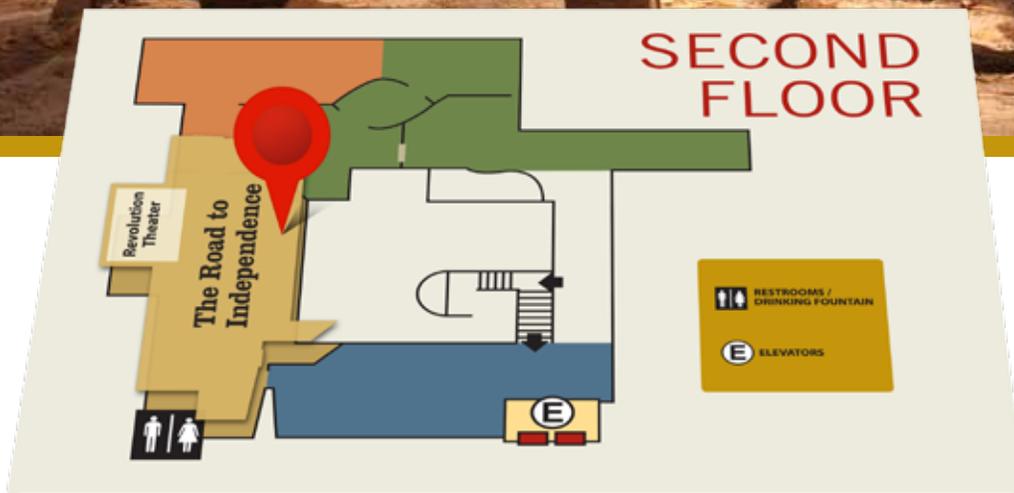
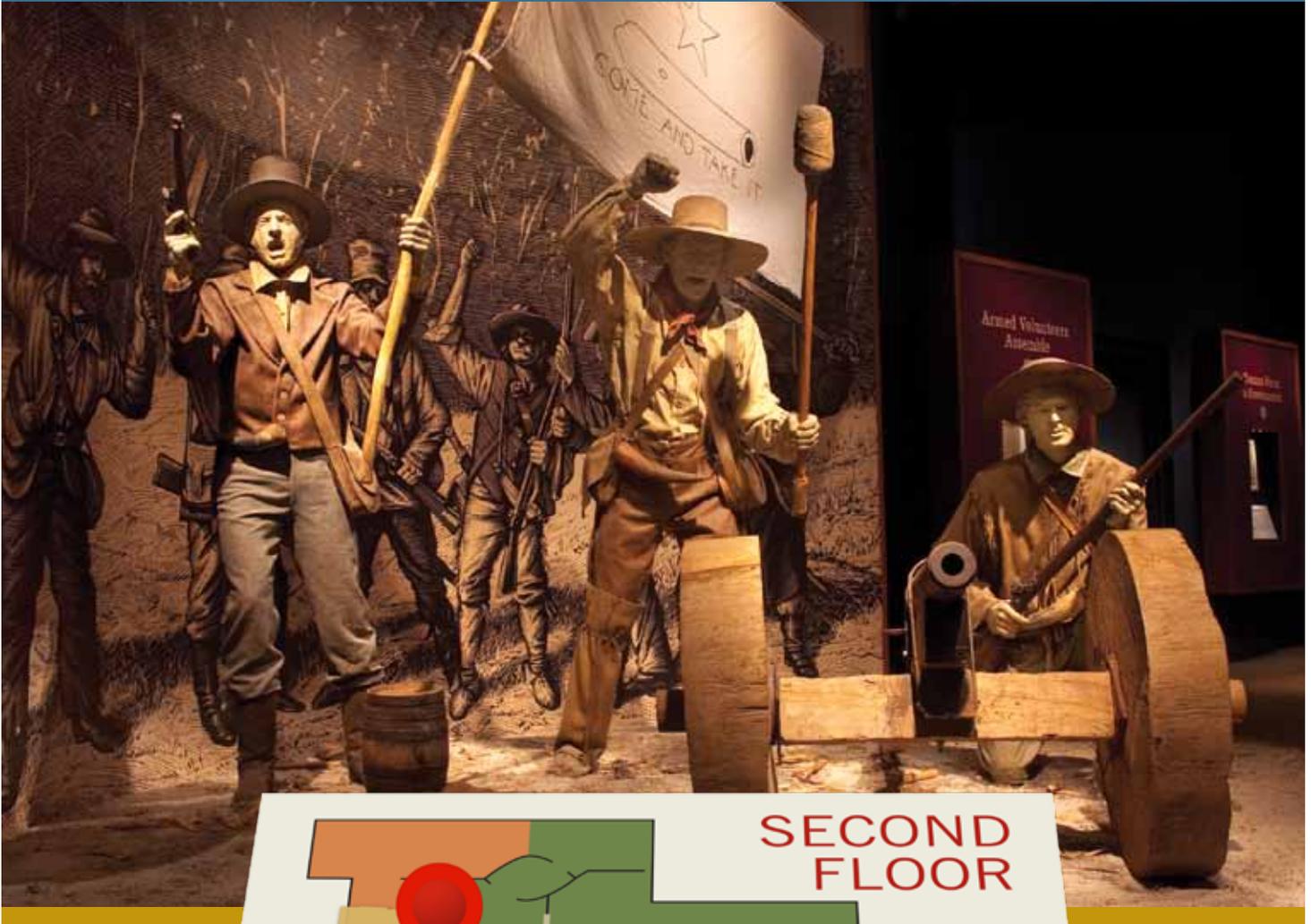


