The Alamo and Goliad

Essential Question • Why does conflict develop?

Chapter 11

Lesson 1
A Clash of Armies

Lesson 2
Victory or Death

Lesson 3
Defeat in South Texas

The Story Matters...

Texans had captured San Antonio and the Alamo late in 1835. That winter, they prepared for the Mexicans to try to retake both.

In February of 1836, the Mexican army led by Antonio López de Santa Anna arrived. One of the Texans who displayed exceptional courage at the Alamo is James Bonham, an officer in the Texan army. Bonham was sent to deliver a message to the Texas leaders' meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos requesting more men. Bonham delivered the message and returned to his post to defend the Alamo even though he knew the troops inside were vastly outnumbered.

James Bonham, who came to Texas from South Carolina, has been celebrated for his bravery in the defense of the Alamo.
The Texans' early victories did not mean a quick end to the revolution. Enraged by the settlers' actions and demands, Santa Anna sent a sizable army northward to put down the rebellion, leading a large part of the army himself. The Texans were not ready for the Mexican invasion and suffered setbacks in several important battles. Mexican actions at the Alamo and at Goliad, however, inspired the Texans to continue their struggle.

**Step Into the Place**

**MAP FOCUS** In February and March of 1836, key conflicts took place in South Texas.

1. **LOCATION** What three Mexican victories preceded the Battle of Coleto?
2. **MOVEMENT** What roads did the Mexicans use to move into Texas?
3. **CRITICAL THINKING** Interpreting Maps Why did the Mexicans choose these roads?

Standing on Alamo Plaza, just outside the old chapel's doors, the Alamo cenotaph was built to honor the bravery of the men who fought and died there. A cenotaph is a memorial to a deceased person or group of deceased people that does not contain any burial remains.

Texan forces captured the presidio at Goliad in October 1835. Several months later, however, a large Mexican force recaptured the presidio and town. Texan prisoners captured in several battles were then held by the Mexicans within the presidio.

**Step Into the Time**

**TIME LINE** As the situation in Texas intensified, politicians in the United States watched the events closely. Look at the time line. What important political event took place in the United States late in 1836? How can you tell?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1835</th>
<th>TEXAS</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
<th>WORLD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 30, 1835</td>
<td>Samuel Clemens, who wrote books as Mark Twain, born</td>
<td>December 1835</td>
<td>Santa Anna's troops head north to Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 5, 1835</td>
<td>Hailey's Comet, which is seen about every 75 years, makes appearance</td>
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The Alamo and Goliad Campaigns

- Mexican victory: Red
- Texan victory: Blue
- Mexican forces: Green
- Texan forces: Purple

- **February 23, 1836** Santa Anna begins siege of the Alamo
- **March 6, 1836** The Alamo falls
- **March 20, 1836** Fannin's army surrendered to General Urrea
- **March 27, 1836** Goliad Massacre
- **July 29, 1836** Arc de Triomphe opens in Paris
- **September 5, 1836** Sam Houston elected president of Texas
- **December 7, 1836** Martin Van Buren elected president of the United States
It Matters Because

*After their original victory at San Antonio, Texan forces fell into disarray and were not prepared for another Mexican attack.*

Two Armies

**GUIDING QUESTION** *What happened to the Texas army after the victories at San Antonio and Goliad?*

The loss of San Antonio to the Texans in December 1835 angered Mexican president Antonio López de Santa Anna. The loss of Goliad added to his determination to defeat the rebels in Texas and regain control of the region. The distance from Mexico City to Texas meant that it would take several weeks for Santa Anna to form an army and reach Texas.

Those weeks gave Texans an opportunity to gather their strength against the coming invasion. The time was wasted, though. Most of the volunteer soldiers who had captured San Antonio returned home. They thought their work was done and wanted to be home for the winter. Meanwhile, volunteers poured into Texas from the United States and elsewhere. They came to Texas for a variety of reasons. Some wanted to gain the land promised by the Texas government to those who fought. Some came because of their strong belief in liberty. Others were drawn by the spirit of adventure.

Some volunteers, such as former member of Congress from Tennessee David Crockett and frontier fighter James Bowie, were well-known public figures. Most, though, were ordinary people—farmers, hunters, and laborers.
Problems in the Texas Army

Several problems plagued the Texas army. First, it was short of men. While the Consultation of 1835 passed a law calling for the creation of a regular army, it did nothing to recruit, or enlist, soldiers.

In addition the army was disorganized. Volunteers insisted on choosing their own officers. The Consultation had placed Sam Houston in charge of the volunteers as well as the regular army, but many volunteers refused to accept his authority.

The undisciplined fighters could barely be called soldiers. Many Texas volunteers left the army for home once a battle had ended. Volunteers from outside Texas grew restless when there was no fighting. There was little effort to train them, and the government had no system to feed them.

Conflicting Commands

Divisions within the provisional government added to the confusion. Some leaders wanted to support the fight of Mexican Federalists against Santa Anna. Others wanted to declare independence from Mexico. These divisions affected military operations. For example, different government officials gave orders to three different commanders to attack the Mexican city of Matamoros, near the mouth of the Rio Grande. The conflicting commands caused confusion about who was in charge, and the attack never occurred.

