

# Texas essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Texas, one of the West South Central states of the United States. It borders Mexico on the southwest and the Gulf of Mexico on the southeast. To the west is New Mexico, to the north and northeast lie Oklahoma and Arkansas, and Louisiana bounds Texas on the east. Austin is the capital of Texas. Houston is the largest city. Texas is the size of Ohio, Indiana, and all the New England and Middle Atlantic states combined, and its vast area encompasses forests, mountains, deserts and dry plains, and a long, humid, subtropical coastal lowland. Texas's wealth of mineral resources is almost unequaled among the other states. Its rapid economic development stimulated by these resources and its vast size have made Texas an American legend. Oil wells, chemicals, ranches, and cattle have played a major part in that legend. For more than 100 years, Texas was part of the Spanish Empire in America. When Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, Texas was for a while joined to Mexico. The section from San Antonio southward retains the flavor of the Hispano-Mexican period in its architecture, foods, and festivals. The name Texas is derived from *tejas* or *teyas*, the rendering by the Spanish in the mid-16th century of the Caddo people's word for friends or allies. It gradually became used to denote the region north of the Rio Grande and east of New Mexico, and was officially applied as Texas when the area was organized as a republic in 1836. Texas was an independent republic until it joined the Union on December 29, 1845, as the 28th state. Its single-star flag dates from its independent period and has given Texas the nickname the Lone Star State. IIPHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY Texas is the second largest state in the nation, after Alaska, and has an area of 692, 244 sq km (267, 277 sq mi), including 12, 844 sq km (4959 sq mi) of inland water and 1046 sq km (404

sq mi) of coastal water over which it has jurisdiction. Extending for about 1240 km (about 770 mi) from east to west and for about 1290 km (about 800 mi) from north to south, the state comprises about 7 percent of the land area of the United States. The mean elevation is about 500 m (1700 ft). A Natural Regions Texas can be divided into four natural regions, or physiographic provinces: the Gulf Coastal Plain, the Central Lowland, the Great Plains, and the Basin and Range province.

The Gulf Coastal Plain, a subdivision of the Coastal Plain, makes up most of eastern and southern Texas and occupies more than one-third of the state. Near the coast this region is mostly flat and low-lying. It rises gradually to about 300 m (about 1000 ft) farther inland, where the land becomes more rolling. Belts of low hills cross the Gulf Coastal Plain in many areas. In these higher areas the stream valleys are deeper and sharper than those along the coast. The Central Lowland, a subdivision of the Interior Plains, occupies much of north-central Texas. The section of the Central Lowland in Texas is known as the Osage Plains. The land in this region has elevations ranging from about 150 m (about 500 ft) in the east to about 800 m (about 2600 ft) on the western edge. Several belts of low hills cross the Central Lowland, running in a north-to-south direction. The Great Plains, also a subdivision of the Interior Plains, extends over most of northern and central Texas. The part of the Great Plains that occupies northern Texas, or the Panhandle, is called the High Plains. Another name for this area is Llano Estacado, or Staked Plain. The elevation of the High Plains ranges from about 750 m (about 2500 ft) to more than 1200 m (4000 ft).

The land is flat, except for a few eroded river valleys. The southern part of the Great Plains in Texas can be divided into the Edwards Plateau and the Central Texas section. The Edwards Plateau is generally level and differs from the rest of the Great Plains in that it is underlaid with hard limestone, rather than with softer and more porous rock. The Central Texas section, which is hillier and rockier than the rest of the Great Plains in Texas, is often called the Hill Country. The eastern edge of the Edwards Plateau and of the Central Texas section is marked by the long ridge known as the Balcones Escarpment. It divides these regions from the lower Gulf Coastal Plain. Two small subdivisions of the Great Plains are seen in Texas, the Pecos Valley in the southwest and the Plains Border in the northeastern corner of the Panhandle. The Pecos Valley is mostly flat and rocky. The Plains Border is level or gently rolling. The Basin and Range province, a subdivision of the Intermontane Plateaus, lies to the west of the Great Plains in the extreme western part of Texas. Running through the central part of this region are several rugged mountain ranges.

Between the mountain ridges and to the west of them are high dry basins or plateaus. The Basin and Range province in Texas is divided into two sections, the Mexican Highland and the Sacramento section. The Sacramento section has more extensive plateaus than the Mexican Highland, and contains the highest point in Texas, Guadalupe Peak, at 2667 m (8749 ft) above sea level. Rivers and Lakes Texas's largest river is the Rio Grande, which flows southeastward for about 1300 mi (about 2100 km) and forms the border between Texas and Mexico. The Rio Grande carries little water during most of the year, but floods occur after periods of heavy rain. The principal rivers

that flow across the central part of the state from the Great Plains or Central Lowland to the Gulf of Mexico are the Colorado, Trinity, and Brazos rivers. The Colorado River is particularly important because it has been dammed to form several large artificial lakes. Two other large rivers are the Red River, which forms most of the boundary between Texas and Oklahoma, and the Sabine River, which marks part of the border between Texas and Louisiana. Shorter rivers that flow across the Gulf Coastal Plain include the Nueces, the San Antonio, the Guadalupe, the Lavaca, and the San Jacinto. Most of the large lakes in Texas have been formed by dams.

Among the largest natural lakes in the state is Caddo Lake, along the Louisiana border. Caddo Lake is not a single open body of water, but a winding network of channels and inlets. Large artificial lakes include Lake Texoma, on the Red River; Toledo Bend Reservoir, on the Sabine River; and Sam Rayburn Reservoir, on a tributary of the Neches River. CCoastline Texas has a coastline of 591 km (367 mi) along the Gulf of Mexico. However, long narrow islands called barrier islands extend along most of the coast; if the shoreline of all the islands and bays is taken into account, the coastline is more than 5300 km (3300 mi) long. Between most of the barrier islands and the mainland are shallow lagoons. The largest island along the coast is dune-filled Padre Island, most of which has been made a National Seashore.

DClimate Eastern Texas has a humid subtropical climate, while a semiarid low latitude climate prevails in central areas, and an arid low latitude climate in the extreme west. Along the coast the climate is much milder, with fewer extremes in temperatures.

Hurricanes sometimes hit the coastal areas of Texas from late July through September, and tornadoes are common in north-central Texas in April and May. D1Temperature Summers are hot throughout the state, and temperatures exceeding 35 C (95 F) are relatively common. Average July temperatures range from 28 to 30 C (82 to 86 F) over most of Texas. Winters are generally mild, except in the extreme northern parts of the state. The coldest winter weather is brought by north winds, called northers, that sweep down the Great Plains. The winds get warmer as they pass over the state, however, and by the time they reach the coast, temperatures are generally above freezing. Average January temperatures range from 16 C (60 F) in the extreme south to 1 C (34 F) in the northern Panhandle. D2Precipitation Precipitation in Texas decreases steadily from east to west. Along the Texas-Louisiana border almost 1400 mm (55 in) of rain falls each year. The central part of the state has about 640 mm (about 25 in) of precipitation, and the extreme western part of the state has less than 250 mm (10 in).