★ CHAPTER SIX ★

THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE



Overview

Chapter 6: *The Road to Independence* encompasses the main battles of the Texas Revolution interpreted in the story of Texas independence: Gonzales, the Alamo, Goliad and San Jacinto. The exhibits in this chapter represent 1835 and 1836 — the Texas Revolution for independence from Mexico. During their visit, students

will investigate Texans’ decision to declare independence and fight against the Mexican government, the causes and outcomes of battles during the Revolution, and the flight of settlers from their homes during the Runaway Scrape. Finally, students will analyze the events that ended the Texas Revolution.

★ THE STORY OF TEXAS EDUCATOR GUIDE ★

CHAPTER SIX: THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

Student Objectives

- ★ Explore how people communicated in the 1820s by simulating the delivery of messages between towns.
- ★ Compare armaments, equipment, motivation, and determination to explore how a smaller, less organized Texian army could defeat a larger, more organized Mexican army.
- ★ Observe and record information and ideas from exhibits to determine the causes and outcomes of the battles during the Texas Revolution.
- ★ Investigate and record why settlers left their homes during the Runaway Scrape.
- ★ Determine and explain the government outlined by the Texas Constitution in 1836.

Guiding Questions

- ★ How did Texians communicate with each other over long distances during the Texas Revolution?
- ★ How did Texians prepare for the revolution?
- ★ What were the outcomes of the battles of the Texas Revolution?
- ★ How were Texans able to win their independence?

TEKS

(TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)

§ 113.15. Social Studies, Grade 4

History 4.3A, 4.3B

Government 4.15A

Citizenship 4.16A

Social Studies Skills 4.21A, 4.21B, 4.21C, 4.21D

Social Studies Skills 4.22A, 4.22C, 4.22D

§ 113.19. Social Studies, Grade 7

History 7.2D, 7.2E, 7.2F

History 7.3B, 7.3C

Geography 11.A

Social Studies Skills 7.21A, 7.21B, 7.21C, 7.21D, 7.21E

Social Studies Skills 7.22A, 7.22D

§ 74.4 English Language Proficiency Standards

Learning Strategies 1.C, 1.E

Listening 2.I

Speaking 3.D, 3.E, 3.G, 3.J

Reading 4.G, 4.I, 4.J, 4.K

Writing 5.B

Materials

- *The Story of Texas Student Journal: Chapter 6: The Road to Independence*



Fannin Surrounded, original scratchboard illustration by Mark Weakley, San Antonio

Set the Stage

Since 1821, immigrants from the U.S. had been legally settling in Tejas under the empresario system. In 1835 President Santa Anna centralized the government's authority in Mexico and abolished the **Constitution** of 1824.