Yet another problem was that the Texan forces were scattered. Colonel Frank W. Johnson and Dr. James Grant each had about 50 men near San Patricio. Colonel James W. Fannin had about 450 men in Goliad. Another force was slowly being assembled at Gonzales. Colonel James C. Neill commanded about 100 men in San Antonio, site of the Mission San Antonio de Valero, called the Alamo. The separate units did not communicate well or coordinate their actions.

The Mexican Army Heads North

While the Texans faced problems of disorganization and poor command, the Mexican army gathered strength. General Santa Anna divided his troops into two forces. He commanded some 6,000 soldiers whom he would lead toward San Antonio. He gave General José de Urrea (oo•REE•ah) command of 1,000 more troops farther east. They would march along the coast and then head for Goliad.

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**Content Vocabulary**

| **recruit** | to enlist people into the armed services |

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**Academic Vocabulary**

| **coordinate** | to work together toward a common goal |
Santa Anna’s army was large but plagued by its own problems. Most Texans expected that Santa Anna would wait until the spring of 1836 to move north. Marching in winter meant there would be little grass for his horses and mules to eat. Santa Anna pressed on, however. A forced march north brought the troops to the Rio Grande by the middle of February. That progress had been costly, though. Some soldiers and many horses had fallen behind, unable to keep up the pace. An even worse problem was that the army’s heaviest cannons trailed far behind the main group because they could not be moved quickly along the muddy roads.

Some Texans learned of the Mexican advance. One, Plácido Benavides, a Tejano, heard from a Mexican official about Santa Anna’s march. He passed on the news, which reached James Fannin at Goliad on February 7. However, both Neill at the Alamo and Fannin at Goliad lacked riders who could act as scouts. Therefore, they could learn little more about the approaching Mexican forces.

**READING PROGRESS CHECK**

**Explaining** When did Texans expect Santa Anna to invade Texas? What happened instead?

**Drawing Conclusions** How did the provisional government contribute to the confusion that hurt the Texas army?

### Gathering at the Alamo

**GUIDING QUESTION** What Texan forces came together to defend the Alamo?

The Texan troops in San Antonio occupied the abandoned mission known as the Alamo. They intended to turn it into a fortress.

**Reinforcements Arrive**

Colonel James C. Neill had 104 soldiers and 21 pieces of artillery at the Alamo. In January he complained to the ad interim government that he needed more guns and troops. Sam Houston thought that the Alamo should be abandoned.
On January 17, 1836, he ordered Colonel James Bowie and about 30 fighters in Goliad to go to the Alamo. Bowie was to inspect the situation there and decide whether the old mission could be defended. Bowie had a strong reputation as a frontier fighter. He had become famous using a large butcher-type knife. Blacksmiths received many orders to copy this famous weapon, which became known as the **Bowie knife**.

Bowie’s inspection led him to agree with Neill that the Alamo had to be defended, and he was impressed with how Neill had arranged his artillery. Also, importantly, the Alamo provided protection for settlements further east. Bowie wrote to Governor Henry Smith that the Alamo should be defended. Based on Bowie’s report, Smith decided to reject Houston’s advice to abandon it.

On February 3, another key figure arrived in San Antonio. Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis of the regular Texas army joined the Alamo **garrison**. He arrived with 30 horsemen.

Several days later, David Crockett and 12 more volunteers arrived. Crockett, like Bowie, was a legend of the frontier. He was a skilled sharpshooter, hunter, and storyteller. He had been a colonel in the Tennessee militia and a representative in the Tennessee legislature and the U.S. Congress. When Crockett came to Texas he was nearly 50 years old. Although Travis offered him a command in the regular army, Crockett preferred to serve as a private among the Alamo volunteers.

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**Content Vocabulary**

- **Bowie knife**: a large hunting knife used on the frontiers of the United States in the early 1830s.
- **garrison**: the soldiers at a military post.
Nine Tejanos also helped defend the Alamo. They were Juan Abamillo (ah•bah•MEE•yoh), Juan Antonio Badillo (bah•DEE•yoh), Carlos Espalier (ehs•pahl•YEHR), José María (Gregorio) Esparza, Antonio Fuentes (FWEN•tehs), Brígido Guerrero (geh•REH•roh), Damacio Jiménez (hee•MEN•ehs), José Toribio Losoya, and Andrés Nava.

These Tejanos risked more than just their lives. They had, at times, more to lose than did the newly arriving Anglo-Americans or Europeans seeking adventure, land, or liberty. The Tejanos fought for freedom at the price of their lands, their homes, and their families. Many Tejanos considered Santa Anna a dictator. They objected to the fact that Santa Anna did not follow the Constitution of 1824, which had established a more democratic Mexican government.

