

Westward Expansion

Expansion and Reform
(1801–1861)



Expansion

Manifest destiny

Indian removal

Mexican-American War

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know about the following events relating to the Mexican-American War:

- Anglo settlement of Texas
- The Texas War of Independence
- The annexation of Texas
- Battles in the Mexican-American War
- The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.



In 1821, Mexico won its independence from Spain. The newly liberated country included modern-day California, Texas and the land between.

At first, the Mexican government encouraged immigration to its northern provinces. Colonies sprang up across the region, and by 1836, 45,000 Anglo Americans had settled in Texas.



The settlers were mainly Protestant and many owned slaves. Mexico was officially Catholic, and had abolished slavery in 1824. As more Anglos came to Texas, Mexico's ties to its northern provinces began to weaken.





When Mexican president **Antonio López de Santa Anna** repealed the Mexican Constitution and attempted to create a more centralized government, rebellions broke out across Texas. What followed was the **Texas Revolution**.

Press **start** to begin.

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When Texas became the 28th state in 1845, Mexico ended diplomatic relations with the United States.

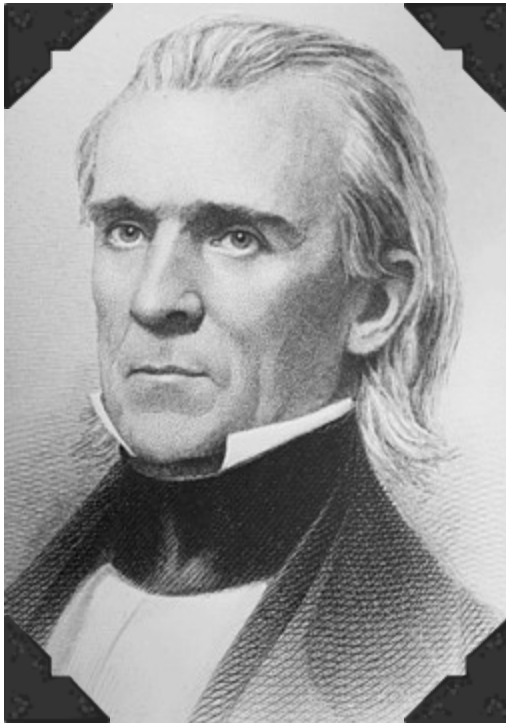
The Mexicans were further enraged when President **James Polk** supported Texas's claim that their border extended to the **Rio Grande**.

According to Mexico, its border was the Nueces River, which was much further north.





Polk was a strong believer in manifest destiny. He hoped a war with the politically unstable Mexico would extend U.S. borders.



Polk ordered General **Zachary Taylor** to blockade the Rio Grande. Mexican troops met the invasion and killed nine U.S. soldiers.

Polk claimed that the Mexicans had shed “American blood on American soil,” and declared war.

Do you think Polk's actions were justified?



The **Mexican-American War** lasted from 1846 to 1848. It was the first time in U.S. history that war reports reached the home front quickly, making civilians feel more connected to the outcome.

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The **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo** officially ended the war in 1848.

Mexico accepted the Rio Grande border and gave up California and New Mexico (which included modern-day Utah, Nevada and Arizona) to the United States for \$15 million.



In 1853, the **Gadsden Purchase** paid \$10 million to Mexico for a portion of land that established the modern borders of the continental United States.





Can your wagon train reach Oregon before your opponents? Use your knowledge of westward expansion to answer questions and progress along the Oregon Trail as quickly as you can.

Press **start** to begin.

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Test your understanding of westward expansion by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary. Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.
Press **start** to begin.

start