Under that **Constitution**, Tejas had been combined with Coahuila in a single state, which had greatly limited the Texians' representation within the Mexican government. Texians and Tejanos together sought to ensure fair representation within the Mexican government by establishing a Mexican state of Tejas, separate from Coahuila. Attempts to work with the government to realize reform failed, and frustrations in Tejas with the changing policies of the Mexican government grew. Citizens in Tejas along with other Mexican states began to rebel against the new laws. Many leaders in Tejas decided to fight against the Mexican government for **independence**. Even though the Mexican army was large and well equipped, Texians and Tejanos were willing to risk their lives to protect their rights.

The first shots of the escalating conflict were fired at Gonzales. Mexican soldiers traveled to Gonzales in September 1835 to reclaim a cannon the military had loaned to the colonists for protection, but the Texians refused to give it back. In October, Mexico sent a larger force to retrieve the cannon, but the colonists challenged them to "Come and take it," and fired on the soldiers.

Texians prepared for the approaching **revolution**. They formed a volunteer army with Stephen F. Austin acting as Commander in Chief. A delegation of men adopted the *Declaration of the People of Texas* to announce their loyalty to the 1824 Mexican **Constitution** and their intention to resist Santa Anna's new regime. The delegation formed a Texas government that would serve until they could reach an agreement with Mexico.

In December of 1835, the Texian army fought Mexican troops at the Battle of Bexar. After five days of fighting the Mexican troops surrendered, leaving San Antonio in the Texians' control.

By March, delegates gathered at Washington-on-the-Brazos. They installed Sam Houston as Commander in Chief of the Texian army, passed a Declaration of **Independence**, and adopted a **Constitution** of the **Republic** of Texas.

As these delegates gathered, Texan forces continued to meet Mexican forces on the battlefield. Approximately 250 Texians and Tejanos battled almost 2000 Mexican soldiers for 13 days during the Battle of the Alamo. The entire Texas force was killed. On March 27, 1836, James Fannin's army was defeated at the Battle of Coleto Creek. Fannin and his men surrendered and marched to Goliad as prisoners of the Mexican army. Santa Anna ordered Mexican soldiers to execute all captured forces. Only a few escaped or were spared. After learning of this massacre at Goliad, thousands of settlers abandoned their homes and fled toward Louisiana. This civilian retreat became known as the Runaway Scrape. Finally, on April 21, 1836, Sam Houston and his army caught Santa Anna's forces by surprise at San Jacinto. Texians and Tejanos attacked shouting, "Remember the Alamo," and "Remember Goliad."

Houston's army quickly defeated the Mexicans and captured Santa Anna the day after the battle. Although wounded, Sam Houston accepted Santa Anna's surrender, and the **Republic** of Texas was born.

Vocabulary

Constitution	A document that outlines the system of laws and principles of a government.
Independence	Liberty; freedom
Republic	A nation in which the power lies in the hands of the citizens who vote for officers and representatives responsible to them
Revolution	The overthrow of one government and its replacement with another