Several of these men were in a company formed by Captain Juan Seguín. Seguín joined the Texas Revolution in response to Santa Anna’s repeal of the Constitution of 1824. Assigned to supply the troops with food and provisions, he was among the Tejanos at the Alamo over the winter of 1835–1836. He was not there at the
time of the battle, however, because he had been dispatched as a courier to raise more volunteers.

**New Commanders in Place**

In the middle of February 1836, the garrison’s command changed. Colonel Neill had to leave the Alamo to return to his home because members of his family had fallen ill. By the time he was on his way back to San Antonio, the battle had ended.

Neill left William Travis in command. Travis had experience as an officer in the regular Texas army. This caused the **ongoing** conflict between volunteers and the regular army to arise again. The large number of volunteers did not want to have Travis’s leadership forced upon them, and they insisted on a vote. The fact that Travis had only recently arrived was a factor. Travis agreed to the vote, and the volunteers—who outnumbered the regulars—voted in favor of Bowie. The two men settled the situation with a compromise. Travis would command the regular army soldiers and Bowie the volunteers. When they issued orders, both signed them to prevent any questions about whether they should be followed.

**The Mexican Army Approaches**

On February 23, the two commanders received a report that Santa Anna’s army was nearing San Antonio. Travis had believed that he would have until March to plan his defenses. Not long after the news reached the Alamo, Mexican soldiers began arriving.

About that same time, Bowie became seriously ill. Weakened by his illness, he passed his command of the volunteers to Travis. With the Mexican army now gathering nearby, the volunteers accepted the decision.

**READING PROGRESS CHECK**

**Identifying Cause and Effect**

How did William Travis become the main commander of the Alamo garrison?

**LESSON 1 REVIEW**

**Reviewing Vocabulary**

1. Use the words **recruit** and **garrison** in a sentence about the Texas army. 22a

**Answering the Guiding Questions**

2. **Summarizing**

   What happened to the Texas army after the victories at San Antonio and Goliad? 218

3. **Identifying Points of View**

   Why did Neill and Bowie want to defend the Alamo? 38, 3c, 210

4. **Analyzing**

   Why were Travis and the Alamo defenders not fully prepared when Santa Anna and his troops arrived in February of 1836? 38

5. **Identifying Points of View**

   Why did Tejanos like Juan Seguín fight on the Texan side? 38, 210

6. **Comparing and Contrasting**

   How was the leadership situation at the Alamo similar to that in all the Texas armies? How was it different? 3c, 218

7. **NARRATIVE WRITING**

   You are a soldier at the Alamo in early 1836. Write a letter to your family explaining how you feel about the arrival of famous individuals, such as James Bowie and David Crockett, who had come to help the Texas army. 220
It Matters Because

While the defenders of the Alamo eventually fell to superior Mexican forces, the Texans' bravery in the battle inspired others to continue the fight for independence.

Defending the Alamo

GUIDING QUESTION How well were the Texans prepared to defend the Alamo?

The Texan commanders at the Alamo realized that they had too few soldiers to hold off a large Mexican attack. Both Bowie and Travis believed, however, that holding the Alamo was vital to the fate of Texas. They made clear to Santa Anna from the start their determination to hold the old mission. On February 23, Santa Anna sent a message demanding the Texans' surrender. Travis ordered a single cannon-ball shot as a response.

Preparing the Defenses

The Texans had some advantages. For example, the walls of the old mission were 2 to 3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) thick and 12 feet (3.7 m) high. Twenty-one cannons helped to fortify, or strengthen, the defenses. The most powerful cannon, an 18-pounder, was placed in the southwest corner. This allowed the defenders to shoot the gun at attackers in two directions. Two or three cannons were in the northwest corner, and others were placed along the walls. In addition, the Texan troops were determined.

However, Travis and his men also faced serious weaknesses. The surrounding wall was incomplete or partly in ruins. The South Wall had a large gap near the chapel. The defenders made a fence

Content Vocabulary
- fortify
- bombard

Reading HELPDESK

TAKING NOTES: Categorizing
As you read the lesson, use a chart like the one shown to list the strengths and weaknesses of the Alamo. Add rows if you need to.
The diagram shows the structure of the Alamo, the location of major buildings, and the placement of the Texan artillery.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

1. **Analyzing Visuals** Which wall was most difficult for the Texans to defend? Why?
2. **Analyzing** How could Santa Anna avoid having his men suffer casualties from the 18-pound cannon?

there of sticks and dirt, but this point was weak. The North Wall of the Alamo had crumbled with age. The defenders placed logs to support it, but it was not sturdy.

The two most significant weaknesses were related to each other. Travis had to defend a huge area of about 460 feet (140 m) long and 160 feet (49 m) wide within the Alamo walls. He had fewer than 200 men to do so. To defend the Alamo successfully, a much larger army was necessary, especially against such a large Mexican force.

**Travis’s Plea for Aid**

Despite these weaknesses in the defenses, Travis and the other defenders were determined to hold the Alamo. To many of them, the mission symbolized what the Texas Revolution had already achieved.