Rainfall is generally greatest during the summer. Snow is fairly uncommon in Texas, except in the higher mountains and in the High Plains. D3Growing Season The growing season, or the period between the last killing frost in spring and the first killing frost in fall, ranges from about 320 days along the coast to about 180 days in the Panhandle. In most of the state the first killing frost in fall comes in about the middle of November and the last hard frost in spring occurs toward the end of March. ESoils Much of eastern Texas and the Gulf Coastal Plain has red and yellow soils that are mostly sandy and reasonably productive with the proper use of fertilizers. Parts of the Gulf Coastal Plain and central Texas section have soils based on weathered

decayed limestone. This limestone, with its thick cover of native grasses, has formed a rich, nearly black soil. It is one of the best types of farming soil in Texas, although it becomes hard when dry. When wet, it becomes gummy and difficult to plow. Many of the soils of southern Texas are rich, especially along the lower Ro Grande, which has fertile alluvial soils.

However, the soils in this area are often not productive because of scanty rainfall. Most of the High Plains has rich reddish-chestnut soils that are productive with adequate water. Farther south, the Edwards Plateau has thin, poor soils. Most of the land in this area is used for grazing livestock. The Basin and Range province has some fertile alluvial soils in the river valleys of the Pecos and the Ro Grande. In most other parts of the area the soil is too salty for farming. FPlant Life Texas's vegetation changes gradually from east to west as the climate becomes more arid. Eastern Texas has forests largely made up of loblolly pines and shortleaf pines. The undergrowth of these forests usually includes several types of ferns. West of the pinewoods is an area of mixed pine and hardwood forests called the post oak belt. Several kinds of oaks, as well as sweetgums, hickories, and elms, grow there. Farther west the forests are thinner and the trees smaller. Mistletoe, a parasitic plant, often grows on the trees of this region. Much of central Texas is grassland, with thickets of junipers known as "cedar breaks." Southern Texas and parts of the Great Plains are mainly grasslands, with clumps of mesquite trees.

The mesquite is highly efficient in extracting water and minerals from the soil and therefore grows well in arid climates. The most common grasses are the big bluestem, found in the less arid regions, and the little bluestem.

Some parts of western Texas have desert vegetation. The plants in this region generally have few leaves and flower only in moist seasons. They send their roots far into the earth to gather as much water as possible. Some, such as the cacti, have thick spongy tissues that store water. The higher elevations of western Texas have some fir and pine trees. The fields and roadsides of central Texas have many colorful wildflowers, especially in late spring. Among the most notable wildflowers are the bluebonnet, which is the state flower; the Indian paintbrush; and the prickly pear, a type of cactus that is common in dry areas and that bears large yellow flowers on the edges of its thorny leaves. GAnimal Life Texas's wild animals have been greatly reduced in number by settlement and by extensive hunting and trapping. The white-tailed deer is by far the most important game animal. There are also many coyotes, which live mostly in the rough country of southwestern Texas.

Other large animals still occasionally found include pronghorn antelope, cougar, and black bear. Smaller animals include the rabbit, squirrel, skunk, and raccoon. The prairie dog, a rodent that once existed in huge colonies on the prairies, has become relatively scarce. Two unusual Texas animals are the nine-banded armadillo, a small slow-moving creature with a scaly shell-like skin, and the peccary, or javelina, which resembles a small pig. Texas has a variety of reptiles. Probably the best known is the western diamondback rattlesnake, one of the most dangerous poisonous snakes. Other poisonous snakes in Texas include the coral snake, the copperhead, and the cottonmouth. There are more than 85 species of nonpoisonous snakes in the state. Many alligators live in the lakes, rivers, and bayous of



eastern and coastal Texas, and there are several kinds of turtles. Small reptiles include a variety of lizards, notably the horned lizard. Texas's birdlife is the most varied of any state. Among the best-known birds that live in Texas all year is the mockingbird, which is the state bird. Jays, wrens, woodpeckers, sparrows, and titmice are common in the eastern and central parts of Texas. Among the large migratory birds that winter in Texas, especially around the lakes and lagoons of the Gulf Coast, are many species of ducks and geese, as well as the nearly extinct whooping crane, a great white bird that stands about 1.5 m (about 5 ft) tall and whose numbers are slowly recovering through rigid protection. Birds found in the interior of Texas include the wild turkey and the roadrunner. A few golden eagles live in the mountains of the Basin and Range province. Fish are plentiful in the waters off the Texas coast. Commercial marine catch includes shrimp, crab, oyster, snapper, flounder, and drumfish.

Among the most popular saltwater game fish are the tarpon and sea-trout. Of the freshwater fish caught in Texas the most common are catfish, bass, and sunfish. Conservation Texas's most serious environmental problem is the establishment of an adequate supply of water. More than 200 reservoirs are maintained for water supply, recreation, flood control, and irrigation. Underground water supplies are also widely used for irrigation. Soil conservation and the protection of Texas's wildlife are also of primary concern. There are state organizations, notably Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, as well as federal agencies involved in Texas's conservation program. Soil conservation in the state is carried out by 212 soil conservation districts, which cover about 99 percent of the state's total land

area. Among the various soil conservation projects are the reseeded of grasses and rangelands to control wind and water erosion, the terracing of croplands in hilly areas, and the rotation of crops in areas where the fertility of the soil has been impaired by extensive growing of a single crop. The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission is the major state agency involved in controlling environmental pollution. In the early 1990s Texas spent less than 0.6 percent of its annual budget on the environment, ranking it second from the last among the states, ahead of only New York. In the mid-1990s the state had 30 hazardous waste sites placed on a national priority list for cleanup due to their severity or proximity to people. Progress was being made in efforts to reduce pollution; by 1993 the amount of toxic chemicals discharged into the environment had been reduced by more than 45 percent from four years before.

