

# The Early Republic

## Main Ideas

1. Under the Treaties of Velasco, Mexico would recognize Texas independence, but the treaties were not honored.
2. Texas held its first national elections in 1836.

## Why It Matters Today

Because Texas was a democratic republic, its citizens elected their leaders. Use current events sources to learn about elections in other countries around the world today.



**TEKS:** 1A, 3C, 4A, 8A, 9C, 21B, 21C, 21E, 22D

## The Story Continues

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on events in the early Texas Republic.

Several Texans were camped near Buffalo Bayou after fleeing their homes during the Runaway Scrape. Suddenly, a woman on the edge of the group began pointing and shouting, “Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” A man on horseback was racing toward them and yelling. “San Jacinto! The Mexicans are whipped and Santa Anna a prisoner!” Everyone laughed, hugged, and cried from happiness at the victory.



## The Treaties of Velasco

With the victory at San Jacinto, Texas had become a free republic. The Republic of Texas would last 10 years, from 1836 to 1846. In 1836, some issues from the Revolution remained. Some 2,000 Mexican troops under General Vicente Filisola remained in Texas. Texans also needed to decide what to do with Mexican general and president Antonio López de Santa Anna, whom they had captured at San Jacinto. In exchange for his life, Santa Anna agreed to order the Mexican troops to leave Texas.

The Texans brought Santa Anna to Velasco, the temporary capital of Texas. On May 14, 1836, Santa Anna and Texas ad interim president David G. Burnet signed two **Treaties of Velasco**. The first treaty, which was made public, included the following terms.

1. The war between Mexico and Texas was officially ended, and Texas was independent.
2. Santa Anna would not take up arms against Texas.

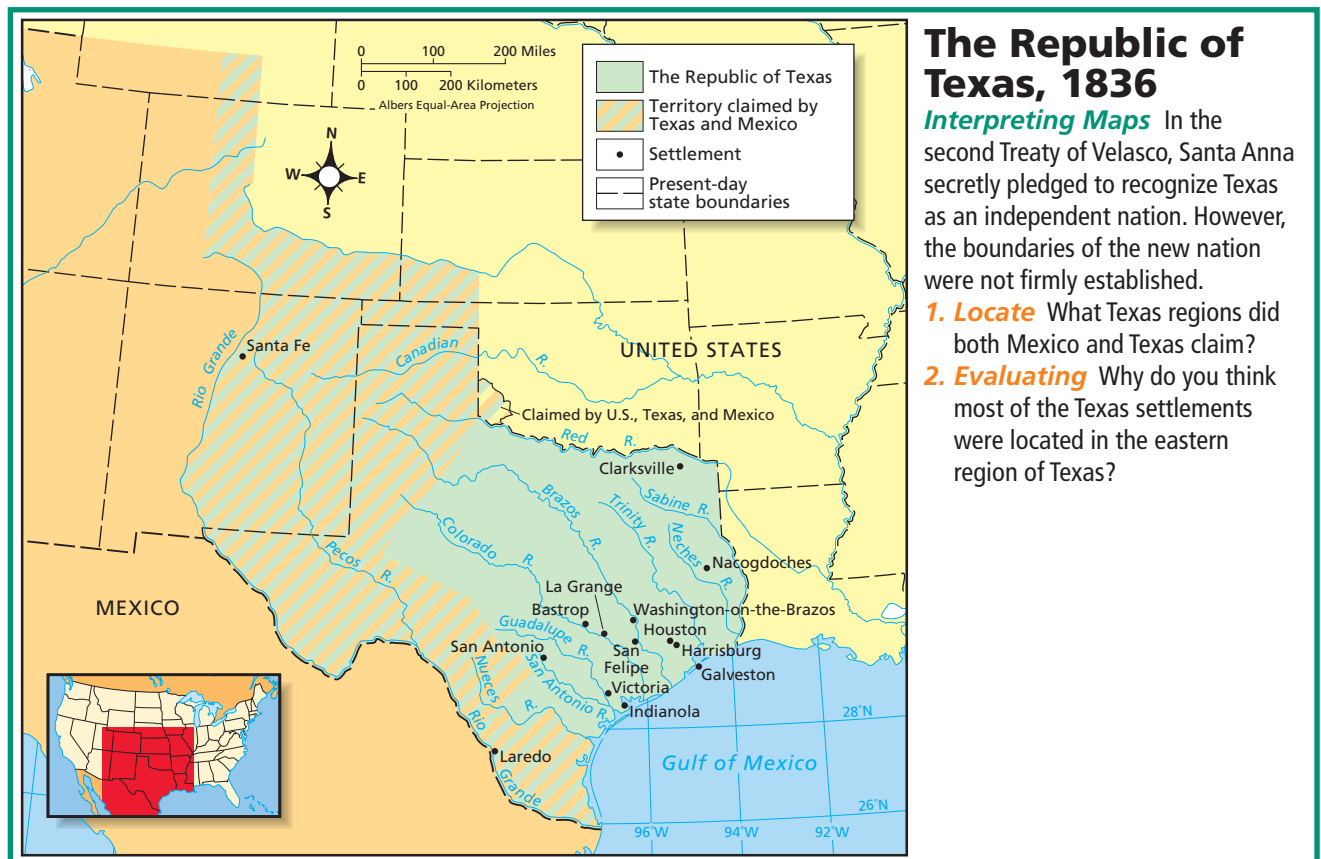
3. All Mexican forces would withdraw beyond the Rio Grande.
4. Prisoners would be returned to their homes.
5. The Mexicans would return all captured property.
6. Texas leaders would promptly return Santa Anna to Mexico.

