

United States History  
Historical Problem – Manifest Destiny

**HISTORICAL PROBLEMS**

The historical problems have students explore and evaluate topics in history. It first places the student in a historical role and position. This could be a person from a geographic region, a member of a particular ethnic/racial, religious, socio/economic, or political group. Student researches his/her position and explores a number of events, primary sources, maps, graphs, charts, statistics (these are selected by the teacher to allow the student to investigate materials relevant to the topic.) Finally the student is asked to evaluate how these materials might affect his/her role or position.

*Sample positions:*

- Empresario
- Texian
- Tejano
- Person thinking of immigrating to Texas from the US
- Slave owner in Louisiana
- Anglo land owner in Texas
- Tejano after Texan independence
- Slave being taken to Texas

**Sample Historical Problem #1:**

**Immigration from the United States**

In **1842**, a neighbor asks you, **a Tejano landowner in San Antonio**, to sign a petition requesting your local representative **to restrict further immigration into Texas from the United States**. You ask your neighbor to come back later because you wish to think about it. You gather the following information and decide to divide the information into two columns: "Arguments for banning further immigration" and "Arguments against banning further immigration." Briefly describe each item and explain why you placed it in the column. Finally will you sign the petition when your neighbor returns? Why? Why not? Why not?

- Texas Constitution (1836)
- Slavery provisions in the new constitution
- Land sales (*Possibility of selling land*)
- Indian problems
- Socio-economic status
- Mexican attitudes toward Tejanos

Texas population statistics:

	Total	Texians, Anglo	Tejano
1820			
1830			

1840			
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Immigrants to Texas by country of origin (1830, 1840):  
Europeans, Americans, Mexicans

Immigrants to Texas by occupation, skill, or experience (1830, 1840):  
Farmer, Rancher, Trader, No occupation

## **Sample Historical Problem #2**

### **The Alamo Decision**

You are an aide to Sam Houston and have been asked to help with the decision of sending troops to help at the Alamo. You gather the following information and decide to divide the information into two columns: "Arguments for sending additional troops to the Alamo" and "Arguments against sending additional troops to the Alamo" Briefly describe each item and explain why you placed it in the column. Finally will you recommend that troops be sent to the Alamo? Why? Why not?

Bexar (San Antonio) as a town – support from residents

Bexar as a strategic point on the San Antonio River

Recruiting and training of new soldiers

Reports to Sam Houston on Mexican troops and their movements and strengths

Messages from the Alamo

Santa Anna

Roles of the Tejanos and Texians