

TEACHER NOTES:

- Before the first read
 - Do [slides #1- #4](#)
- First read
 - Read aloud to students
 - Choral Read the introductory paragraph
 - Watch the video on Slide #5
- Second Read
 - Assign partners and do the fill in the blank.
 - One partner reads the solid copy while the other partner fills in the blank lines.
 - Students answer the “test questions” as partners
- Third read
 - Editing pages
- Fourth Read
 - Reading Response: [slides #6](#)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Opinion: California should have sided with Mexico



Introduction

In 1821, Mexico won its independence from Spain. Soon after, California became part of Mexico. During this time, the land was full of ranchos, farms, and small towns. The people spoke Spanish, traded goods, and celebrated fiestas. Life was slower, and families worked together to grow food and care for animals. California was far away from Mexico City, but it was still proudly part of the new Mexican nation.

Body Paragraphs

In my opinion, California should have stayed part of Mexico. One reason is that the people living here already had strong Mexican culture and traditions. In 1835, Mexican leader José María de Echeandía said, “California must not be forgotten—it is the jewel of the West.” This quote shows that Mexico cared about California and saw its value. When the United States took over after the Mexican-American War, many Californios lost their land and their language was no longer respected. Staying with Mexico could have protected their culture.

Another reason California should have stayed with Mexico is fairness. When the U.S. government took California in 1848, President James K. Polk called it “Manifest Destiny,” saying that Americans had a right to take the land. That idea sounds selfish today. This quote shows that Polk believed one nation could take land just because it wanted to. The people who already lived there didn’t get to choose. If California had stayed part of Mexico, the original families might have kept their homes, and Indigenous and Mexican people could have had more control over their own future.

Conclusion

In conclusion, California should have remained part of Mexico. The Mexican government respected the land and the people who lived here, while the United States took it for power and gold. History shows that not every “destiny” is fair—and California’s story might have been more just if it had stayed Mexican.

Partner who is reading: _____ Partner who is writing: _____

Opinion: Should California have sided with the USA or Mexico?

Introduction

In 1821, Mexico won its _____ from Spain. Soon after, California became part of Mexico. During this time, the land was full of ranchos, farms, and small towns. The people spoke Spanish, traded goods, and _____ fiestas. Life was slower, and families worked _____ to grow food and care for animals. California was far away from Mexico City, but it was still proudly part of the new Mexican nation.

Body Paragraphs

In my opinion, California should have stayed part of Mexico. One _____ is that the people living here already had strong Mexican culture and _____. In 1835, Mexican leader José María de Echeandía said, “California must not be forgotten—it is the jewel of the West.” This quote shows that Mexico cared about _____ and saw its value. When the United States took over after the Mexican-American War, many Californios lost their land and their _____ was no longer respected. Staying with Mexico could have _____ their culture.

Another reason California should have stayed with Mexico is fairness. When the U.S. _____ took California in 1848, President James K. Polk called it “Manifest Destiny,” saying that Americans had a right to take the land. That idea sounds selfish today. This _____ shows that Polk _____ one nation could take land just because it wanted to. The people who already lived there didn’t get to choose. If California had _____ part of Mexico, the original families might have kept their homes, and _____ and Mexican people could have had more control over their own future.

Conclusion

In _____, California should have remained part of Mexico. The Mexican _____ respected the land and the people who lived here, while the United States took it for power and _____. History shows that not every “destiny” is fair—and California’s story might have been more just if it had stayed Mexican.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Opinion: California should have sided with the USA

In 1821, Mexico won its freedom from Spain, and California became part of the new country of Mexico. Life in Mexican California was quiet, with big ranchos, small missions, and trading along the coast. By the 1840s, more and more settlers from the United States were moving west. They brought new tools, schools, and ideas for government. When the Mexican-American War ended in 1848, California officially became part of the United States.

In my opinion, California should have joined the United States. One reason is that joining the U.S. brought new chances for growth and democracy. President James K. Polk once said, “It is our destiny to spread freedom and civilization.” This quote shows that Americans believed their system of government and rights could help people in new territories. Both Mexico and the USA had a democracy but California, under Mexican law, was ruled by governors appointed in Mexico City and did not vote in elections. Under U.S. rule, Californians could vote and they got a state constitution, state schools, and laws that protected more people’s rights. The change helped the state develop faster.

Another reason California was better off joining the United States is opportunity. Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a senator from Missouri, said, “The East of the Old World meets the West of the New.” Senator Benton imagined sailing ships from China and Japan trading things within the US, making the US richer. This shows that Americans, in general, saw California as a bridge of trade and travel between continents. As part of the United States, California could build railroads, attract business, and connect to the rest of the country. That growth made California stronger and more important.