The second treaty was kept secret. It provided that, in exchange for Santa Anna's immediate release, he would try to persuade Mexican leaders to recognize Texas independence. Santa Anna also agreed to promote the Rio Grande as Mexico's border with Texas.

With the treaty signed, General Filisola immediately began to remove his troops from Texas. However, the Texans did not follow through on their part of the treaty. The Texas army refused to return Santa Anna to Mexico, instead keeping him prisoner at Velasco. In fact, the Texas government chose to send Santa Anna to Washington, DC, rather than back to Mexico. The official purpose of the Washington trip was to negotiate a lasting peace between Texas and Mexico, but nothing came of it.

Likewise, the Mexican government refused to honor the terms of the treaty. Mexican leaders stated that Santa Anna, as a prisoner of war, was no longer their president and had no authority to sign a treaty. As a result, the Mexican government refused to ratify the treaties. Although Texas had won its freedom, Mexico refused to acknowledge the fact, and would continue to refuse for many years.

**Reading Check Analyzing Information** Why did the Treaties of Velasco have little effect?





### The Lone Star Flag

The first official Texas flag was adopted by the Texas Congress on December 10, 1836. It had a blue background with a gold star in the center. It was replaced by the red, white, and blue Lone Star flag in 1839. The designer of the 1839 flag is unknown. Since then, changes have been made to the specifications for the flag, but the symbol of the state of Texas has remained essentially unchanged since 1839.

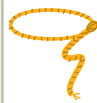
**How did the appearance of the Lone Star flag change during the 1830s?**

## The Election of 1836

A second major challenge facing the Republic of Texas was to form a new government. The Constitution of 1836 required that elections be held to select new leaders. At the same time, Texans would decide whether to approve the Constitution of 1836 and whether to pursue **annexation** of Texas to the United States. Annexation is the formal joining of one political region to another. Burnet wrote in a letter that the election would probably “be conducted with a good deal of spirit.”

Three well-known Texans ran for president—Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, and Henry Smith. Of the three candidates, Houston was the most popular. After all, “Old Sam Jacinto,” as he became known, had led Texans to victory. Many Texans shared the view of this supporter.

### TEXAS VOICES



“No person ever met Sam Houston in the early days of the Republic without being impressed with his greatness. He was then about forty-two years of age, just the prime of life. Standing largely over six feet in height, with a massive, well formed hand, . . . a large head, a piercing gray eye, [and] a mouth and nose indicating character of fine proportions.”

—Francis R. Lubbock, quoted in *A Political History of the Texas Republic, 1836–1845*, by Stanley Siegel

Houston won the presidency by a large majority. For vice president, voters elected **Mirabeau B. Lamar**, another hero of San Jacinto. Texans also elected 30 representatives and 14 senators to the Republic’s new Congress. In addition, voters overwhelmingly approved the Constitution of 1836 and expressed a desire to pursue U.S. annexation. These issues decided, the Republic began to set up its national government.

**Reading Check Finding the Main Idea** Who did Texans elect in 1836?

## Section 1 Review

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**ONLINE QUIZ**

### 1. Define and explain:

- annexation

### 2. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

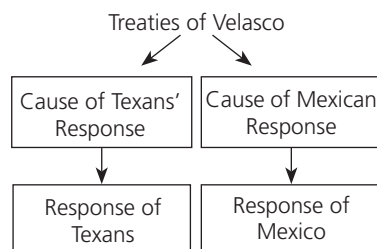
- Treaties of Velasco
- Mirabeau B. Lamar

### 3. Locate on a Texas map:

- Rio Grande

### 4. Identifying Cause and Effect

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to show how the Mexican government and Texans responded to the Treaties of Velasco, and why.



### 5. Finding the Main Idea

- What event created the Republic of Texas, and how long would it last?
- What decisions did Texans make in the election of 1836?

### 6. Writing and Critical Thinking

**Identifying Points of View** Write a newspaper editorial supporting one of the candidates for president in the election of 1836.

Consider the following:

- the personalities and accomplishments of each candidate
- the needs of a new country and how they can be met