**III ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES** Few states possess as wide a variety of resources as Texas, and few support economic activities of comparable variety. The economy of Texas has closely reflected key technological developments that have occurred during the state's history. The widespread use of barbed wire in the 1880s enabled improvements in cattle breeding and ranching. By the 1920s the ravages of the boll weevil elsewhere in the southern United States, combined with advances in irrigation techniques, led to greatly increased cotton production in the state, sustaining a major industry that has endured to the present. Commercial production of oil began in 1894. However, the first large-scale production resulted from the discovery of petroleum at Spindletop, near Beaumont, in the southeastern part of the state, in 1901. During the 20th century Texas became the leading oil-

producing and oil-refining state in the United States. At the same time, the state's economy shifted gradually from dependence on agriculture and lumbering to large-scale manufacturing, spurred by industries associated with petroleum, such as the production of petrochemicals and the manufacture of equipment for the oil and gas industry. Oil, cotton, and cattle have now been joined by hundreds of other business and industrial activities. Some of these reflect further technological developments, such as those of the aerospace and computer industries. A further stimulus to diversification was the decline of oil prices in the mid-1980s, which hurt the state's energy-producing industries. The Texas economy benefited from the many federal military installations located in the state and from other U. S. facilities such as the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, near Houston. A number of major corporations have headquarters in Texas, especially in Houston and the Dallas-Fort Worth area. About 9, 786, 000 people were employed in Texas in the early 1990s. The service industries, which include such activities as dry cleaning and computer programming, contributes the largest share of the state's gross product and employs the most workers, about 28 percent.

About 22 percent work in wholesale or retail trade; 16 percent in federal, state, or local government, including those in the military; 11 percent in manufacturing; 7 percent in finance, insurance, or real estate; 5 percent in construction; 5 percent in transportation or public utilities; 4 percent in farming (including agricultural services), forestry, or fishing; and 3 percent in mining. In the mid-1990s, only 7 percent of the workers in Texas were unionized. The state has a right-to-work law, which prohibits union membership as a condition of employment. AAgriculture In the mid-1990s

there were 185, 000 ranches and farms in Texas. Less than two-fifths of them had annual sales of more than \$10, 000. Many of the others were sidelines for operators who held other jobs. Farmland occupied 52. 3 million hectares (129. 3 million acres). Most of the land on farms was rangeland, and only about one-fifth was cropland. Texas ranks second among the states in income from sales of all farm products, fourth in income from crop sales, and first in income from sales of livestock and animal products. The crops grown range from those typical of temperate climates, such as the wheat and sorghum grain grown in the High Plains, to those that thrive along the subtropical Gulf Coast, such as rice and citrus fruits. Texas leads the nation in the production of cattle and of sheep and lambs. It is also an important producer of cotton, sorghum grain, wheat, dairy products, rice, corn, vegetables, poultry and eggs, greenhouse and nursery products, hogs, peanuts, hay, and oranges. Cattle, cotton lint, and dairy products are the leading sources of farm income. Proceeds from livestock sales exceed those from crop sales.

The ranches of Texas raise Hereford, Shorthorn, Angus, and Brahman cattle. The Santa Gertrudis, the only recognized breed to be started in the United States, was developed on the King Ranch in south Texas. Cattle production has shifted from the drier areas of western Texas to the more humid eastern sections. Cattle ranching is heavily concentrated along the Gulf Coast and in the southern Rio Grande plain south of the Edwards Plateau. The drier areas in western Texas, notably the Edwards Plateau, have remained important for the production of sheep and goats. Texas is especially famous for its Angora goats, which yield most of the mohair produced in the United States.

**A1 Patterns of Farming** One of the most important developments in Texas's agriculture has been the westward movement of cotton production. This shift has been stimulated by the increased use of irrigation. Cotton, long the chief crop in the Black Prairies of eastern Texas, has become a major crop in the irrigated areas of the High Plains. Grain sorghum is the other major crop on these irrigated lands. Irrigation agriculture is also important in portions of the lower Rio Grande Valley, where vegetables, citrus fruits, sugarcane, and cotton are grown. Farther north, in the area known as the Winter Garden, centered on Crystal City, vegetables and melons are the leading crops. They are also grown under irrigation. Around El Paso and Pecos, lands are irrigated mainly for cotton production. Rice culture, also under irrigation, dominates the Texas Gulf Coast from the Louisiana-Texas border to Lavaca Bay. Most of the corn and wheat grown in Texas is dryfarmed, or grown without irrigation. Corn is grown in central and eastern Texas, and wheat, also irrigated in places, comes mainly from the plains of the Panhandle. **B Fisheries** With its long Gulf coastline, which includes numerous bays and estuaries, commercial fishing in Texas is almost exclusively a saltwater business.

Shellfish are the most valuable catch, with shrimp accounting for approximately two-thirds of the income from fishing. Smaller quantities of crabs and oysters are taken. The most important commercial finfish include snapper, flounder, and tuna. Leading centers of commercial fishing are Brownsville-Port Isabel, Aransas Pass-Rockport, and Freeport. Menhaden, an inedible fish used for animal feeds, industrial oils, and fertilizer, is also caught. **C Forestry** Peak production in lumber was reached in the early years of the 20th century, and thereafter it declined as a result of the severe

depletion of forest resources. The cut has increased, however, since the 1930s because of the emphasis placed on the scientific cutting of trees and on reforestation practices. The yellow pine is the most valuable tree crop. Harvested from the forests of eastern Texas, in the area of Lufkin and Camden, the timber is used chiefly in the manufacture of pulp and paper. Some hardwood is also cut and utilized for furniture and construction lumber. Mining Texas has for many years led all other states in the value of mineral production. Petroleum, natural gas, and natural gas liquids accounted for 94 percent of the mineral value in the early 1990s. However, the reserves of oil and gas that were recoverable under existing economic and technological conditions were being depleted. The most valuable non-fuel minerals extracted as crushed and broken stone (of which Texas produces more than any other state) were portland cement (Texas is the second largest producer) and magnesium metal. Texas is also the second largest producer among the states of salt, sulfur, and talc; and is the third largest producer of masonry cement, clays, gypsum, and molybdenum.

Because a vast amount of equipment and relatively few workers are required in petroleum operations, less than 3 percent of Texas wage earners are employed in mining activities. Mineral resources are widely distributed throughout the state, with some form of mineral wealth found in almost all of the 254 counties of Texas. Petroleum, the leading mineral, is produced in approximately 200 counties. However, there are three major petroleum-producing areas in the state: the East Texas Oil Field, centering on the city of Kilgore; the Texas Gulf Coast region; and the Permian Basin in western Texas. Of the seven leading petroleum-producing counties, all but one are in

the west. In the interests of conservation, Texas closely regulates its petroleum production. Natural gas production in Texas is also widespread, but it is more highly concentrated than petroleum production. The leading gas producing counties are in the Gulf Coast and Permian Basin areas.