Before the Museum

BUILD BACKGROUND

1. Read the following scenario to students:
The Texians and Tejanos are frustrated with the policies of the Mexican government. Attempts to work with the government to voice concerns and bring about reform have failed. Many leaders in Tejas have decided to fight against Mexico for independence but will need to communicate with the citizens of Tejas to organize militias and armies and to send information regarding military conflicts and actions taken by the Mexican government. How will towns communicate with each other when there are no cell phones, Internet, television, or radio?
2. Organize the class into four or five groups. Place each group at a different location in an outside area. Explain that each group represents a town in Tejas located many miles from the other towns. Students name their towns.
3. Give each group a message to send to the other towns such as a note recruiting volunteers to join the militia to fight against Mexico for independence, a warning of approaching Mexican soldiers, or a notice of action taken upon a town by Mexican soldiers. Each group will devise a plan to communicate to the people in the other towns located throughout the territory (outside area). This may include sending a messenger, writing a letter, or both. Each group must also keep track of the towns where they delivered messages.
4. To help simulate the amount of time it took to communicate in the 1800s, students must walk with their message to the other towns.
5. Assign one or two students to play the role of Mexican soldiers. Their job is to patrol the area between the towns to prevent communications from passing. Mexican soldiers must also walk. If a soldier is able to tag a messenger, then the messenger must go back to their town and try again.
6. Once a town (group) receives a message, they must send a response back to the town responsible for the message. Play until all groups have had a chance to send and receive messages.
7. Afterwards, share the messages that each group sent and received. What happened when they were not delivered? Did each town understand the messages they received?

Discuss the challenges of communicating in the 1800s. Students consider how long it took to share information.

PREDICT

1. Give each student a *Story of Texas Student Journal*. Ask students the Thinking Ahead question: How were Texians able to communicate and work together to defeat Mexico's larger and better equipped army?
2. Students discuss and record the type of evidence they might find to answer the question. Evidence can include primary sources such as maps, documents, artifacts, newspapers, and letters.



Engage at the Museum

1. Gather students between the *Come and Take It* and *Making a Stand* exhibits. Divide students into four groups. Assign each group one of four topics to observe and describe:
 - ★ armaments and equipment used by the Mexican army
 - ★ uniforms worn by the Mexican army
 - ★ armaments and equipment used by the colonists
 - ★ uniforms worn by the colonists
2. Each group will study the artifacts in the Exhibits and discuss how well prepared they think the Mexican and Texan armies were for battle.



Houston's Trainees,
original scratchboard illustration by Mark Weakley, San Antonio

★ THE STORY OF TEXAS EDUCATOR GUIDE ★

CHAPTER SIX: THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

3. Each group will report their findings to the whole group by discussing the following:
 - ★ How are uniforms and armaments important in fighting a war?
 - ★ Where did the colonists get many of their weapons, including the cannon in Gonzales?
 - ★ Do you think the Mexican government had the right to take the cannon back?
 - ★ If the Mexican army is more organized, larger, and better equipped to fight a war than the colonists, how do you think the colonists can successfully defend themselves and gain independence?
 - ★ Why do you think the colonists risked losing their lives to fight the Mexican army? Why do you think the Mexican army risked their lives for their government?



Explore the Museum

1. Remind students to look for evidence to help them answer the Thinking Ahead question written on the cover of their Student Journals: How were Texans able to communicate and work together to defeat Mexico's larger and better equipped army?
2. Explain that students will identify and analyze the events that took place during the 1820s and 1830s to help answer the question.
3. Divide the class into groups of three to four students. Decide whether each group will complete assigned sections of the Student Journal or all sections. Students rotate through the exhibits to locate primary and secondary sources that will help them complete their journals.

6.1: October 1835 - Make a sketch of the flag the Texians made at Gonzales and explain why they wrote "Come and Take It."

6.2: Texans Fight for Independence from Mexico - Study the exhibits throughout this chapter to identify the outcomes of the four major battles. Explain what the model of the Alamo tells about the battle that took place.

6.3: Spreading the Word - Identify an example or artifact that shows the role that printers played in keeping Texans informed in 1835.

6.4: Civilians Flee - Explain why thousands of settlers abandoned their homes during the Runaway Scrape. Explain what you would take with you if you had to leave your home.