**Content Vocabulary**

**fortify** to strengthen defenses
They also saw their defense of the Alamo as essential to the continued success of the revolution, since they blocked Santa Anna’s access to other Texas settlements. At the same time, Travis recognized the need for help.

Travis wrote several messages to the people of Texas and the United States. His letter of February 24, 1836, is one of the finest statements of courage in American history. He wrote:

"Commandancy of the Alamo—

Bejar, Feby. 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, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & 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 Beeffe [cattle]—Travis

Some Help Arrives

Some help did arrive but not enough. Most unfortunate was the lack of help from Goliad. Colonel James Fannin set out for San Antonio with more than 300 men. The relief effort collapsed in a mess of broken wagons and shoeless soldiers, however. Fannin returned to Goliad, and Travis's best hope was dashed.
Instead of Fannin’s 300 from Goliad, Lt. George C. Kimbell brought 32 men from Gonzales. With them was Albert Martin, who had delivered Travis’s “Victory or Death” letter in Gonzales and then returned. He came back to the Alamo, despite facing certain death.

Santa Anna showed that he would give the defenders no mercy. He ordered a red flag flown, which meant “no quarter.” This signaled that he did not intend to take any prisoners. All the Texan defenders would be killed if the Mexicans took the Alamo.

On March 3, Travis wrote his last appeal for help. James Bonham delivered the message to the Convention of 1836 at Washington-on-the-Brazos. In the letter, Travis described the fighting that had already taken place and repeated his plea for assistance. He ended the letter by restating his determination to fight. Like Martin, Bonham returned to the embattled mission after delivering the message despite the inevitable, or unquestionable, outcome.

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**Defending the Alamo**

**The Texan Defenders**

- Jim Bowie
- Col. William B. Travis
- David Crockett

**The Mexican Army**

- Santa Anna

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Casualties</th>
<th>Troops</th>
<th>Cannons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>189</strong></td>
<td><strong>190</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
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**Mexicans outnumbered Texans by: 9:1**

**Length of siege:** 13 Days

**February 23–March 6**

**Length of final assault:** 90 minutes

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*Historical estimates vary*

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**CRITICAL THINKING**

1. **Analyzing Information** What did Travis need to give him a better chance to defend the Alamo?

2. **Analyzing Visuals** Why do you think some of the information about the Alamo is not known for certain?
Against Heavy Odds

As more Mexican troops arrived, it became apparent to all inside the Alamo that they had no chance for victory. Since February 23 Mexican cannons had been bombarding, or firing upon, the Alamo daily. Although the Texans shot back at the Mexican troops with their own cannon or with their long-range Kentucky rifles, they were seriously outnumbered. Santa Anna had most of the advantages, and his victory was just a matter of time.

On the evening of March 5, Travis met with his men and directly addressed the matter of their certain defeat. Legend says he took his sword and drew a line on the ground. He asked all those willing to stay and defend the Alamo to cross the line and stand with him. According to the story, all but one of the men crossed over the line.

Whether Travis really drew a line and made such a challenge to the men is not important. What matters is that nearly 200 men—mostly volunteers—were free to leave the Alamo any time. Yet nearly all decided to stay and fight.

**READING PROGRESS CHECK**

**Stating** What were the main weaknesses of the Texan defenses of the Alamo?

**Connections: Culture**

**SAVING THE ALAMO**

If you visit the Alamo today, you can thank Adina De Zavala and a number of other Texas women. De Zavala, the granddaughter of Lorenzo de Zavala, took a strong interest in Texas history. The state of Texas acquired the Alamo chapel in 1833, but De Zavala and others in the Daughters of the Republic of Texas worked to preserve more of the site. When part of the mission was threatened with destruction in 1908, De Zavala barricaded herself inside it for three days in protest. Her understanding of the site's history proved crucial in saving the site.

**GUIDING QUESTION** What was the importance of the battle at the Alamo?

By March 5, 1836, after 12 days of his siege, Santa Anna was growing impatient. He knew that Texans were meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos, and he suspected they could be discussing independence. He also knew that further delay meant more time for Texas to gather fighters. It was time to take the Alamo and move on. He ordered a full attack for the next day. Many Mexican officers were surprised by the order, thinking the Texans would soon be forced to surrender. Their commander's grim order stood, however.

**Fierce Fighting**

In the darkness of night on March 5, Mexican troops moved into position. They prepared for an attack at dawn.

At about 5 o'clock on the morning of March 6, the battle began. Some sources estimate that as many as 1,800 Mexican troops took part in the assault. Five columns of troops moved forward to attack the Alamo at three different points. Mexican buglers played the notes of “El Degüello” (ehl deh•GWAY•yoh),

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**Academic Vocabulary**

- **apparent** readily known; obvious

**Content Vocabulary**

- **bombard** to attack continuously with cannon fire
an ancient war tune indicating that there would be no mercy for the Texan defenders.

The Texans greeted the first wave of attackers with a hail of cannon and rifle fire. Many of the leading Mexican troops fell under the heavy fire. The second wave met the same fate, as the Texan defenders put up a stubborn fight.