Manufacturing Manufacturing has expanded rapidly in Texas. In the early 1990s the income generated annually by manufacturing in the state was \$82.5 billion dollars; about 1,033,000 people earned wages in manufacturing jobs. In terms of the numbers of workers employed, the leading industries in Texas are the manufacturers of chemicals, industrial machinery, electrical equipment, fabricated metals, processed foods, and petroleum products. In terms of total industrial income generated in the state, the chemical industry also leads but is followed by petroleum refineries, food processors, makers of machinery, electronic goods manufacturers, and firms making fabricated metals and transportation equipment. A well-defined belt of manufacturing activity extends along the Gulf Coast, encompassing the Beaumont-Port Arthur-Orange area, Houston, the Galveston-Texas City area, Freeport, Port Lavaca, and Corpus Christi.

The development of these areas has been spurred by the presence of raw materials, the availability of natural gas for the generation of electric power, and the fact that the coastal cities have access to the sea and can reach world markets. Chemical products, especially petrochemicals, or those made from petroleum, are major products of the Gulf Coast. One of the major end products is synthetic rubber, of which Texas accounts for much of the nation's production. Although oil refining is found in almost every part of the state, one of the world's densest concentrations of refineries is in the

Houston-Beaumont area. Houston is also a noted manufacturer of oil-field equipment and other products for the oil industry, such as storage containers. Tugs and barges used in offshore drilling operations are produced in Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Galveston. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) operates the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston. The center has attracted many aerospace industries that require highly trained specialists, and research plays an important part in its operations. A second belt of manufacturing cities extends from south to north, all the way to the Oklahoma border, and includes such cities as Sherman, Denison, Dallas, Fort Worth, Waco, Temple, Austin, and San Antonio. Dallas has factories that manufacture oil-field equipment, automobiles, and cotton-gin equipment, and the city is a leading center for the electronics and aerospace industries.

Other industries in Dallas include cement manufacturing, chemical production, and food processing. Fort Worth is one of the major producing centers for airplanes and helicopters in the United States, and it also has a share in Texas's aerospace industry. The primary center in Texas for meat packing is Fort Worth. Another leading city in this north-south industrial belt is San Antonio. The diversified manufactures of this city include petroleum products, food products, and portland cement. However, San Antonio is most noted as the home of a number of large Army and Air Force bases that employ thousands of civilian and military personnel. Away from the major manufacturing belts are several other important industrial centers. These include Odessa and Midland, in the western Texas petroleum district, which specialize in oil refining, oil-field equipment, and the manufacture of



chemicals. Lubbock is the center for cotton trade and marketing for the High Plains area and is among the world's largest centers for cottonseed-oil production. Amarillo, in the Panhandle, is a leading food-processing center and the commercial center of the region. Because of its ample electric power supply, Texas has become an important processor of ores brought in from other states and from foreign countries. One of the world's largest copper refineries is in El Paso, and the only tin smelter in the United States is located in Texas City. Copper is also refined at Amarillo, where there is a plentiful local supply of natural gas.

Corpus Christi has zinc-smelting operations and plants that process bauxite into finished aluminum. Electricity Texas's large but limited supply of natural gas, together with its ample lignite reserves, has enabled the state to meet rapidly increasing demands from its growing population and industries for electric power. Texas ranks first among the states in electricity production. In the mid-1990s some 88 percent of the electricity generated in the state came from conventional steam power plants fueled by natural gas or by coal. The state's four nuclear power plants produce about 11 percent of the electricity generated. Two nuclear plants are at Glen Rose, near Fort Worth, and two at Bay City, in southeastern Texas. Less than 1 percent of Texas's large electrical generation comes from hydroelectric facilities. Large hydropower plants are at Buchanan Dam on the Colorado River and at Possum Kingdom Dam and Whitney Dam on the Brazos River.

Transportation Texas has a good highway system that reaches all parts of the state but is especially dense in the more populous eastern sections. In the mid-1990s the state had 473,363 km (294,142 mi) of highway, more

than any other state. The total included 5204 km (3234 mi) of the federal interstate highway system, which connects the largest cities with adjacent states and Mexico. Texas also has more railroad track than any other state, some 18,161 km (11,285 mi) in the early 1990s. Of the goods shipped by rail and originating in the state, nearly one-third are chemicals and two-fifths are nonmetallic minerals. Air transportation has been especially important to Texans because of the great distances they must often travel from one city to another.

There are 1710 airports in Texas, including private airports. Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport is the nation's second busiest airport, and in the early 1990s handled nearly 25 million passengers annually. Two airports in Houston also rank among the nation's busiest. HPipelines One of the most interesting aspects of freight transportation in Texas is the intensive use made of pipelines to transport oil and natural gas. From the time that natural gas began to be utilized as a fuel, instead of being wasted during petroleum-extracting operations, pipelines were constructed to transport the natural gas. It is estimated that gas from Texas reaches three-quarters of the United States by pipeline. Pipelines also move crude oil from fields in Texas to refineries along the Gulf Coast and to various points outside Texas. Refined petroleum products also move by pipeline into the interior of the United States. One of the most ambitious pipeline projects undertaken to date, about 2480 km (about 1540 mi) long, was built in the early 1960s. It brings refinery products from Houston to points in the eastern United States, including Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and New York City, which is the pipeline's terminus. ITrade Water transportation plays an important part in

Texas commerce. The state has 13 deepwater ports along the Gulf Coast, which have access to the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. They are also served by the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, a section of the Intracoastal Waterway system.

This sheltered water route stretches the length of the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, enabling barges to shuttle among Gulf Coast ports and easily reach ports on the Mississippi River and on the East Coast. Houston is Texas's busiest port and ranks among the top three ports of the United States. Corpus Christi, Texas City, Port Arthur, and Beaumont are next in importance after Houston. The other deepwater ports are Freeport; Galveston; Harbor Island; Port Lavaca; Brownsville and Port Isabel, in the extreme south of the state; and Orange and Sabine Pass, near the Louisiana border. Ships reach the ports of Houston and Beaumont by means of ship canals, because these ports lie inland from the Gulf of Mexico. Victoria, on the Guadalupe River, is an important port for inland waterborne commerce. The greater part of the tonnage handled by Texas ports is destined for other parts of the United States. Petroleum and petroleum products make up a large part of these shipments. Texas ports also handle a large volume of ores, such as aluminum, imported from foreign countries. They export large quantities of wheat, sorghum, sulfur, and cotton.

