

PRODUCE THE PODCAST: TELL US HISTORY

Lesson Plan

Lesson 15

WEEKLY WORK:

Length: One or two approximately 5-10 -minute asynchronous video with virtual instructor each week, homework will be assigned for the rest of the week. The video will drop on Sunday nights.

LESSON 15: 1846 – 1848: The Mexican American War

Weekly Homework:

- Read about this time-period.
- Review the videos/materials
- Make a podcast episodes plan
- Worksheet: Podcast Episode 1846 - 1848

Watch the Weekly Video:

- <https://logcabinschoolhouse.com/course-catalog>

Materials:

- Your own curriculum
- Lesson Plan
- Worksheet: Podcast Episode: 1846-1848: The Mexican American War
- Podcast Episodes Planner Worksheet – to do with team

LESSON TRANSCRIPT:

Hey, Trailblazers! 🌟

Today, we're talking about the Mexican-American War—basically the 1840s version of “Whose Land Is It Anyway?” Spoiler: It's got a lot of drama, a splash of Manifest Destiny, and some serious consequences.

Alright, picture this: It's 1846. The United States is vibing with westward expansion, riding the Manifest Destiny train like it's the hottest new trend. Manifest Destiny, if you're wondering, is this belief that the U.S. had the divine right to expand all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Sounds fancy, but to some, it was just an excuse to grab more land.

Now, zoom in on Texas. It used to be part of Mexico, but in 1836, it declared itself independent—kind of like the kid who moves out but keeps borrowing your Netflix account. By 1845, Texas had joined the U.S., and Mexico? Not thrilled. Tensions were higher than a cat on a bookshelf. The U.S. said, “The border's at the Rio Grande,” and Mexico was like, “Nope, it's the Nueces River.” Cue the “Border Dispute of the Century.”

Things boiled over in April 1846 when American and Mexican troops had a skirmish near the Rio Grande. President James K. Polk—let's call him “Mr. Manifest Destiny”—was all, “They spilled American blood on American soil!” Congress declared war, and boom! The Mexican-American War kicked off.

The U.S. strategy? Classic divide-and-conquer. General Zachary Taylor, aka “Old Rough and Ready,” led troops into northern Mexico, winning big battles like Buena Vista. Meanwhile, General Winfield Scott—nicknamed “Old Fuss and Feathers” (yeah, military nicknames were *wild*)—marched into Mexico City. By 1847, Scott's forces had captured the capital, basically saying, “Game over.”

But here's the thing—this war wasn't just a land grab. It had massive consequences. In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the war. Mexico gave up about half its territory, including what's now California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. In return, the U.S. handed over \$15 million, which sounds generous until you realize how much land they got. This deal was like scoring a mansion for the price of a used car.

Now, think about this: The war fulfilled the dream of Manifest Destiny, but at what cost? Thousands died, tensions over slavery in the new territories grew, and U.S.-Mexico relations? Yeah, they were strained for *decades*.

So, Trailblazers, here's the question: Was the Mexican-American War a necessary step for growth, or a land grab at Mexico's expense? You decide.

Until next time, keep exploring the past, and remember—history's got all the drama you'll ever need! 🚀

Things to Think About: The Mexican-American War (1846–1848)

Part 1: Causes of the War

1. The Spark of Conflict

- What events or actions led to the outbreak of war between the United States and Mexico?
- How did the annexation of Texas and the dispute over the Rio Grande contribute to rising tensions?

2. Role of Manifest Destiny

- How did the belief in Manifest Destiny justify U.S. actions leading up to the war?
- What perspectives might critics of the war have had about this ideology?

Part 2: Key Battles and Strategies

1. Fighting on Two Fronts

- What were some of the major battles of the Mexican-American War, and how did they shape the outcome?
- How did the U.S. military strategy differ from that of Mexico?

2. Leaders of the Conflict

- Who were the key figures on both sides of the war, and how did they influence its course?
- How did leadership styles reflect the goals and challenges of each nation?

Part 3: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

1. Ending the War

- What were the main terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and how did it reshape North America?
- Why did Mexico agree to the treaty, and what did it lose as a result?

2. Impact on Both Nations

- How did the territorial gains from the war affect the United States politically and socially?
- What were the consequences of the war for Mexico's economy and national identity?