6.5: Victory at San Jacinto - Identify your favorite artifact displayed at the Victory at San Jacinto exhibit. Describe the artifact and why you chose it.

6.6: The Republic of Texas is Born - Describe the type of government that the Texas Constitution outlined.

4. After investigating and recording information in their Student Journals, ask groups to present their information and ideas to the class while standing near the exhibits they used for their research.
5. Students record what they learn from the group presentations in their Student Journal. Discuss the sacrifices that Texans made to win their freedom from Mexico.



After the Museum

DRAW CONCLUSIONS

1. Students share the information they gathered in their Student Journal during the Museum visit.
2. Refer back to the Thinking Ahead question found on the cover of the Student Journal. Compare the evidence students were looking for to what they actually observed at the Museum.
3. Discuss students' responses to the question. The exhibits include many examples of how letters and newspapers helped communicate the outcomes of battles and rally the support and efforts of Texans. The exhibits showcase the passion, will, and determination of Texans that helped them to persevere.

EXTEND STUDENT LEARNING

- ★ Students create a presentation highlighting the important battles of the Texas Revolution. Include a map of battle locations, details of each battle, the results of each battle, and the importance of each battle
- ★ Students write a script to reenact one of the battles of the Texas Revolution such as the Battle of Gonzales, the Battle of the Alamo, or the Battle of San Jacinto. Students present the play to the class.
- ★ Students research the Runaway Scrape to determine its causes and effects. Create a journal with at least three entries describing life as a Texian or Tejano during the Runaway Scrape. Entries should discuss why the author left home, where his or her home is located in Tejas, where the author is planning to go for safety, the challenges of traveling across Tejas, the events that end the Mexican army's threat to Tejas, and how the author learns that he or she may return.
- ★ Students visit the interactive painting of the Surrender of Santa Anna by William H. Huddle at http://education.texashistory.unt.edu/lessons/psa/Texas_Revolution/docs/Flash/history_portal_surrender_2.swf. Students use software such as PhotoShop or PowerPoint to create their own interactive painting.
- ★ Students read William Barrett Travis' letter from the Alamo at <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/republic/alamo/travis-about.html>. Students write their own letter from the point of view of a Texan or Mexican soldier at the Alamo.

ACTIVITY 6.5: VICTORY AT SAN JACINTO

Identify your favorite artifact shown in the *Victory at San Jacinto* exhibit. Describe the artifact and why you chose it.

Artifact	Description

This is my favorite artifact because _____

ACTIVITY 6.6: THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS IS BORN

Describe the type of government established by the Texas Constitution.

How is this type of government different from the Mexican government the Texans have been living under?

★ THE STORY OF TEXAS STUDENT JOURNAL ★



**CHAPTER SIX:
THE ROAD TO
INDEPENDENCE**

STUDENT NAME



Question:

How were Texans able to communicate and work together to defeat Mexico's larger and better equipped army?

Before I visit:	During my visit:
<p>What evidence will I look for to answer the question?</p>	<p>What evidence have I found to answer the question?</p>



.....
After exploring this chapter I learned _____

ACTIVITY 6.1: OCTOBER 1835

Make a sketch of the flag the Texians made at Gonzales.



Why do you think the Texians wrote, "Come and Take It" on the flag?

ACTIVITY 6.2: TEXANS FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE FROM MEXICO

Study the exhibits throughout this chapter to identify the outcomes of the following battles.

Location of Battle	Outcome
Bexar	
Alamo	
Coleto Creek	
San Jacinto	

What does the Museum's facade of the Alamo tell you about the battle that took place?

ACTIVITY 6.3: SPREADING THE WORD

Identify an example or artifact that shows how printers reported the events of 1835 to Texians.

Artifact	What does the artifact tell Texians?

ACTIVITY 6.4: CIVILIANS FLEE

Why did thousands of settlers leave their homes during the Runaway Scrape?

What would you take with you if you had to leave your home?