IVTHE PEOPLE OF TEXAS The total population of Texas has increased greatly over the years. In 1900 there were only 3, 048, 710 persons in the entire state. In 1990 the population was 16, 986, 510, an increase of 19. 4 percent over ten years earlier. The population estimate for 1997 was 19, 439, 337. The state ranks third among the states in population. The average

population density is 24 person per sq km (64 per sq mi). The first Texans were Native Americans, but there remains only one small reservation in the state, in Polk County, where members of the Alabama and Coushatta peoples still live. The French and Spanish were the first Europeans to reach Texas, but few of them settled in this land; most were explorers, missionaries, soldiers, or traders. Indeed, most of the people who live in Texas are descendants of people who came from other parts of the United States or from Mexico. The largest number of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans live in southern Texas, especially along the Rio Grande and in such cities as San Antonio and Corpus Christi. Many of them still speak Spanish in their homes and read the Spanish-language newspapers published in several southern Texas cities. Many families emigrated from Germany and other parts of central Europe to central Texas in the middle of the 19th century. The names of some of the towns in central Texas, such as New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, and Schulenburg, reflect their German origin.

In 1990 whites constituted 75.2 percent of the population, blacks 11.9 percent, Asians and Pacific Islanders 1.9 percent, Native Americans 0.4 percent, and those of mixed heritage or not reporting ethnicity 10.6 percent. Hispanics, who may be of any race, were 25.5 percent of the people.

**APopulation Patterns** The first towns in Texas grew up along rivers and near springs, where there was plentiful water. There was little early settlement on the dry plains of western Texas. Later, with the coming of the railroads, new towns sprang up along the railroad routes. Still later a new generation of towns was built or expanded in the parts of Texas where large oil fields were discovered. In 1910 more than three-quarters of the population lived on

farms or in rural communities of less than 2500 people. By 1970 only one-fifth of the people lived on farms or in small towns, a proportion that was to remain stable into the 1990s. This shift to larger cities was due to two factors. Farming was mechanized during the 60-year period; and industries in the cities grew very rapidly, thus providing employment for rural dwellers leaving the farms.

**Principal Cities** The Gulf Coast section of the Coastal Plain is dominated by a belt of seaport cities, almost all of which are large oil and natural-gas centers. Houston, with a population of 1, 630, 533 in 1990, is the dominant city on the coast. It is a shipping point for goods produced throughout the Southwest and has the central administrative offices of many oil, gas, and pipeline companies. Beaumont, with 114, 323 people in 1990, and Port Arthur, with 58, 724, are twin seaport cities in southeastern Texas. Galveston, with 59, 070 people, and Texas City, with 40, 822, are seaports on Galveston Bay south of Houston. Galveston is located on an island, and its long beaches on the Gulf side of the island make it a popular summer resort. Texas City leans more toward manufacturing. Corpus Christi, with 257, 453 people, is the major city in the southern part of the Gulf Coast section. The Black Prairies, stretching down the northwestern edge of the Coastal Plain, originally constituted Texas's richest cotton-farming country. The farm population has declined there, but the cities have grown. Dallas, with 1, 006, 877 people in 1990, for example, is Texas's second largest city and at the center of one of the fastest growing regions of the country. San Antonio, with 935, 933 people in 1990, the third largest city in the state, was first settled by Spaniards. It became the capital of their Texas territory during the late 18th and 19th centuries. Later its growth was spurred by the development of

the surrounding rich Black Prairies farming area. Austin has a population of 465, 622 and is the capital city of Texas. Waco, with 103, 590 people is a transportation and distribution center. Fort Worth, with 447, 619 people in 1990, is the major metropolitan center of the Central Lowland. Although Fort Worth and Dallas are only about 50 km (about 30 mi) apart, Dallas tends to face east in its business interests and Fort Worth is more concerned with the farmlands, ranchlands, and oil fields to the west. Wichita Falls, with 96, 259 people, is the second largest city of the Central Lowland. Its rapid growth has been spurred by the discovery of large petroleum deposits nearby. The Basin and Range province is largely unpopulated.

Great expanses of land are too mountainous and dry to support human habitation. Some scenic parts of this country are held in state and national parks, yet there are also important ranchlands there. El Paso, with 515, 342 people in 1990, is the major city in the Basin and Range province. The eastern Texas section of the Coastal Plain, or that portion of the Coastal Plain lying inland from the Gulf Coast and east of the Black Prairies, was one of the first parts of the state to be settled by farmers from states to the east. It was a cotton-growing region, and after the abolition of slavery many of the cotton lands were farmed by black and white tenant farmers, operating largely as sharecroppers. In 1930, in some of the counties of eastern Texas, as many as 60 percent of the farmers were tenants. It is in this part of Texas that the farm population has declined the most. Farm tenancy has also dropped sharply. Some counties have lost as much as half their population since the 1930s. The southern Texas section of the Coastal Plain is much more thinly populated than the Gulf Coast section. There are no seaports, except at the

mouth of the Rio Grande, and not many large towns. Generally this land is ranching country. There are only two sizable concentrations of population, the city of Laredo and a cluster of cities near the mouth of the Rio Grande. Laredo, with a population of 122, 899, is located on the Mexican border. Through the city is funneled a great deal of traffic and trade between Mexico and the United States.

Brownsville, with 98, 962 people in 1990, is the largest of a belt of cities that dominates the Rio Grande Valley from the Gulf Coast to a point about 100 km (about 60 mi) inland. The High Plains section of the Great Plains extends over most of the Texas Panhandle. The population has increased considerably as ranching has given way to crop farming. More important, several towns and cities have grown very rapidly as agricultural or petroleum and natural gas centers. Amarillo, with 157, 615 people in 1990, has been replaced by Lubbock, with 186, 206 people, as the largest city of the High Plains. Lubbock has grown rapidly with the development of irrigated cotton farming in the surrounding area. The Edwards Plateau, the rough southern part of the Texas Great Plains, is thinly populated. Some people in the rugged Hill Country support themselves through tourism. San Angelo, with 84, 474 people, is the only city of substantial size on the plateau. Religion About one-third of those participating in religion in Texas are Baptists, while about one-quarter are Roman Catholics. The Methodists, Pentecostals, and Lutherans also have membership of significant size.

