

# Unit 4: The Mexican National Era

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Lesson Plan: Texas Today

(45 – 60 minutes)

<b>Objective</b>	<p>Students will analyze five charts and graphs related to the Texas economy and climate to determine the significance of cotton agriculture in Texas today.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>We will</u></b> <i>examine five charts and graphs on the modern Texas economy and climate related to the significance of cotton cultivation in the state.</i></li> <li>2. <b><u>I will</u></b> make observations, conclusions, and inferences about information in each chart or graph and record my responses on my work.</li> </ol>
<b>Key Concepts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cotton cultivation in Texas began with the Spanish missions in the 1700s, increased in prominence during the Empresario System, and today is the top cash crop produced in the state.</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing data in maps, graphs, and charts</li> <li>• Making conclusions and inferences based on data</li> <li>• Summarizing and paraphrasing</li> <li>• Identifying the main idea</li> </ul>
<b>Essential Question</b>	In what ways can we see the effects of the Empresario System on the Texas economy today?
<b>Assignment</b>	<p><b>Warm-up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students examine a pie chart demonstrating the top 5 Texas agricultural commodities today.</li> <li>• The chart shows profit by the billions for each item.</li> <li>• Students make observations about the information presented in the chart.</li> <li>• Note: Broilers are chickens raised for meat.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lesson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students use the maps, graphs, and charts presented in 5 different stations to answer questions about the Texas economy and climate today as it relates to cotton.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Station 1: Leading U.S. Cotton Producing States, 2018-2020, showing bales of cotton produced by the millions.</li> <li>- Station 2: Acres of Cotton Harvested in the U.S. 2017 – map</li> <li>- Station 3: The Top 5 Most Profitable Agricultural Products, Texas, 2021</li> <li>- Station 4: Cotton Planted and Harvested in Texas, 2018-2022, measured by the number of pounds per acre.</li> <li>- Station 5: Historical Drought Conditions in Texas, showing percentage of land affected across the state.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student work: Students paraphrase the purpose of each chart and answer comprehension questions related to the data presented in each.</li> </ul> <p><b>Exit Ticket</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students put five events related to the Empresario System and cotton cultivation in Texas into the correct chronological order.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<p><b><u>Links to the following materials</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Slideshow (<i>Suggested use: present on the overhead; Upload to an educational platform like google classroom; print extra copies for note-taking assistance</i>)</li> <li>2. Warm-up / Exit Ticket (<i>Suggested printing: 1 per student. Assignment prints two copies per page.</i>)</li> <li>3. Stations (<i>There are 5 stations. Each station has one piece of paper. Suggested printing 1 set to use as stations around the room at designated stations. Class can also be divided into 5 groups with each group receiving one station.</i>)</li> <li>4. Assignment (<i>Suggested printing 1 per student</i>)             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Advanced Level work</li> <li>b. Grade Level work</li> <li>c. Foundations Level work</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Differentiation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scaffolding including classwork at three different levels of academic ability</li> <li>2. Visuals representations of directions</li> <li>3. Visual cues in readings</li> <li>4. Sentence Stems and answer options for short, constructed response questions</li> <li>5. Reduction in answer choices</li> </ol>

<p><b>TEKS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>7.08(C)</b> Analyze the effects of physical and human factors such as climate, weather, landforms, irrigation, transportation, and communication on major events in Texas.</li> <li>• <b>7.20(A)</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>7.20(B):</b> Analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and conclusions.</li> <li>• <b>7.20(C)</b> Organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps.</li> <li>• <b>7.21(A)</b> Create and interpret thematic maps, graphs, and charts representing various aspects of Texas during the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.</li> <li>• <b>7.21(B)</b> Analyze and interpret geographic distributions and patterns in Texas during the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.</li> </ul>
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## Teacher Guide: Texas Today