Part 4: Conflict and Society

1. Native American and Settler Experiences

- How did the territorial expansion following the war impact Native American tribes living in newly acquired lands?
- What opportunities and challenges did settlers face in these regions?

2. A Nation Divided

- How did the addition of new territories reignite debates over slavery in the U.S.?
- In what ways did the war deepen sectional tensions between the North and South?

Part 5: Reflection and Modern Connections

1. **Legacy of the War**
 - How does the Mexican-American War continue to influence U.S.-Mexico relations today?
 - What lessons can be drawn from this period regarding conflict and diplomacy?
2. **Expanding Frontiers**
 - How did the war shape Americans' attitudes about expansion and national identity?
 - What parallels can be drawn between the challenges of this era and modern debates about borders and inclusion?

Part 6: In-Person Discussion Activities

1. **Debate: Justified or Unjustified?**
 - Argue whether the Mexican-American War was a legitimate expansion of U.S. territory or an act of aggression.
2. **Role-Playing: Perspectives of the War**
 - Take on the role of a U.S. soldier, a Mexican citizen, or a Native American leader. Share how the war affected your life and community.
3. **Gallery Walk: Visualizing the Conflict**
 - Display maps of territorial changes, illustrations of key battles, and images of leaders. Reflect on how these visuals represent the stakes and outcomes of the war.
4. **Simulation: Peace Negotiations**
 - Imagine you are part of the peace talks at the end of the war. What compromises would you propose to balance the interests of both nations and prevent future conflict?

Socratic Discussion Questions: The Mexican-American War (1846–1848)

1. **Was the Mexican-American War justified?**
 - *Pro:* It fulfilled Manifest Destiny by expanding U.S. territory and creating opportunities for growth.
 - *Con:* It was an aggressive war that resulted in unnecessary loss of life and violated Mexican sovereignty.
2. **Did the annexation of Texas cause the Mexican-American War?**
 - *Pro:* The annexation directly provoked Mexico, as it disputed the borders and claimed territory Mexico considered its own.
 - *Con:* The war could have been avoided through diplomacy, and other factors beyond Texas contributed to the conflict.
3. **Did the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo benefit the United States?**
 - *Pro:* The treaty secured vast territories, including California and New Mexico, strengthening the U.S. economy and influence.
 - *Con:* It exacerbated tensions over slavery and led to long-term instability in U.S.-Mexico relations.
4. **Were U.S. actions during the Mexican-American War fair to Mexico?**
 - *Pro:* Supporters argue that the U.S. paid for the acquired lands and pursued a vision of progress.
 - *Con:* Critics argue that the U.S. exploited a weaker nation and unjustly seized its territory.
5. **Did Manifest Destiny play a positive role in the Mexican-American War?**
 - *Pro:* It unified the country with a shared vision of growth and opportunity.
 - *Con:* It was a justification for imperialism that disregarded the sovereignty of other nations.
6. **Were U.S. military strategies during the war ethical?**
 - *Pro:* The military strategies were effective and decisive, ensuring a swift resolution to the conflict.
 - *Con:* Some tactics, including the occupation of Mexican cities, caused undue suffering for civilians.
7. **How did the war affect Native Americans in the newly acquired territories?**
 - *Pro:* Some argue that U.S. governance brought new opportunities for trade and development.
 - *Con:* The war displaced many Native tribes and led to further loss of land and autonomy.
8. **Should President James K. Polk be praised for his role in the war?**
 - *Pro:* Polk's leadership expanded U.S. territory significantly, fulfilling his promises to the nation.
 - *Con:* His aggressive policies led to unnecessary conflict and deepened divisions over slavery.
9. **Was the war inevitable?**
 - *Pro:* Given the U.S. commitment to expansion and unresolved border disputes, war was unavoidable.
 - *Con:* Diplomatic solutions could have prevented war, but U.S. ambition escalated the situation.

10. Did the benefits of the Mexican American War outweigh its costs?

- *Pro*: The war added valuable land, expanded economic opportunities, and strengthened the U.S. position in the world.
- *Con*: The costs included the loss of life, strained relations with Mexico, and intensified sectional divisions over slavery.

CCSS:

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) do not have specific standards for U.S. History alone. However, U.S. History can be taught within the framework of the **Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies** for grades 6-12. These standards focus on developing students' abilities to read, analyze, and write about historical texts.