However, the sheer numbers of the Mexican force were simply too much for the brave, but few, defenders. The third assault of Mexican troops reached the walls. Travis was killed in fighting on the North Wall. All around the mission, the Texans were forced to pull back into the compound, as Santa Anna’s troops stormed over the walls.

Fighting took place in the central plaza and in the Long Barracks, where many defenders gathered in the hope of gaining some cover. Men from both sides used rifles, knives, and clubs in the desperate fighting. About 90 minutes after the attack began, it was over.

**Academic Vocabulary**

*compound* a walled-in area containing one or more buildings

*Texas painter Robert Onderdonk painted this version of the fighting at the Alamo, showing Davy Crockett at the center of the Texans’ last defense. The Alamo still stands today as a symbol of the freedom for which Texans fought for many years.*

*Making Connections* Why has the Alamo remained important to Texans to this day?
Andrea Castañón Villanueva may have been the longest-lived survivor of the Alamo.

For many years after the battle, Villanueva said that she had been at the Alamo and had tended to the ill Jim Bowie. In one account she said that Sam Houston wrote her and asked her personally to take on this task.

In different interviews at different times, Villanueva recounted stories from the fateful last days of the battle. Historians disagree on how much she can be believed.

The state of Texas accepted her claim to have been an Alamo survivor. In 1891 it agreed to give her a pension for her service as a nurse to the sick and wounded. Many important figures in San Antonio wrote to support her claim. Villanueva lived to be 113.

**Assessing** How did the state of Texas view Villanueva’s claims about surviving the Alamo?

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**Fallen Heroes**

The exact number who died at the Alamo is unknown. The bodies of the defenders were burned after the battle, making an accurate count impossible. Santa Anna reported 600 Texan defenders killed. Historians believe about 180 is more accurate. Among the dead were Travis, Bowie, and Crockett.

Conflicting reports arose about Crockett’s death. A Mexican officer, Colonel José Enrique de la Peña (ehn•REE•kay day lah PEH•nyah), wrote that Crockett and five or six others survived the battle. According to de la Peña, Santa Anna ordered the immediate execution of these prisoners.

Mexican losses in the battle also are difficult to determine. Most historians, however, estimate the actual number to be about 600 Mexican dead and wounded. Even so, the capture of the Alamo was a heavy price for Santa Anna to pay.

**“Remember the Alamo!”**

Santa Anna was nearly true to his word that none of the garrison would be spared. One Alamo defender did survive, however. Brigido Guerrero of San Antonio convinced Santa Anna that he had been a prisoner of the Texans and was forced to fight against his will. His life was spared.

The other survivors were nearly all women and children, whom Santa Anna released. Among these were the wives of three soldiers—Ana Salazar de Esparza, wife of Gregorio Esparza; Juana Navarro Albury, whose husband was away on a scouting mission; and Susanna Dickinson, wife of an officer. Dickinson, her daughter, Angelina, and an enslaved man named Joe Travis,
who was with William Travis, were allowed to leave San Antonio. The survivors traveled to Gonzales, where they delivered the solemn news of the battle. Another reported survivor was a Tejano woman named Andrea Castañón Villanueva (Señora Candelaria).

Historians—and ordinary Texans and Americans—have long debated what the Battle of the Alamo meant. Some think that the battle was essential for Texas to win its independence. They reason that the delay to Santa Anna’s advance and the troops he lost slowed and weakened his army. The nearly two weeks that Santa Anna spent at San Antonio gave political leaders time to declare independence and organize a government.

The battle also encouraged citizens of the United States to help Texans in their struggle for freedom. This greatly benefited the Texans’ cause.

More important, perhaps, the courage and determination of the Alamo defenders provided inspiration to other Texans hoping for independence. Despite the heavy loss of life, the battle did not have the effect that Santa Anna desired. He had hoped the fall of the Alamo would convince other Texans that it was useless to resist his armies. Instead, the heroism of those in the Alamo inspired other Texans to carry on the struggle. The battle cry of Houston’s army became, “Remember the Alamo!”

**READING PROGRESS CHECK**

**Identifying Cause and Effect** Why did Santa Anna and the Mexican army win the Battle of the Alamo?

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**LESSON 2 REVIEW**

**Reviewing Vocabulary**

1. Use the words *fortify* and *bombard* in a sentence that describes the action at the Alamo. 3c, 22b

**Answering the Guiding Questions**

2. **Describing** What were the strengths of the Texans’ position in the Alamo? 3c, 21b

3. **Drawing Inferences** Why did most volunteers stay to defend the Alamo when they knew it meant almost certain death? 3c, 21b

4. **Identifying Cause and Effect** What effect did Travis’s letter have on the Battle of the Alamo and on people who were not at the Alamo? 3c

5. **Explaining** What was the impact of the Battle of the Alamo? 3c, 21b

6. **Comparing** Use the infographic titled “Defending the Alamo” from the lesson to create a bar graph showing the total troops and the number of casualties for both sides at the Alamo. What do the bars in your graph tell you about the two armies and about the nature of the fighting at the Alamo? 3c, 8a

7. **Persuasive Writing** Write a letter using quotations from Travis’s letter “To the People of Texas & all Americans in the world” urging readers to join the Texans in their fight. 3c, 17c, 22d
Gary Clifton Wisler (1950–2006) was born in Oklahoma. His family moved to Texas when he was young. He wrote for his high-school newspaper. During college he worked part time for the Dallas Morning News while majoring in journalism.

