U.S-Mexican War

Causes and Effects on the Region

Picture Reveal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Predictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Learning Goal

• Discuss the causes and effects of the Mexican-American War 1846-1848 on the region.

What questions do we need to address to discuss the causes and effects? (and impact)
Evidence? (specific examples to support rationale)

Make notes using these guiding questions.

Causes of the War

1. Manifest Destiny
2. Texas Annexation by the United States
3. Boundary dispute between Mexico and the U.S. over the boundary of Texas

Manifest Destiny

• Belief that it was America’s God-given right and duty to expand west to the Pacific Coast
Manifest Destiny

- Sense of mission or national destiny.
- Believed US had mission to extend boundaries of freedom to others by sharing idealism and democratic institutions—to those capable of self-government (not Native Americans or Mexicans)
- Idea God had determined America should stretch from East Coast to Pacific.

Reasons behind Manifest Destiny

- Population Increase
- Economic depressions—1818 and 1839
- Abundance of cheap (or free) land in West.
- Expansion offered opportunities for new commerce.
- People began moving over new trails like Santa Fe Trail and Oregon Trail.

The results of Manifest Destiny....
Indian Removal

- 1830 → Indian Removal Act
- Cherokee Nation v. GA (1831)
  * “domestic dependent nation”
- Worcester v. GA (1832)
- Jackson:
  “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!”

Indian Removal

- Van Buren ordered 20,000 Cherokees removed west.
- Rounded them up into camps
- 2000 died in camps, 2000 on 800 mile journey from Georgia to Indian Territory.
- ¼ people died.
- Land they did get was inferior to land they had before.

Trail of Tears (1838-1839)
The Trail of Broken Treaties (1851-Present)

• Treaty of Fort Laramie—gave Native Americans land payments, agreed to boundaries for Native American lands.
• Within years, white settlers were already violating.
• Only first of many broken treaties.

Texas Independence

• It all starts with Texas.
• At first Mexicans encourage American settlement
• Conflicts over cultural issues, including slavery
• Americans who live there a rebellious bunch—start to clamor for independence.

The Battle of the Alamo
Remember the Alamo!

Texas Declaration of Independence

The Republic of Texas
Victory in Texas

- Santa Anna forced to sign Treaty of Velasco—1836.
- Texas becomes independent.
- Americans wait ten years to annex Texas—because of issue of slavery and to avoid war with Mexico.

Okay, back to the war—more than ten years later

Tyler and the annexation of Texas

- Harrison dies in 1841, 4 mos. into presidency
- Unpopular president
- Tyler wanted to do something before he left office to appease the people
- Made sense to annex Texas, plus threats from Britain and France.
- When Democratic Polk wins in 1844, Tyler takes that as a mandate to annex Texas.
- MEXICO ANGRY!

Texas Annexation

- By March 1845 Congress had already approved Texas Annexation
- The Republic of Texas hopes annexation will solve the republic’s financial & military problems
- Texas becomes the 28th state in December of 1845.
- Mexico reacts by cutting off all diplomatic ties with the U.S.
Texas and U.S. claim that the Rio Grande marks the southern border of Texas.

Mexican government rejects this idea and argues that the real southern border is the Nueces River.

James K. Polk

- The “dark horse” candidate from Tennessee
- Election of 1844 platform supporting the goals of Manifest Destiny
- He sent John Slidell to Mexico to find a diplomatic solution to the Texas border question and offered $25 million for the California territory.
Mexican Reaction

- Mexico refuses Slidell’s offer
- Mexican troops attack at Matamoros
- U.S. troops were ready at “the border” per Slidell’s recommendation

Review the Causes

- Conflict between the United States and Mexico from 1846 to 1848.
- United States wanted to expand across the North American continent.
- Texas War of Independence and the subsequent annexation of that area to the United States were the major triggers

Rank the Causes

*Rank the three causes we discussed. Tell why the number causes is such and why one other is not.*

*Turn to your neighbor and discuss your choices and rationale.*
Steps to War

- March 1846 – General Taylor’s troops made camp at the Rio Grande in disputed territory
- April 1846 – Mexican commander insisted U.S. troops must leave area and Taylor refused to move (Matamoros)
- Mexican forces crossed the Rio Grande and attacked group of 63 U.S. soldiers
- 8 Americans killed, 16 wounded

Steps to War

- Ambush was ammunition Polk needed
- May 11, 1846 – Polk addressed Congress
- He declared that “Mexico has shed American blood upon the American soil.”
- Two days later Congress declared war on Mexico

Support of the War

- For many Americans the war led to greater national pride
- Many people who supported the war believed it would spread republican values
- Many southerners supported the war thinking any territory won would organized into slave states
Opposition to the War

- Many members of the Whig Party thought the conflict was unjustified.
- Northern abolitionists feared any territory gained in the war might be organized into slave states.
- Illinois Congressman Abraham Lincoln wrote the “Spot Resolutions” in 1848—asking Polk to show the spot where American blood had been shed on American soil.

Polk’s War Strategy

- General Zachary Taylor invaded northern Mexico.
- General Stephen Kearny traveled west and captured Santa Fe, and supported revolt in California.
- General Winfield Scott invaded Mexico City.

Conquest of New Mexico

- Steven Kearny
  - Take New Mexico
  - Followed Santa Fe Trail
- Took Santa Fe without bloodshed
  - Brought American Rule to New Mexico
Battle of Monterey

- Zachary Taylor
  - Future U.S. President
- Monterey
  - Very bloody battle
  - Captures

Battle of San Gabriel

- Near Los Angeles
  - United States Victory
  - U.S. Takes possession of California.
- What the U.S. had once offered $25 Million for, they now took by force.

Conquest of Mexico City

- Mexico City
  - Population Center
- The attack was to convince Mexico of their loss of the Northern Territories
  - When Santa Anna loses, Polk offers him $1 Million to sign a peace treaty
    - Santa Anna refuses
- The U.S. defeats Mexico City
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

- The United States gained full title to Texas with the Rio Grande as the southern border.
- Gained California and the New Mexico territory including present day Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Colorado.
- The U.S. paid $15 million for California and New Mexico and agreed to pay Mexican debts totaling 3.25 million dollars.
Gadsden Purchase

- Santa Anna brought back, again
- In 1853, the United States purchased the southern portion of New Mexico in the Gadsden Purchase for $10 million dollars enabling the U.S. to have flat land for a connecting railroad
- Santa Anna was exiled for the last time
- Once the United States gained control of these areas, populations grew with new settlers flooding west.

Effects

- The United States gained the state of Texas, New Mexico, California, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado.
- Even though Mexico lost the battles, the positive side is that they finally had peace.
- Mexico lost much of its stability due to the uprisings that took place during and after the war and had to deal with U.S. interference.
- The war led to the disruptions in Congress and the build up of hatred between the North and South for each had a specific stance when it came to the problem of slavery.
- The United States obtained the expansion of the U.S across the North American continent.

Legacies of the U.S.-Mexican War

- “Small war” – not many lives lost
- Increased size of US by a third
- Prepared military and soldiers for Civil War
- Led to Mexican resentment
- Re-aroused issue of slavery which would lead to Civil War
  ➔ WILMOT PROVISO (no slavery in new territories)
    - Passed in House three times, failed all three times in the Senate (dominated by the South)
How did the U.S.-Mexican War impact the region?

Was the war an act of U.S. imperialism?