Here's a breakdown of the relevant Common Core Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies for grades 6-12:

Grades 6-8:

1. Key Ideas and Details

- **RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **RH.6-8.3:** Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes a law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

2. Craft and Structure

- **RH.6-8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **RH.6-8.5:** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **RH.6-8.6:** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- **RH.6-8.7:** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **RH.6-8.8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **RH.6-8.9:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

4. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- **RH.6-8.10:** By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Grades 9-10:

1. Key Ideas and Details

- **RH.9-10.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

- **RH.9-10.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **RH.9-10.3:** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 2. Craft and Structure**
- **RH.9-10.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.
 - **RH.9-10.5:** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
 - **RH.9-10.6:** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**
- **RH.9-10.7:** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **RH.9-10.8:** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
 - **RH.9-10.9:** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 4. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**
- **RH.9-10.10:** By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Grades 11-12:

- 1. Key Ideas and Details**
- **RH.11-12.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
 - **RH.11-12.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
 - **RH.11-12.3:** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- 2. Craft and Structure**
- **RH.11-12.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.
 - **RH.11-12.5:** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.
 - **RH.11-12.6:** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

3. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

- **RH.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **RH.11-12.8:** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **RH.11-12.9:** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

4. **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

- **RH.11-12.10:** By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

These literacy standards help guide the integration of U.S. History content within the Common Core framework by ensuring students develop critical reading, writing, and analytical skills relevant to understanding historical texts and contexts.

AP US History by the College Board:

Yes, there are standards for Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History (APUSH). However, these standards are developed by the College Board, not the Common Core State Standards. The AP U.S. History course framework outlines the skills and knowledge students should acquire to be successful on the AP exam and in future college-level history courses.

AP U.S. History Course Framework:

The APUSH framework is organized into nine historical periods, each with key concepts, themes, and historical thinking skills:

1. **Historical Thinking Skills:**

- **Analyzing Evidence:** Ability to analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.
- **Argument Development:** Crafting coherent historical arguments using evidence.
- **Contextualization:** Placing historical events within a broader context to understand their significance.
- **Comparison:** Comparing historical developments across time, geography, and cultures.
- **Causation:** Understanding cause-and-effect relationships in history.
- **Continuity and Change Over Time:** Identifying patterns of continuity and change over time.
- **Synthesis:** Connecting insights from different historical events or processes to develop new understandings.

2. **Thematic Learning Objectives:** APUSH is structured around seven themes that help students make connections between different historical periods:

- **American and National Identity (NAT)**
- **Work, Exchange, and Technology (WXT)**

- **Geography and the Environment (GEO)**
 - **Migration and Settlement (MIG)**
 - **Politics and Power (PCE)**
 - **America in the World (WOR)**
 - **American and Regional Culture (ARC)**
 - **Social Structures (SOC)**
3. **Key Concepts by Period:**
- **Period 1 (1491-1607):** The development of indigenous societies in North America before European contact and early European exploration and colonization.
 - **Period 2 (1607-1754):** European colonization, regional differences, and conflicts with indigenous peoples.
 - **Period 3 (1754-1800):** The American Revolution, the creation of the U.S. Constitution, and the early Republic.
 - **Period 4 (1800-1848):** The rise of American democracy, market economy, and social reforms.
 - **Period 5 (1844-1877):** Manifest Destiny, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.
 - **Period 6 (1865-1898):** Industrialization, urbanization, and the Gilded Age.
 - **Period 7 (1890-1945):** The Progressive Era, World Wars, and the Great Depression.
 - **Period 8 (1945-1980):** The Cold War, civil rights movements, and postwar prosperity.
 - **Period 9 (1980-present):** Contemporary U.S. history, including globalization, technological change, and shifts in social and political dynamics.

AP U.S. History Exam Format:

The APUSH exam assesses students' understanding of these periods, their ability to think critically, and their skills in analyzing historical evidence. The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, a document-based question (DBQ), and a long essay question (LEQ).

APUSH Skills and Practices:

- **Practice 1:** Analyzing and interpreting primary and secondary sources.
- **Practice 2:** Making historical arguments.
- **Practice 3:** Using historical evidence.
- **Practice 4:** Contextualization.
- **Practice 5:** Making connections across periods, regions, and themes.

These standards ensure that AP U.S. History students are prepared to engage in college-level historical analysis and develop a deep understanding of U.S. history across different periods and themes.