 1830s and 1840s *Common Assignment 3*



### Teacher Instructions

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Before having students answer this constructed response, have them work with materials that help them learn about different groups who moved west; varied motives for that move; and impacts on varied groups, both migrants and those already living in the region.

Some possible materials include:

- [“America: The Story of Us” “Westward” Episode](#) 
- [“TCI History Alive! The United States through Industrialism”—Unit 5, Section 16: “Life in the West” minidramas](#)  (Please note that these materials require purchase.)

**How and Why Did the United States Expand Westward?**  
**The 1830s and 1840s** *Common Assignment 3*

### Summative Response Rubric

<b>Score 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You complete all parts of the question and communicate ideas clearly.</li><li>• You demonstrate in-depth understanding of the relevant concepts and ideas.</li><li>• Where appropriate, you offer insightful interpretations or extensions.</li><li>• You accurately use various content vocabulary.</li></ul>
<b>Score 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You complete most parts of the question and communicate clearly.</li><li>• You demonstrate an understanding of major concepts even though you overlook or misunderstand some less important ideas or details.</li><li>• You accurately use content vocabulary.</li></ul>
<b>Score 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You complete some parts of the question and communicate those components clearly.</li><li>• You demonstrate that there are gaps in your conceptual understanding.</li><li>• You use little content vocabulary.</li></ul>
<b>Score 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You show minimal understanding of the question.</li><li>• You address only a small portion of the question.</li><li>• You use no content vocabulary.</li></ul>
<b>Score 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your answer is totally incorrect or irrelevant.</li></ul>



## Moving West Summative Response

During the first half of the 19th century, the United States expanded across the North American continent. Some of the territory was won by the United States through conflict, and some was won through compromise. Regardless of how the land was added to the United States, many groups were affected by this expansion.



Source: Robert A. Divine et al., *America: Past and Present*, Scott, Foresman (adapted)

Write a well-developed response that addresses the following:

**Part A:** Explain, in detail, how the United States acquired two territories.

**Part B:** Choose two groups that were affected by westward expansion and describe the impact of expansion on these groups.