## VEDUCATION AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Although the president of the Republic of Texas, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, urged the Texas congress to establish public schools in 1838, public education was little developed until the annexation of Texas to the United States. Private schools, known as Cornfield schools, provided teachers who rotated among the plantations and communities during the 1840s and 1850s. A Education The public educational system was launched by a law passed in 1854. Then, under the constitution of 1876, a state board of education was created and part of the revenue raised from taxation and from the sale of public lands was set aside to support public education. The discovery of oil on the lands that were earmarked for the support of schools and colleges has subsequently increased the value of the Permanent School Fund and the University Endowment Fund to several hundred million dollars each. The 24 elected members of the state board of education appoint a commissioner of education, who heads the Texas education agency. Some school districts are directly responsible to this agency, and others are supervised by locally elected county superintendents. Progress has been made to improve educational facilities for the rural population, as well as for the rapidly growing urban population. Significant developments have been the enforcement of compulsory attendance laws for children from the age of 6 to 17, the closing of all one-room schools, and a drastic reduction in the number of school districts. About 5 percent of the state's children attend private schools. In the mid-1990s Texas spent about \$4930 on each student's education, compared to a national average of about \$5310. There were 15.7 students for every teacher, giving Texas an average class size much smaller than the national norm. Of those older than 25 years of age in the state, about 72 percent had a high school diploma, under the average for <https://assignbuster.com/texas-essay/>



the nation as a whole. A1Higher Education Texas has a comprehensive system of colleges and universities. In the mid-1990s the state had 106 public and 72 private institutions of higher education. The oldest institution of higher education in Texas is Southwestern University, in Georgetown, founded in 1840.

Other notable schools include Baylor University (1845), in Waco; Rice University (1891), the University of Houston (1927), and Texas Southern University (1947), in Houston; Southern Methodist University (1911), in Dallas; Texas A&M University (1876), in College Station; the University of Texas (1876), with principal campuses in Austin, Arlington, Brownsville, Dallas (in Richardson), Edinburg, El Paso, Houston, Odessa, San Antonio, and Tyler; East Texas State University (1971) in Texarkana; Lamar University (1923), in Beaumont; University of North Texas (1890) and Texas Woman's University (1901), in Denton; ; Sam Houston State University (1879), in Huntsville; Southwest Texas State University (1899), in San Marcos; Stephen F. Austin State University (1923), in Nacogdoches; Texas Christian University (1873), in Fort Worth; and Texas Tech University (1923), in Lubbock.

BLibraries There are 498 tax-supported public library systems in the state, circulating each year an average of 4. 6 books for each resident. The largest public libraries are in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio. The libraries of The University of Texas at Austin, the fifth largest academic library in North America, consist of four separate collections that include more than 7 million volumes. It is noted for its collection of rare books, original manuscripts by modern authors and materials on Texas. The Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library is also located on the Austin campus. The Armstrong

Browning Library at Baylor University has original manuscripts by 19th-century English poet Robert Browning.

Museums The Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Dallas Museum of Natural History, the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, and Science Place in Dallas are only some of the many museums in these cities. Valuable art collections have been acquired by the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Fort Worth, the Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, the Elisabet Ney Museum in Austin, and the El Paso Museum of Art. Of historical interest are the Texas Memorial Museum of the University of Texas at Austin, the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum at Canyon, and the Witte Museum in San Antonio. Communications Texas journalism had its start in 1813, when two newspapers, *Gaceta de Tejas* and *El Mejicano*, were published in Nacogdoches. An early English-language newspaper of significance was the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, first published at San Felipe in 1835.

The state had 81 daily newspapers in the mid-1990s. Those with the largest circulations were the *Houston Chronicle and Post*, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, the *San Antonio Express-News*, and the *Austin American-Statesman*. In the mid-1990s Texas had 249 AM and 286 FM radio stations and 104 television stations. The first radio station in the state, WRR in Dallas, began operation in 1920. The first commercial television station was WBAP-TV in Fort Worth, which went on the air in 1948. Music and Theater Interest in music and drama is a vital part of Texas's cultural tradition, and the state has contributed significantly to national achievements in these fields. Most sizable cities and most colleges and

universities have local concert series and theaters. The most prominent locally supported orchestras are the Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio symphony orchestras. The last also sponsors civic opera. The Dallas Civic Opera and Houston Grand Opera Association provide opera seasons. The Kalita Humphreys Theater, designed by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, houses the Dallas Theatre Center. It is the successor to the renowned Margo Jones Theater, which pioneered presentations of plays-in-the-round. Other active groups are the Casa Maana at Fort Worth, the Alley Theater and Houston Theater Center in Houston, and the Little Theater in San Antonio.

#### VIRECREATION AND PLACES OF INTEREST

Many recreational and scenic attractions are found in Texas. There are tall pine forests in the eastern part of the state, rugged mountains and colorful deserts in the southwest, and interesting historic landmarks in such cities as San Antonio. In about 350 places the Texas landscape has been altered with artificially created lakes. The lakes have greatly expanded the facilities for fishing and all kinds of other water sports. Hunting is a popular seasonal sport in all parts of Texas, particularly in the central and southern sections, where deer and other wildlife abound. Boating, bathing, and deep-sea fishing draw large numbers of visitors to the winter resorts along the lower Gulf Coast. Other winter vacation centers have been developed in the Lower Ro Grande Valley between Brownsville and Mission. These cities are gateways to Mexico, as are Laredo, Del Rio, and El Paso. ANational Parks and Forests Noted for its rugged scenery and beautiful wild flowers, Big Bend National Park along the Ro Grande, is a major tourist attraction. A relatively recent <https://assignbuster.com/texas-essay/>

addition to the national park system is Padre Island, a barrier island about 180 km (about 110 mi) long and linked by causeway with Corpus Christi. About 130 km (about 80 mi) of beach has been included in Padre Island National Seashore. Another park is the Guadalupe Mountains National Park in the southwest. National recreation areas provide access to Amisdad Reservoir on the Rio Grande and Lake Meredith on the Canadian River. The National Park Service administers several important historic sites in Texas.

The San Antonio Missions National Historical Park preserves four Spanish missions built during the 18th century. An important post in the 19th-century defensive system of West Texas is contained in the Fort Davis National Historic Site. The Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park in Johnson City and Stonewall includes the birthplace, boyhood home, and ranch of Lyndon B. Johnson, the 36th U. S. President. Four national forests, Sabine, Davy Crockett, Sam Houston, and Angelina, all in eastern Texas, offer recreational facilities. Agencies of the federal government also administer a national preserve, five national grasslands, and 14 national wildlife refuges. Aransas-Matagorda Island National Wildlife Refuge, north of Rockport, is the winter home of the only flock of Canadian-nesting whooping cranes in the world. BState Parks State-protected lands include more than 110 state parks and five state forests. Palo Duro Canyon, one of the largest state parks, covers more than 6100 hectares (15, 000 acres) in the High Plains. Water sports may be enjoyed at Caddo Lake, Atlanta, Possum Kingdom, Lake Whitney, and many other state parks, and bay fishing is available at Goose Island State Park. A number of state parks preserve the missions, forts, and historic buildings of Texas. In San Antonio is the famous mission-fortress known as

the Alamo. Several historic sites associated with the Republic of Texas are included in Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park. East of Houston the San Jacinto Monument commemorates the defeat of the Mexican general Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna in 1836, during the Texas Revolution.

