

Unit 8: Civil War

7th Grade Lesson Plan: Texas & Secession

Extension

(45 – 60 minutes)

Objective	<p>In this optional one-day extension lesson, students will analyze a primary source text explaining the primary reasons why the people of Texas voted in favor of secession from the Union.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>We will</u> analyze excerpts from Texas’ Declaration of the Causes of Secession to determine why most Texans voted in favor of secession from the United States. 2. <u>I will</u> match primary source excerpt cards to their modern-day translation cards, then use the information in the cards to answer comprehension questions about Texas’ reasons for secession.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary cause for Texas’ secession from the United States was the desire to preserve the system of slavery within the state. • Texans stated grievances against the U.S. government including Northerners forming an anti-slavery coalition against Southerners and controlling the government. • The document argues that Texas joined the U.S. with the expectations that slavery would continue into the future. • For these reasons, and Texas’ close ties to the rest of the South, Texans decided to secede from the Union.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing a primary source text. • Using context to determine the meaning of words and phrases from a primary source text. • Identifying, paraphrasing, and summarizing the main ideas and supporting evidence of a primary source text. • Identifying different points of view on a historical topic based on a primary source text.
Essential Question	<p>What event caused the Southern states to secede from the Union, and what reasons did Texas give for seceding?</p>

Assignment	<p>Warm-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students analyze a small portion of the primary source text used in the lesson to practice identifying and summarizing the main idea of the excerpt. <p>Lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use a timeline of the events leading to Texas secession to answer a question about the event that directly led to the secession of the Southern states. Students when match a set of 4 primary source excerpt cards lettered A – D with the translation card that best summarizes each excerpt, numbered 1 – 4. Using the excerpt and translation cards, students answer comprehension and analysis questions about the reasons given for Texas secession from the United States. This activity highlights the predominant role that slavery played in Texas’ desire to secede from the U.S. <p>Exit Ticket</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students observe a political cartoon related to secession. Using the context of the images and symbolism of the cartoon, they determine whether the illustrator likely supported or opposed secession. Students provide evidence from the image to support their answer.
Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Slideshow (<i>Suggested use: present on the overhead; Upload to an educational platform like google classroom; print extra copies for note-taking assistance</i>) Warm-up / Exit Ticket (<i>Suggested printing: 1 per student. Assignment prints two copies per page.</i>) Primary Source Cards (<i>Suggested printing: 1 set per student, or per partners</i>) Assignment (<i>Suggested printing 1 per student</i>) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Level work Grade Level work Foundations Level work
Differentiation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Scaffolding including classwork at three different levels of academic ability Visual representations of directions Chunking text information

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Translation cards provide context and explanations of challenging vocabulary and phrasing from the primary source excerpts. 5. Sentence Stems and response options for short constructed response questions 6. Reduction in answer choices and amount of writing.
TEKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.05(A) Explain the central role the expansion of slavery played in the involvement of Texas in the Civil War. • 7.20(A) Differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas. • 7.20(B): Analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and conclusions. • 7.20(D) Identify bias and points of view from the historical context surrounding an event that influenced the participants. • 7.20(E) Formulate and communicate visually, orally, or in writing a claim supported by evidence and reasoning related to a social studies topic.

Teacher Guide: Texas & Secession

Warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read a short excerpt from the primary source used in the day's lesson to practice identifying, summarizing, and paraphrasing the main idea of the text. • The text briefly explains that Texas has 2 options in the wake of the secession of the other Southern states: 1) stay with the North but be isolated, or 2) join up with the South. • Slides 2 and 3 restate the directions and provide sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class. • Slides 4 and 5 provide the essential question and the "We will / I will" statements for the lesson.
Lesson	<p><u>Student Worksheet</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students begin by examining a short timeline of events leading to the secession of Texas. The timeline is presented on the first page of the worksheet. • Students answer a question(s) about the event that triggered the secession of the Southern states. • <u>Slide 6</u> provides an image to accompany this portion of the worksheet. The image shows a map of Texas, by county, and how each county voted in the secession referendum. If there is time, this can be an opportunity for students to make observations about the map, and why certain areas of the state might have voted as they did (ie: the eastern portion of the states supported secession, and that is where the majority of the plantations were. Areas in the Hill Country especially around Fredericksburg opposed secession, that was the location of many German immigrants.) <p><u>Primary Source Cards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students next use 4 primary source excerpt cards that explain Texas' primary reasons for seceding from the United States. The cards are lettered A – D. • Students read each card (or the teacher can read each card as students follow along, due to the challenging nature of the language in the excerpts.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After students have read the excerpt cards, students read the four translation cards. Each translation card provides a modern-day translation of each of the excerpt cards. The translation cards are numbered 1 – 4, but they are NOT in order. Students must determine which translation card best summarizes each individual excerpt card. • <u>Slide 7</u> introduces this portion of the assignment. • <u>Slides 8 and 9</u> explain the excerpt and translation cards to the students. <p><u>Worksheet</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once students have matched their cards and understand the meaning of the information in the excerpt, they return to their worksheet to answer the questions about the primary source material. • If text evidence is requested to support a response, students should use the text of the excerpt cards, not the translation cards. • <u>Slide 10</u> directs students to use their cards to complete the rest of their assignment. • Advanced: Students will answer short, constructed response questions related to the primary source materials. • Grade Level: Students will answer multiple-choice, multi-select, and short constructed response questions related to the primary source materials. • Foundations: Students will answer multiple-choice and multi-select questions with one answer choice eliminated, and short constructed response questions with a sentence stem and response options provided.
Exit Ticket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students make observations about a political cartoon related to secession. • Based on the imagery in the cartoon, students make inferences to determine whether they think the illustrator supported or opposed secession. Students provide reasoning based on the imagery to support their answer. • Slides 11 and 12 display a larger view of the image and provide sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class.

Primary Sources and Other Resources Used

- Brownrigg, R. T., and William Dunn Schoolfield. "[State of Texas Declaration of Secession]." The Portal to Texas History, June 30, 2015.
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph619463/m1/1/>
- Currier & Ives. *The "Secession Movement.* ca. 1861. New York: Published by Currier & Ives. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003674576/>
- Wang, Thomas, Lila Rakoczy, and James Harkins. *American Civil War Political Loyalties.* 2022. Texas General Land Office, GIS Educational Maps. Map Database and Store. <https://historictexasmaps.com/object/97091>
- Timeline: Texas Secession and Civil War (1861–1865) Accessed August 26, 2025.
<https://www.texasalmanac.com/articles/secession>