



TEXAS INDEPENDENCE

The Star of the Republic Museum

Title: The Convention of 1836: Grievances to Independence

Lesson Synopsis:

Why did Texas want to be independent from Mexico? This lesson teaches the reasons for the Texans' desire for independence through the grievances included in Declaration of Independence written at the Convention of 1836.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

4. (3) History. *The student understands the causes and effects of the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas, and the annexation of Texas to the United States. The student is expected to:*

(A) analyze the causes, major events, and effects of the Texas Revolution

4. (16) Government. *The student understands important ideas in historic documents of Texas. The student is expected to:*

(A) identify the purposes and explain the importance of the Texas Declaration of Independence

4. (22) Social studies skills. *The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:*

(D) identify different points of view about an issue or topic;

7. (3) History. *The student understands how individuals, events, and issues related to the Texas Revolution shaped the history of Texas. The student is expected to:*

(B) explain the issues surrounding significant events of the Texas Revolution including the Convention of 1836

7. (21) Social studies skills. *The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:*

(E) support a point of view on a social studies issue or event

Preparing For Instruction

Performance Indicator

- Letter to the Editor

Key Understandings

- People rebel when they feel they have been treated unjustly.

Guiding Questions

- What was the importance of the Convention of 1836?
- What were reasons for Texans to declare independence?
- Who were some important individuals at the Convention of 1836?

Academic Vocabulary

- grievance

Materials

- Letter written by the principal outlining new rules or one written yourself
- 8 Sets of Grievance Matching Cards – 1836 and Modern Language
- Grievance Ranking Document

Resources

- Texas Independence Website www.txindependence.org**
- Primary Sources
 - Behind the Grievances
 - Convention Comicmaker

Background Information

Students should already be familiar with the earlier events leading to the Declaration of Independence and the problems that had been already occurring including the Law of April 6, 1830, the Turtle Bayou Resolutions, and the arrest of Stephen F. Austin.

Instructional Procedures

5-E Model	Instructions	Teacher Notes
ENGAGE	<p>Objective: <i>The student will explain what a grievance is and options a citizen has in a democracy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the principal to write a letter describing new changes to a problem area in your school (cafeteria issues, hallway issues, general behavior issues, etc.) Students for the most part should not agree with the changes. • Read the letter to the class outlining the changes in school policy • Have the students vote on whether they like the changes or not. • Organize students into committees to draft a statement to give to the principal. 	<p>Timeframe: 10-15 minutes</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They should state the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Original Rule ○ Changes to Rule ○ Explain why the new rule is unfair and why it should remain as the original rule <p><i>After students have drafted their statements, explain to students that they have drafted a grievance or complaint just like the men at Washington-on-the-Brazos did prior to the Texas Revolution. There was one difference- the men were not just drafting a grievance but a list of grievances explaining why they were declaring themselves independent from Mexico. Show students a copy of the Texas Declaration of Independence.</i></p> <p>Texas Independence Website: Download the original Texas Declaration of Independence to show students. www.txindependence.org Click on Texas Independence: Primary Sources: Grievances</p>	
EXPLORE	<p>Objective: <i>Examine the grievances found in the TX Declaration of Independence and analyze their importance.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on what has been discussed, explain the definition of <i>grievance</i>: <i>Grievance = Complaint</i> • Have students remain in the earlier groups • Using the attached 1836 Grievance Matching Cards and the Modern Grievance Matching Cards, have students match them together • After students have matched the 15 grievances (1836 Language with Modern Language), have them choose the top five grievances that affected the Texans and list them on the Grievance Ranking Document (Attachment) • Students will rank these grievances describing each grievance and why they were ranked how they were. <p>Texas Independence Website: Before students begin gathering information have them complete the activities on <i>Behind the Grievances</i></p>	Timeframe: 30-40 minutes
EXPLAIN	<p>Objective: <i>The student will explain the importance of the convention of 1836.</i></p> <p>Have student complete the sentence summary on the Grievance Ranking Document. (Attachment)</p> <p><i>The importance of the Convention of 1836 was _____.</i></p>	Timeframe: 10 minutes
ELABORATE	<p>Objective: <i>The student will use point of view to explain the causes for declaring independence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students go to the website Texas Independence: Convention Comicmaker. • Using this online comic-making tool, have students create their own comic (or graphic novel) about Texas history based on the theme The Causes of Independence • Have students share with the class or email to teacher. 	Timeframe: 10 minutes
EVALUATE	<p>Objective: <i>The student will explain the reason for Texas Independence.</i></p> <p>Write a letter to the local paper arguing the case for Texas Independence. The letter should be persuasive and must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments for why you think Texans had the right to declare independence from Mexico • At least 3 examples of misdeeds committed by the Mexican government that led to the Convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos 	Timeframe: 30 minutes



Attachments:

- Grievance Matching Cards 1836
- Grievance Matching Cards Modern
- Grievance Ranking Document
- Grievances Key

1836

The Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government to which they had been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America.