<b>Warm-up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students examine a pie chart showing the top 5 most profitable agricultural commodities in Texas today including: Cattle, broilers (chickens raised for meat), cotton, milk and corn.</li> <li>• Students are asked to summarize the purpose of the chart, make an observation about the data presented, and pose one question about the chart and its data.</li> <li>• Slides 2 and 3 restate the directions and provide sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class.</li> <li>• Slides 4 and 5 provide the essential question and the “We will / I will” statements for the lesson.</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson</b>	<p><b>Stations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 5 materials, one for each station.</li> <li>• Station 1: Leading U.S. Cotton Production States, 2018-2020 showing bales of cotton produced by the millions for Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, and Arkansas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 8 shows a large view of the data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Station 2: Acres of Cotton Harvested in The U.S. 2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 9 shows a large view of the data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Station 3: The Top 5 Most Profitable Agricultural Products in Texas, 2021. This shows the percentage of receipts each product produced in both Texas and the U.S. for the year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 10 shows a large view of the data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Station 4: Cotton Planted and Harvested in Texas from 2017-2022, measured by the number of pounds planted and harvested per acre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 11 shows a large view of the data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Station 5: Historical Drought Conditions in Texas, showing the percentage of land affected across the state for the years 2018 – 2022. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 12 shows a large view of the data</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Stations can be printed to hang around the room; Class can be divided into 5 groups with each group receiving one station. When students have completed their station, the data can be presented and reviewed by the whole class.</p>

	<p>There is only one set of stations; they are not differentiated for the various academic levels.</p> <p><b>Worksheet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The worksheet begins with a one page reading about the development of cotton in the state of Texas from the Spanish Colonial era to the present day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slide 7 shows a photograph from the early 1900s of a cotton farm in Texas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is one page of questions for each station.</li> <li>• Students paraphrase the purpose of the chart, graph, or map at their station, then answer 2 or 3 additional questions about the data.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions for carrying out the activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete one station together as a class to model how to read and analyze a chart, and show what kind of information to look for (the Title, descriptions, numbers, percentages, etc.) Then, have the students use the remaining 4 stations for their work.</li> <li>• For classes with more literacy struggles, it can help to do two or three stations together as a class, leaving fewer for students to complete without as much guidance.</li> <li>• Stations can be printed and hung around the room or placed at table stations.</li> <li>• Students can be divided into groups and each group can be assigned a station.</li> <li>• At the conclusion of the lesson, student groups can present their material to the class.</li> <li>• All students can be required to record information about each station, or they can be directed to only record information about their own station.</li> <li>• To save paper, student worksheets can be printed with the first page for every student, and then the page with only their assigned station.</li> </ul>
<b>Exit Ticket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of five events from the economic and social condition of Texas after the War for Mexican Independence to modern day cotton production.</li> <li>• The events are out of order. Students must put the events in chronological order by writing the number 1 through 5 next to each event in order.</li> <li>• Slides 13 and 14 restate the directions for the exit ticket and provide sentence stems to guide student responses when sharing with the class.</li> </ul>

## Primary Sources and Other Resources Used

- USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, *Crop Production* reports. January 8, 2025 <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/crops/cotton-and-wool/cotton-sector-at-a-glance>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service [Agriculture Industry Grows Texas](#)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, Annual Cotton Review, Monthly Crop Production Reports [Annual Cotton Review](#)
- National Integrated Drought Information System, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. [Texas | Drought.gov](#)
- Aerial view of a cotton picking harvester, during the Ernie Schirmer Farms cotton harvest which has family, fellow farmers, and workers banding together for the long days of work, in Batesville, TX, on August 23, 2020. Photos taken during visit by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA Photo and Media by Lance Cheung. U.S. Department of Agriculture.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cotton\\_harvester\\_in\\_Batesville,\\_Texas\\_fi  
 eld\\_-\\_angle\\_view.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cotton_harvester_in_Batesville,_Texas_field_-_angle_view.jpg)
- [Many round bales of cotton at Selz Cotton Gin], photograph, Date Unknown; (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph25319/>: accessed February 4, 2025), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Denton Public Library.
- Top Texas Commodities. Texas Department of Agriculture.  
[www.texasagriculture.gov/About/Texas-Ag-Stats](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/About/Texas-Ag-Stats)