From 1974 to 1984 Wisler taught English at Ben Jackson Middle School in Garland, Texas. His students encouraged him to write his first novel, My Brother the Wind, in 1979. Eventually he stopped teaching to write historical fiction. In all, Wisler published 73 books and over 25 short stories and articles.

Wisler uses the Texas Revolution as the setting for his book All for Texas. Through the eyes of Thomas Jefferson (Jeff) Byrd, a thirteen-year-old boy, he tells the story of a family new to Texas. Jeff’s father has been promised land if he joins the Texas settlers fighting against Mexico. In this excerpt, Jeff and his neighbors have just learned of Santa Anna’s advance on the Alamo.

Texans had to set aside quiet domestic scenes like this once the Texas Revolution began. Some families, like the Byrds in All for Texas, faced the worry of having loved ones serving in the Texas armies.
We received worse news before long. Lieutenant Bonham was with Colonel Travis and Jim Bowie at an old mission called the Alamo at San Antonio. Thousands of Mexican soldiers arrived, and they had everyone really worried.

"It's not possible," Mrs. Sagler said, shaking her head. "Nobody could have made the march from Mexico to San Antonio in winter, even in mild weather...."

Nevertheless, the Mexicans had done it, and more of them were rumored to be on the way. The folks around Columbia offered flour, salted beef, bacon, and beans for the garrison at Goliad. The trouble was finding a volunteer to take it to the men there.

"My pa and brothers are at Goliad," Josh announced when he stopped at our place with a wagon. "I've got four good horses, and I know the way. What I need is somebody to spell me—talk to me and keep me going—so we can cover the distance fast. Well, Jeff? Your pa's there too, isn't he?"

"You think you can't leave because your ma and family need you," Josh said, his eyes full of worry. "Listen, if those Mexican soldiers starve our army out of the fort, a boy or two on the Brazos won't be worth a penny. We can get these supplies to La Bahia and be a real help."...

"Maddy [Jeff's brother], I've got to go with Josh and take food to Pa," I told him. "Nobody else is willing to do it, so we have to. Understand?"

"Don't," he pleaded. "I've heard people talking. They don't think any of the soldiers are coming home, T.J."

"Maddy, I've got to try," I told him.

surrounded the Texans. Fannin assembled his soldiers in the shape of a square to meet Urrea's attack.

Each of the three times the Mexican troops charged, they were driven back by Fannin's troops. Seven Texans were killed and 60 were wounded—including Fannin—during the day's fighting. The Texans held their ground, although the battle was not over yet.

The Texans spent a miserable night. They were short of water, and they could not care for their wounded. The water shortage also meant that they would not have enough the next day to cool the cannons each time they were fired. That meant the cannons would be less effective. Rain and a cold norther added to their discomfort. Also, expected reinforcements failed to arrive.

Urrea, who had hundreds more troops in the area, did receive reinforcements, as well as artillery. In the early morning of March 20, Mexican cannons opened fire on the Texans. After a discussion with his officers, Fannin decided that there was no point in continuing to fight and lose men. He signed an agreement of surrender.

**DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** How did Fannin's leadership contribute to the losses in South Texas?

**A DISASTROUS SURRENDER**

**GUIDING QUESTION** *What effect did the execution of Texan troops at Goliad have on the Texas Revolution?*

Fannin and the Texans he led expected to be treated fairly as prisoners of war. Urrea was willing to grant them mercy, but the orders from Santa Anna were clear: no rebel should live.
The Goliad Massacre

Fannin and his men were marched back to Goliad. Urrea wrote to Santa Anna, requesting that the lives of the prisoners be spared. In his reply, Santa Anna ordered the immediate execution of the Texans. Santa Anna did not want to let Fannin and his men go to continue to fight. He also referred to a Mexican law that stated that the penalty for rebellion against the government was death. Urrea was reluctant, but considered it a “cruel necessity” to follow orders.

While the two Mexican commanders exchanged letters about the fate of Fannin and his men, other Texans that had been captured were brought to Goliad. On March 27, any question as to the captured Texans’ fate was gone. All able-bodied prisoners were divided into three columns and marched out onto the prairie. The Texans thought they might be asked to perform a work detail or that they might be released. On a signal the Mexican soldiers fired at them. Other prisoners who had been unable to march because they were wounded were executed later that morning.

It is believed that about 340 Texans were killed on this day. The Mexicans spared a few prisoners—including two doctors—because of their special skills. About 28 other men managed to escape what became known as the “Goliad Massacre.”