1836

In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed, inasmuch as the Mexican nation has acquiesced in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having overturned the constitution of his country, now offers us the cruel alternative, either to abandon our homes, acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.

1836

It has sacrificed our welfare to the state of Coahuila, by which our interests have been continually depressed through a jealous and partial course of legislation, carried on at a far distant seat of government, by a hostile majority, in an unknown tongue, and this too, notwithstanding we have petitioned in the humblest terms for the establishment of a separate state government, and have, in accordance with the provisions of the national constitution, presented to the general Congress a republican constitution, which was, without just cause, contemptuously rejected.

1836

It incarcerated in a dungeon, for a long time, one of our citizens, for no other cause but a zealous endeavor to procure the acceptance of our constitution, and the establishment of a state government.

1836

It has failed and refused to secure, on a firm basis, the right of trial by jury, that palladium of civil liberty, and only safe guarantee for the life, liberty, and property of the citizen.

1836

It has failed to establish any public system of education, although possessed of almost boundless resources, (the public domain,) and although it is an axiom in political science, that unless a people are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty, or the capacity for self government.

1836

It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.

1836

It has dissolved, by force of arms, the state Congress of Coahuila and Texas, and obliged our representatives to fly for their lives from the seat of government, thus depriving us of the fundamental political right of representation.

1836

It has demanded the surrender of a number of our citizens, and ordered military detachments to seize and carry them into the Interior for trial, in contempt of the civil authorities, and in defiance of the laws and the constitution.

1836

It has made piratical attacks upon our commerce, by commissioning foreign desperadoes, and authorizing them to seize our vessels, and convey the property of our citizens to far distant ports for confiscation.

1836

It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, by the support of a national religion, calculated to promote the temporal interest of its human functionaries, rather than the glory of the true and living God.

1836

It has demanded us to deliver up our arms, which are essential to our defence, the rightful property of freemen, and formidable only to tyrannical governments.

1836

It has invaded our country both by sea and by land, with intent to lay waste our territory, and drive us from our homes; and has now a large mercenary army advancing, to carry on against us a war of extermination.

1836

It has, through its emissaries, incited the merciless savage, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, to massacre the inhabitants of our defenseless frontiers.

1836

It hath been, during the whole time of our connection with it, the contemptible sport and victim of successive military revolutions, and hath continually exhibited every characteristic of a weak, corrupt, and tyrranical government.

Modern

The Mexican government invited us to come and settle Texas, promising that we would have a written constitution much like we did in the United States.

Modern

The Mexican government promised us a constitution, but Santa Anna refuses to acknowledge the constitution he showed us and ordered us to either leave Texas, or stay and tolerate his military and religious dictatorship.

Modern

Mexico made Coahuila the boss of Texas and they have taken advantage of that situation. The state capital is too far for Texans to have a reasonable say in the laws we are made to live by. The government in the state capital of Coahuila is also ruled by a majority who doesn't speak our language. We have asked the Mexican government repeatedly to allow us to be a separate state and they have rejected the petition each time.

Modern

The Mexican government put one of our most respected citizens in prison just for asking that we be allowed to become our own Mexican state.

Modern

The Mexican government has denied us the right for a jury trial before we are punished or thrown into prison.

Modern

The Mexican government has not provided us with any public education system, even though they have the resources to do so. It has been proven that if people are to maintain the ability to be self-governed, they need to be educated.

Modern

The Mexican government has completely ignored our rights by randomly sending their military troops to our homes and towns. This has made our city governments practically powerless against their military forces.

Modern

The Mexican government brought their army into our state capital and did away with our state legislature by using force. This military action forced our representatives to leave the capital or possibly face death by the army.

Modern

The Mexican government has ordered that we give up several of our most important leaders to the Mexican army. The army took our leaders to Mexico City for trial even though the constitution they promised us said they couldn't do that.

Modern

The Mexican government hired foreign pirates to attack our ships and steal the goods meant for Texans. They then sold these goods to others.

Modern

The Mexican government forces us to join their national religion and does not let us choose which religion we want to follow.

Modern

The Mexican government forced us to give up our weapons so that we would not be able to defend ourselves.

Modern

The Mexican government has invaded Texas in order to destroy our land and kick us out of our homes. In fact, they have a large army advancing on us right now in order to kill us all.

Modern

The Mexican government has sent Mexican officials to Texas to talk to the Native Americans and try to get the Natives to massacre us with their tomahawks and scalping knives.

Modern

The Mexican government, for the entire time that we have had to deal with them, has shown over and over how they cannot even keep a stable government. Their government has suffered several takeovers by the military and has shown themselves to be weak, corrupt and tyrannical.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Ranking the Grievances

Using the matching cards, select the top five grievances that affected the Texans the most, rank them describing each grievance, and explain why each grievance was given its rank.