In conclusion, joining the United States helped California become the place it is today—a land of freedom, progress, and opportunity. While life under Mexico was peaceful, being part of the United States opened the door to new ideas, new people, and a brighter future for generations to come.

Partner who is reading: _____ Partner who is writing: _____

Opinion: California should have sided with the USA

In 1821, Mexico won its _____ from Spain, and California became part of the new country of Mexico. Life in Mexican _____ was quiet, with big ranchos, small missions, and trading along the coast. By the 1840s, more and more _____ from the United States were moving west. They brought new tools, schools, and ideas for _____. When the Mexican-American War ended in 1848, California officially became part of the United States.

In my opinion, California should have joined the United States. One _____ is that joining the U.S. brought new chances for growth and _____. President James K. Polk once said, “It is our destiny to spread freedom and civilization.” This quote shows that Americans believed their system of _____ and rights could help people in new _____. Both Mexico and the USA had a _____ but California, under Mexican law, was ruled by _____ appointed in Mexico City and did to vote in elections. Under U.S. rule, Californians could vote and they got a state _____, state schools, and laws that _____ more people’s rights. The change helped the state _____ faster.

Another reason California was better off joining the United States is _____. Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a senator from Missouri, said, “The East of the Old World meets the West of the New.” Senator Benton imagined sailing ships from China and Japan trading things within the US, making the US richer. This shows that Americans, in _____, saw California as a _____ of trade and travel between _____. As part of the United States, California could build railroads, attract _____, and connect to the rest of the country. That growth made California stronger and more _____.

In conclusion, joining the United States helped California become the place it is today—a land of freedom, progress, and opportunity. While life under Mexico was peaceful, being part of the United States opened the door to new ideas, new people, and a brighter future for generations to come.

Test Questions

Name: _____

1. In the second article, which sentence best supports the author’s opinion that joining the U.S. helped California grow?

- A. “Life in Mexican California was quiet, with big ranchos, small missions, and trading along the coast.”
- B. “Under U.S. rule, Californians could vote and they got a state constitution, state schools, and laws that protected more people’s rights.”
- C. “By the 1840s, more and more settlers from the United States were moving west.”
- D. “While life under Mexico was peaceful, being part of the United States opened the door to new ideas.”

2. In the second article, what does Senator Benton’s quote, “The East of the Old World meets the West of the New,” show about how Americans viewed California?

- A. They thought California was too far away to control.
- B. They believed California could connect the U.S. to Asia for trade and travel.
- C. They wanted to keep California isolated from other nations.
- D. They were afraid other countries might take California.

3. Both articles have the same structure. Which sentence best describes it?

- A. Each text starts with an opinion and ends with facts.
- B. Each text begins with a short history, gives two reasons with evidence, and ends with a conclusion.
- C. Each text lists important events without a main idea.
- D. Each text explains both sides but never gives an opinion.

Test ANSWERS

1. In the second article, which sentence best supports the author’s opinion that joining the U.S. helped California grow?

B. “Under U.S. rule, Californians could vote and they got a state constitution, state schools, and laws that protected more people’s rights.”

2. In the second article, what does Senator Benton’s quote, “The East of the Old World meets the West of the New,” show about how Americans viewed California?

B. They believed California could connect the U.S. to Asia for trade and travel.

3. Both articles have the same structure. Which sentence best describes it?

B. Each text begins with a short history, gives two reasons with evidence, and ends with a conclusion.

Editing

Name: _____

Directions: There are at least fourteen mistakes in the following paragraph. Please edit the following paragraph for those mistakes. Most of the mistakes are punctuation - specifically, commas.

In 1921, Mexican won it's independence from Spian. Soonafter, California become part of Mexico. During this time the land was full of ranchos farms and small towns. The people spoke Spainsh traded goods and celabreted fiestas. Life was slower and families worked together to grow food and care for animals. California was far away from Mexico City but it was still proudly part of the new Mexican nation.

Editing

Name: _____

Directions: There are at least twelve mistakes in the following paragraph. Please edit the following paragraph for those mistakes. Most of the mistakes are spelling.

In 1821, Mexico won its independence from Spain. Soon after, Califurnia became part of MEXICO. During this time, the land was full of ranchos, farms, and small towns. The people spoke spanish, traded goods, and celebrate fiestas. Life was slowest, and familyes worked together to grow food and care for animals. California was far away from mexican city, but it was stil proud lee part of the new Mexican nashun.