General Urrea deeply regretted the killings. He wrote the following in his diary:

In 1936, when Texas was celebrating its centennial, or hundredth anniversary, money was raised to build this memorial on the site of the graves of Fannin and his men killed in the Goliad Massacre.

CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing What is the purpose of monuments and memorials like this one?
The lead riders in a Veterans Day parade in San Antonio move past the Alamo Cenotaph, decorated on the side by sculptures of the Alamo defenders and on the front by a figure called “the Spirit of Sacrifice.”

CRITICAL THINKING

Making Connections: Why is the “Spirit of Sacrifice” an appropriate figure for this memorial?

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Nothing could be more painful to me than the idea of sacrificing so many gallant men, and particularly the [friendly], spirited, and soldier-like Fannin. They certainly surrendered in the full confidence that Mexican generosity would not be [cold] in their regard.... I... did not fail to exert all my influence with the General-in-Chief to engage him to save them from the threatened carnage, and more especially Fannin; but all I obtained from His Excellency was a serious reply, stating that a cruel sense of duty compelled him to follow out the orders of the Government, and ratifying his previous orders.”

—General José de Urrea

Other Mexicans also disagreed with Santa Anna’s decision. Some soldiers aimed over the heads of the Texans, which allowed some to escape. Señora Francita Alavez, the wife of a Mexican army officer, helped several Texans avoid execution by urging that the doctors and some others be spared. Survivors called her the “Angel of Goliad.”

Academic Vocabulary

considerable: large; sufficient

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Rallying Around the Alamo and Goliad

Santa Anna had achieved two significant victories in March 1836. His forces had overrun the Alamo, and with Goliad, they had taken two strongholds that controlled roadways to the main Texas settlements. Santa Anna had demonstrated his willingness to go to great lengths to punish the rebels. With thousands of troops in the field, he was in a position to drive out the remaining Texan fighters.

Texans saw the situation differently. The stand at the Alamo had inspired them and Goliad outraged them. While Santa Anna's army was strong, the fighting had cost him a considerable number of professional soldiers. Texans were still willing to fight.

However, it was clear that changes had to be made. One historian wrote that never before had Americans managed their affairs so poorly while fighting more bravely than in Texas. Dividing authority between volunteer and regular armies and the ill-fated attempt to capture Matamoros had been disastrous. The defeats at the Alamo and Coleto also convinced General Sam Houston that he must not allow his forces to be separated into small groups. The recent losses also revealed that Texan forces were not cooperating. The Texan army learned some valuable lessons from these problems and setbacks. Houston would work hard not to let them happen again.

In the meantime, word of the defeats at the Alamo and Coleto as well as the massacre at Goliad spread rapidly throughout Texas. “Remember Goliad” now joined “Remember the Alamo” as a rallying cry in the struggle for Texas independence.

**READING PROGRESS CHECK**

*Finding the Main Idea* Why did Santa Anna order the execution of Fannin and the other Texan prisoners?

**LESSON 3 REVIEW**

**Reviewing Vocabulary**
1. Use the word *civilians* in a sentence about the action in South Texas. 3C, 22A

**Answering the Guiding Questions**
2. *Identifying Cause and Effect* What was the major cause in the outcome of the fights at San Patricio, Agua Dulce, and Refugio? 21B
3. *Summarizing* What were Colonel Fannin and his troops doing at Coleto as they were attacked, and how might that have affected the outcome of the battle? 3B, 3C, 21B
4. *Identifying Cause and Effect* How did Santa Anna's treatment of most of the Texan prisoners at Goliad affect the rebellion? 3B, 3C, 21B
5. *Describing* What lessons did Sam Houston learn from the defeats at the Alamo and in South Texas? 3B, 3C
6. *EXPOSITORY WRITING* Based on what you have read in this lesson, write a paragraph describing the military circumstances that the Texans faced in early 1836 and how they responded. 22D

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CHAPTER 11  Activities

Directions: Write your answers on a separate piece of paper. Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.

1. Use your **Foldables** to explore the **Essential Question**.
   **EXPOSITORY WRITING** Why were the battles at the Alamo and Coleto fought, and what were their outcomes? In your answer, explain both the Mexican and Texan points of view. 3C, 210, 228, 229

2. **Social Studies Skills**
   **CREATING AND INTERPRETING A MODEL** Use the diagram in Lesson 2 to create your own model of the Alamo. Add information from the text about the approximate dimensions of the North, South, and West walls. Interpret this model considering the fact that William Travis had fewer than 200 fighters available to defend these walls. Write a paragraph describing how he might have distributed his defenders and what areas were vulnerable to attack. 3C, 8A, 228

3. **Thinking Like a Historian**
   **IDENTIFYING CAUSE AND EFFECT** Create and fill in a diagram like the one shown here that describes the causes and effects that led to the Texan defeat at the Alamo. You should list multiple causes and effects. Add cause-and-effect boxes as needed. 3C, 8A, 218, 228

4. **GEOGRAPHY ACTIVITY**
   Review the map of Urrea’s movement into Texas. Use the map to answer the questions that follow.
   a. How far is the Alamo from Goliad?
   b. How successful were the Texans in the fights against Urrea’s forces? What was the result of those outcomes?