Other state historic parks include such sites as the Port Isabel Lighthouse; the Fannin Battleground, near Goliad; and the birthplace of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in Denison. COther Places to Visit The large meteor crater near Odessa is one of the few known meteor sites in the United States. Once a prosperous mercury-mining town, Terlingua is one of Texas's ghost towns. The W. J. McDonald Observatory on Mount Locke is operated by the University of Texas. DAnnual Events The earliest version of the rodeo is supposed to have taken place in Pecos in 1884. Most Texas events combine rodeos and barbecues with elements of the Spanish fiesta. These colorful events include Laredo's Washington Birthday Celebration, a ten-day fiesta celebrated jointly with residents across the border in Mexico; and Brownsville's costume festival, known as Charro Days, held during the week before Lent. Fiesta San Antonio spans ten days in late April. This major event includes art exhibitions, coronation of King Antonio, pilgrimage to the Alamo, concerts, band festivals, and three parades. Many Texas festivals are associated with livestock auctions and state fairs. More than 600, 000 cattle move through Texas's largest livestock auction, in Amarillo. The State Fair of Texas, held in Dallas during the fall, draws more than 3 million people annually.

Traditional fair exhibits include prize livestock and horse show performances, and a huge midway. Livestock events draw more crowds to the East Texas

Fair in late September, in Tyler. Some annual events have a sports and recreation emphasis. A series of fishing competitions, including tarpon, billfish, and surf fishing tournaments, occupy Port Aransas from June to September. The July Hot Air Balloonfest in Mesquite attracts thousands of pilots and onlookers from all over the United States for the aircraft flyovers, parachute jumps, arts, crafts, and musical entertainment. The activities of Dallas' Cotton Bowl Week commence late in December and are climaxed by the New Year's Day football game. Other festivals in the state highlight the arts. The Houston International Festival each April celebrates the performing and visual arts with a ten-day outdoor festival of multicultural music, dance, arts and crafts, and food. Texas's dramatic scenery serves as the backdrop for outdoor drama in several cities. Galveston brings musicals to life at Galveston Island Outdoor Musicals; the spectacular Franklin Mountains are the backdrop for open-air McKelligon Canyon Amphitheater near El Paso. ESports and Recreation Major league professional sports teams in Texas include the Houston Astros and Texas Rangers baseball teams; the Dallas Cowboys football team; the Dallas Mavericks, Houston Rockets, and San Antonio Spurs basketball teams; and the Dallas Stars hockey team. The Babe Didrikson Zaharias Memorial Museum, near Beaumont, honors Zaharias, a leading athlete of the first half of the 20th century. The Texas Sports Hall of Fame is in Waco.

## VII GOVERNMENT

Texas is governed under a constitution adopted in 1876, as amended. Four earlier constitutions had been adopted, in 1845, 1861, 1866, and 1869. An amendment to the constitution may be proposed by the legislature. To

become effective, the amendment must be approved by a majority of people voting on the issue in an election. AExecutive The chief executive of Texas is a governor, who is elected to a term lasting four years and may be reelected any number of times. The lieutenant governor, who succeeds the governor should the latter resign, die, or be removed from office, is also elected, as are the attorney general, treasurer, comptroller of public accounts, commissioner of agriculture, and commissioner of general land office. The influential Texas Railroad Commission, made up of three people popularly elected to six-year terms, regulates the state's production of petroleum, natural gas, and coal, as well as its railroads and trucking industry. In 1998 Republican George W. Bush III was governor. BLegislative The Texas legislature is composed of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The 31 senators are popularly elected to four-year terms, and the 150 representatives are elected to two-year terms. The legislature convenes in January. CJudicial The highest tribunals in Texas are the Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals, each with nine justices popularly elected to six-year terms. The state's intermediate court of civil appeals is composed of judges popularly elected to six-year terms, and the major trial courts, called district courts, are made up of judges elected to four-year terms. Among the other tribunals in Texas are corporation courts and municipal courts. DLocal Government Texas is divided into 254 counties, more than any other state, and some 1171 cities and towns.

Each county is governed by an elected commissioners court consisting of a county judge or administrator and four commissioners. Other elected county officers include the county attorney, treasurer, sheriff, and assessor-collector

of taxes. Many of the cities used the council-manager or commissioner-manager form of government. ENational Representation Texas elects two senators and 30 representatives to the Congress of the United States. The state casts 32 electoral votes for president.

VIIIHISTORY AEarly Inhabitants Analysis of bones found near the present-day western Texas town of Midland suggests that humans lived in the area as early as 15, 000 years ago. Between 1000 BC and the arrival of Europeans several Native American cultures existed in different parts of what is now Texas. A well-developed society existed in the wooded areas of eastern Texas. Abundant rainfall allowed the inhabitants, whom archaeologists call Mound Builders, to raise corn, beans, squash, and tobacco. They built houses of poles, thatch, and mud plaster. They made beautiful pottery and used stone implements. Several mounds, each about 3. 8 m (12 ft) high and 46 m (150 ft) long, are thought to have been made by these prehistoric people. Along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico early inhabitants lived principally on seafood and practiced ceremonial cannibalism. They made pottery that was waterproofed with asphalt. In central Texas large middens, or refuse piles built up over many years, have revealed advances in technology during the Stone Age.

More advanced stone implements were found in the top layers of the refuse, and cruder ones were found at the bottom. Dwellings made of stone slabs were discovered along the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle. The people who lived there hunted and planted corn and beans. An early people, whom archaeologists call Basket Makers, settled in the Texas Panhandle and along the Pecos River. They lived in caves or built shelters of poles and



adobe mud. They made baskets, bags, and sandals from the yucca and other plants and raised corn and squash and killed game with a dart-thrower. When the first European explorers arrived, they found that the settled, agricultural Native Americans living in Texas were usually peaceful. The peoples of eastern Texas belonged to the Caddoan linguistic group and were loosely organized into two confederacies, the Caddo of the Texarkana area and the Hasinai on the upper Angelina and Neches rivers. When Spanish explorers first met the Hasinai, the Spaniards were greeted with the word *techas*, or allies. The Spanish pronounced the word as *Tejas* (Texas), and adopted it for both the area and the people. These people lived in small villages with 7 to 15 dome-shaped huts. They were accomplished farmers and raised many different crops. Deer, bears, and fish were plentiful, and these peoples sometimes made long trips to hunt buffalo. The Karankawa lived along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. They used dugout canoes to catch seafood from the lagoons along the shore, smearing their bodies with fish oil to repel mosquitoes. The Wichita and Tonkawa of central Texas hunted and planted beans and corn, but they depended less on farming than did their eastern neighbors.