Rank	Description of Grievance	Reason for this Rank

The importance of the convention of 1836 was

**Grievances – Historical and Modern Language
KEY**

Grievance	1836	Modern
1	<p>The Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government to which they had been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America.</p>	<p>The Mexican government invited us to come and settle Texas, promising that we would have a written constitution much like we did in the United States.</p>
2	<p>In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed, inasmuch as the Mexican nation has acquiesced in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having overturned the constitution of his country, now offers us the cruel alternative, either to abandon our homes, acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.</p>	<p>The Mexican government promised us a constitution, but Santa Anna refuses to acknowledge the constitution he showed us and ordered us to either leave Texas, or stay and tolerate his military and religious dictatorship.</p>
3	<p>It has sacrificed our welfare to the state of Coahuila, by which our interests have been continually depressed through a jealous and partial course of legislation, carried on at a far distant seat of government, by a hostile majority, in an unknown tongue, and this too, notwithstanding we have petitioned in the humblest terms for the establishment of a separate state government, and have, in accordance with the provisions of the national constitution, presented to the general Congress a republican constitution, which was, without just cause, contemptuously rejected.</p>	<p>Mexico made Coahuila the boss of Texas and they have taken advantage of that situation. The state capital is too far for Texans to have a reasonable say in the laws we are made to live by. The government in the state capital of Coahuila is also ruled by a majority who doesn't speak our language. We have asked the Mexican government repeatedly to allow us to be a separate state and they have rejected the petition each time.</p>
4	<p>It incarcerated in a dungeon, for a long time, one of our citizens, for no other cause but a zealous endeavor to procure the acceptance of our constitution, and the establishment of a state government.</p>	<p>The Mexican government put one of our most respected citizens in prison just for asking that we be allowed to become our own Mexican state.</p>
5	<p>It has failed and refused to secure, on a firm basis, the right of trial by jury, that palladium of civil liberty, and only safe guarantee for the life, liberty, and property of the citizen.</p>	<p>The Mexican government has denied us the right for a jury trial before we are punished or thrown into prison.</p>

6	It has failed to establish any public system of education, although possessed of almost boundless resources, (the public domain,) and although it is an axiom in political science, that unless a people are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty, or the capacity for self government.	The Mexican government has not provided us with any public education system, even though they have the resources to do so. It has been proven that if people are to maintain the ability to be self-governed, they need to be educated.
7	It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.	The Mexican government has completely ignored our rights by randomly sending their military troops to our homes and towns. This has made our city governments practically powerless against their military forces.
8	It has dissolved, by force of arms, the state Congress of Coahuila and Texas, and obliged our representatives to fly for their lives from the seat of government, thus depriving us of the fundamental political right of representation.	The Mexican government brought their army into our state capital and did away with our state legislature by using force. This military action forced our representatives to leave the capital or possibly face death by the army.
9	It has demanded the surrender of a number of our citizens, and ordered military detachments to seize and carry them into the Interior for trial, in contempt of the civil authorities, and in defiance of the laws and the constitution.	The Mexican government has ordered that we give up several of our most important leaders to the Mexican army. The army took our leaders to Mexico City for trial even though the constitution they promised us said they couldn't do that.
10	It has made piratical attacks upon our commerce, by commissioning foreign desperadoes, and authorizing them to seize our vessels, and convey the property of our citizens to far distant ports for confiscation.	The Mexican government hired foreign pirates to attack our ships and steal the goods meant for Texans. They then sold these goods to others.
11	It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, by the support of a national religion, calculated to promote the temporal interest of its human functionaries, rather than the glory of the true and living God.	The Mexican government forces us to join their national religion and does not let us choose which religion we want to follow.
12	It has demanded us to deliver up our arms, which are essential to our defence, the rightful property of freemen, and formidable only to tyrannical governments.	The Mexican government forced us to give up our weapons so that we would not be able to defend ourselves.

13	It has invaded our country both by sea and by land, with intent to lay waste our territory, and drive us from our homes; and has now a large mercenary army advancing, to carry on against us a war of extermination.	The Mexican government has invaded Texas in order to destroy our land and kick us out of our homes. In fact, they have a large army advancing on us right now in order to kill us all.
14	It has, through its emissaries, incited the merciless savage, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, to massacre the inhabitants of our defenseless frontiers.	The Mexican government has sent Mexican officials to Texas to talk to the Native Americans and try to get the Natives to massacre us with their tomahawks and scalping knives.
15	It hath been, during the whole time of our connection with it, the contemptible sport and victim of successive military revolutions, and hath continually exhibited every characteristic of a weak, corrupt, and tyrannical government.	The Mexican government, for the entire time that we have had to deal with them, has shown over and over how they cannot even keep a stable government. Their government has suffered several takeovers by the military and has shown themselves to be weak, corrupt and tyrannical.