Analyzing Maps  3C, 8A, 9A, 21C, 228

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CHAPTER 11  **Assessment**

**Directions:** Write your answers on a separate piece of paper. Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.

**CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING**

1. Explain the significance of each of the following individuals to the events surrounding the Alamo and Goliad. 3B, 3C, 22B
   - A. David Crockett
   - B. Juan Seguín
   - C. James Bowie
   - D. Lieutenant George C. Kimbell
   - E. James Bonham
   - F. General José de Urrea
   - G. James Fannin
   - H. Susanna Dickinson
   - I. William B. Travis

**REVIEW THE GUIDING QUESTIONS**

2. **Explaining** In January, why did the Texans think that Santa Anna would not reach Texas until the spring? What opportunity did this expected delay provide for Texans? 3C, 21B, 22B

3. **Evaluating** How was Santa Anna’s army weakened during the winter of 1835–1836? 21B, 22B

4. **Identifying Central Issues** What message did Santa Anna send on February 23, 1836, regarding the Alamo? How did Travis respond, and what did his response mean? 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

5. **Specifying** Who ordered that a red flag be flown at the Alamo? What was the meaning of that flag? 3B, 3C, 22B

6. **Explaining** How did Fannin disobey orders when he sent Amon B. King to Refugio? Did he continue to disobey orders? Explain. 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

7. **Stating** What role did Fannin play in the events of February and March 1836? 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

8. **Expressing** Why was Fannin’s surrender at Goliad significant? 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

**CRITICAL THINKING**

9. **Analyzing** Why were the Texan forces badly divided in late 1835? 21B, 22B

10. **Evaluating** Reread William Travis’s letter “To the People of Texas and all Americans in the world.” In the letter, how does Travis plead for help from American citizens? Do you think the language he uses is effective? Explain. 3B, 3C, 214, 22B

11. **Analyzing** What are two problems that plagued the Texan army after the capture of San Antonio and Goliad? What was the impact of these problems? 21B, 22B

12. **Identifying Central Issues** In January James Bowie wrote a letter to Henry Smith regarding the Alamo. What issue did Bowie’s letter address, and what role did that letter play in what happened afterward? 3C, 21B, 22B

13. **Hypothesizing** Might the Battle of the Alamo have ended differently if Fannin had arrived with his reinforcements? Why or why not? 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

14. **Speculating** If the Battle of the Alamo had not been fought, do you think Texas would have won its independence? Explain. 3C, 21B, 22B

15. **Drawing Conclusions** Was the Battle of the Alamo a serious setback for the Texas cause? Why or why not? 3C, 21B, 22B

16. **Analyzing** Why did the campaign in South Texas go poorly for the Texas forces? 21B, 22B

17. **Summarizing** Summarize the two major victories achieved by the Mexican armies in March 1836. In your summary, state at least one advantage gained by Santa Anna as a result of these victories. 3B, 3C, 21B, 22B

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**Need Extra Help?**

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CHAPTER 11  Assessment  (continued)

DBQ SHORT RESPONSE

“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, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls—I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & 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. cmdt.

18 Analyzing Primary Sources  What two words would you use to describe Travis’s attitude when he wrote this letter? Why?  3B, 3C, 21A, 22B

19 Drawing Conclusions  What issues caused Travis to write this letter, and why is it significant?  3B, 3C, 21A, 21B, 22B

EXTENDED RESPONSE

20 Narrative  You are a Texan preparing to defend the Alamo against Santa Anna’s troops on the night of March 5, 1836. Earlier in the day, Travis made it clear that you and your fellow soldiers are facing an attack that will likely end in your death. In a journal entry, describe your thoughts and feelings about what Travis said and the upcoming battle.  3B, 3C, 22B, 22D

STANDARIZED TEST PRACTICE

DBQ ANALYZING DOCUMENTS

“In the evening they commenced to exchange fire with guns, and from the 23rd of February to the 6th of March (in which the storming was made by Santa Anna) the roar of artillery and volleys of musketry were constantly heard. On the 6th of March, . . . The Mexican army charged and were twice repulsed by the deadly fire of Travis’ artillery, which resembled a constant thunder. At the third charge the Toluca battalion commenced to scale the walls and suffered severely. Out of 800 men, only 130 were left alive.

—José Antonio Ruiz, “Fall of the Alamo, and Massacre of Travis and His Brave Associates”

21 Identifying  What event that occurred between February 23 and March 6 does Ruiz describe?
A. the Battle of the Alamo  3C, 21A  C. the siege of the Alamo
B. the Goliad Massacre  3D. the Battle of Coleto Creek

22 Interpreting  Which statement reflects Ruiz’s view of the Battle of the Alamo?  3C, 21A
A. The Mexicans suffered heavy losses.
B. The Mexicans easily overwhelmed the Texans.
C. The Mexicans lost most of their troops once they were inside the Alamo.
D. The Mexicans retreated and attacked again another day.

Need Extra Help?

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