The Coahuiltecan, who lived south of present-day San Antonio, ate beans, cacti, and small animals. The Lipan peoples, who were related to the Apache of the southwest United States, inhabited the western part of Texas. Late in the 18th century, bands of Comanche entered the Texas area and pushed the Apache southward. The Apache and the Comanche depended on the buffalo for food and used its hide for shelter and clothing. The Comanche, in particular, became expert horsemen. BSpanish Exploration The Spanish were

the first Europeans to explore present-day Texas. In 1519 a group led by Alonzo lvarez de Pieda mapped the coast of the Gulf of Mexico from Florida to Vera Cruz, spending 40 days at the mouth of the river they named Rio de las Palmas (probably the present-day Ro Grande). In 1528 Ivar Nuez Cabeza de Vaca and other members of an expedition led by Pniflo de Narvez were shipwrecked on the Texas coast. Cabeza de Vaca and three others made their way across Texas, wandered through what would become the southwestern United States, and in 1536 reached a Spanish settlement in Mexico. The native inhabitants told Cabeza de Vaca tales about cities full of gold and jewels, which interested the Spaniards. In 1540 an expedition led by Francisco Vsquez de Coronado marched northward from Mexico in search of these cities, called the Seven Cities of Cbola (actually a village of the Wichita in present-day Kansas) and the city of Quivira (actually a pueblo of the Zui people in present-day New Mexico). The group spent much time wandering over the Llano Estacado, or Staked Plain, of western Texas and eastern New Mexico in 1541, but found no evidence of cities full of treasure.

At about the same time, the Spanish adventurer Hernando de Soto was exploring the Mississippi River. After de Soto died of fever, his men tried to reach Mexico by an overland route. They traveled through eastern Texas, but when they reached the plains area, they turned back to the Mississippi. The Spanish lost interest in the territory after the disappointing reports of the two expeditions, although in 1598, Juan de Oate explored the area above the Ro Grande. CMission Settlements In 1682 the Spanish established the first mission in Texas at Ysleta, a village near present-day El Paso, to bring Christianity to the native peoples. In 1685 the French explorer Ren-Robert

Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, built Fort Saint Louis near Matagorda Bay and claimed for France all the lands drained by the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Soon afterwards La Salle was killed on another expedition, and the men at the fort died from disease or were killed by the native inhabitants. The French claim alarmed the Spanish, however, and they sent several expeditions to find and destroy the French fort. In 1690 churchmen from these expeditions established the first of several missions among the Tejas people of eastern Texas. The missions were difficult to maintain and were quickly abandoned. The eastern province of what was called New Spain was ignored until 1714, when a French trading expedition crossed Texas and founded a settlement on the Ro Grande near present-day Eagle Pass.

Again the Spanish were alarmed by the French activities. In 1716, fearing more French incursions into their territory, the Spanish recreated the eastern Texas mission system. More than 30 new missions were established, the most prominent of which was near San Antonio, which was founded as a Spanish town in 1718. No official boundary had ever been set between the territories claimed by Spain and those claimed by France, and when the United States bought the Louisiana territories from the French in 1803, the boundary was still unknown (see Louisiana Purchase). Spanish Decline Between 1800 and 1820 Spain's weak hold on the province of Texas became even more insecure. During that time several expeditions by adventurers from the United States entered Texas. One of the earliest of these so-called filibustering expeditions (armed invasions by groups of private citizens) was led in 1800 by Philip Nolan, who was captured and executed by the Spanish. In 1810 Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and his followers, many of whom

were in Texas, tried to declare Mexican independence from the Spanish Empire. Although that revolt was crushed, unrest in Texas and in the rest of Mexico under Spanish rule continued. Several times Mexicans seeking freedom from Spain joined American adventurers to try to set up governments in Texas. In 1813, for example, the Republican Army of the North, led by Bernardo Gutierrez, a Mexican liberal, and by Augustus W. Magee, a former United States Army officer, took control of Nacogdoches, Goliad, and San Antonio.

The leaders declared Texan independence and adopted a constitution. However, on August 18, 1813, the revolutionaries were wiped out by Spanish forces at a battle near the Medina River. In 1819 James Long of Natchez, Mississippi, led the last filibustering expedition into Texas. He captured Nacogdoches, set up a republic, and proclaimed himself president, but Spanish soldiers soon drove him out as well. Long fled to Galveston Island, the base of the French pirate Jean Laffite, to ask for Laffite's help in the revolution against Spain, but he refused. Long left Galveston to return to Texas and fight for independence. He was eventually captured and sent to prison in Mexico, where he was killed by a guard. His wife, Jane Long, had remained at Point Bolivar near Galveston when he had returned to the mainland. There she gave birth to a daughter in 1821, the first known Anglo-American birth in Texas. EAnglo-American Settlement Although Spain had claimed Texas for more than 300 years, there were only three settlements between the Ro Grande and the Sabine rivers: San Antonio, Goliad, and Nacogdoches. Spanish officials realized that more settlers were needed to prevent other countries from trying to claim the land. In 1820 Moses Austin,

a United States citizen, asked the Spanish government in Mexico for permission to settle in Texas. Austin died soon after making his request, but his son, Stephen Fuller Austin, was permitted to continue with the project in 1821. Mexico gained its independence from Spain in a revolution that same year, and Austin negotiated a contract with the new government to settle 300 families in Texas (see Mexico: War for Independence).

This was the beginning of the empresario system. Empresarios were people who contracted with the Mexican government to bring Roman Catholic settlers to Texas in exchange for 9300 hectares (23, 000 acres) of land for each 100 families that they brought. The first Anglo-American settlements were at Washington and San Felipe de Austin, on the Brazos River, and at Columbus, on the Lower Colorado River. Other American empresarios who founded colonies in Texas included Green DeWitt, Martin de Leon, and Haden Edwards, each of whom was responsible for settling several hundred families. FMexican-U. S. Friction From 1821 to 1836 the population of Texas increased from about 4000 to between 35, 000 and 50, 000 people. Most of the immigrants were from the southern United States. They only pretended to be Catholic, spoke English, did not have much respect for authority, and refused to assimilate. Most importantly, they brought black slaves with them to cultivate cotton. Mexicans, having fought only recently for their freedom from Spain, opposed slavery. The Anglo-Americans were worried about promised land titles, and as population increased, they wanted to be separate from the Mexican state of Tejas y Coahuila, to which Texas had been joined. Mexican officials, however, were usually too busy with internal political problems to give much attention to the new settlers. In 1826 the

Fredonian Rebellion, a short-lived attempt by a small group of Anglo-Americans