Claims and Control

Trace who claimed Alabama and who governed its lands.

SS24.AS.7 "Outline the chronology of Alabama's colonial history, identifying the shifting claims by imperial powers and Indigenous peoples engaged in colonial-era conflict."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each dated event, circle the power or Indigenous people involved, and number the events in order. Use your marks to track how claims changed over time.

Who Controlled the Land?

1. In 1540, Hernando de Soto's Spanish expedition entered lands now called Alabama, where Indigenous chiefdoms already governed their communities. At Mabila, a fortified town whose exact location is unknown, the expedition fought a devastating battle with local defenders. Spain claimed a right to explore and rule, but this march did not give Spain lasting control of the region. For more than a century, Indigenous peoples continued to manage their own lands and political relationships. Later, Creek towns in the interior and Choctaw and Chickasaw communities in neighboring areas negotiated, traded, and fought as European powers sought influence.

2. France made a more lasting colonial foothold when it founded Fort Louis de la Mobile in 1702, near today's Mobile. French officials built ties with nearby Indigenous communities through trade and diplomacy, but those communities made their own choices about alliances. In 1717, France built Fort Toulouse near the meeting of the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, seeking greater influence among Creek towns. These forts marked French claims, not complete French control of Alabama's interior. After France lost the Seven Years' War, the 1763 Treaty of Paris transferred its claims east of the Mississippi River, including the Mobile area, to Britain.

3. Britain placed Mobile in its colony of West Florida, while Creek towns continued to govern much of the interior. During the American Revolution, Spain captured Mobile from Britain in 1780; Britain formally ceded West Florida to Spain in 1783. The United States later disputed Spain's northern boundary and gained the disputed strip under a 1795 treaty. Conflict also shifted within Creek society: in the Creek War of 1813 to 1814, Red Stick Creeks fought U.S. forces and Creek opponents who allied with them. In 1814, the United States imposed the Treaty of Fort Jackson, taking Creek lands from both its enemies and its Creek allies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Spain's presence in 1540 differ from France's presence beginning in 1702?

2. What changed in 1763, and why did that change not give Britain complete control of Alabama's interior?

3. Trace the changes involving Mobile and West Florida from 1780 through the 1795 treaty.

4. How did the Creek War change control of land in 1814, and which Creek people lost land?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a six-sentence museum label explaining why a European claim did not always mean control of the land. Include at least three dated turning points in chronological order and name at least two Indigenous groups or factions.

ANSWER KEY

Claims and Control

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each dated event, circle the power or Indigenous people involved, and number the events in order. Use your marks to track how claims changed over time. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Spain's presence in 1540 differ from France's presence beginning in 1702?	**Spain's expedition fought at Mabila but established no lasting control. France founded a fort near Mobile in 1702 and later built Fort Toulouse.**
2	What changed in 1763, and why did that change not give Britain complete control of Alabama's interior?	**Britain received France's claims in the region, including Mobile, but Creek towns continued to govern much of the interior.**
3	Trace the changes involving Mobile and West Florida from 1780 through the 1795 treaty.	**Spain captured Mobile from Britain in 1780 and received West Florida in 1783. A 1795 treaty gave the United States the disputed strip along Spain's northern boundary.**
4	How did the Creek War change control of land in 1814, and which Creek people lost land?	**The United States imposed the Treaty of Fort Jackson and took Creek land from both Red Stick enemies and Creek allies.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A claim to land was not the same as governing the people who lived there. In 1540, Spanish soldiers fought defenders at Mabila, but their expedition left no lasting Spanish government. France founded a fort near Mobile in 1702, while Creek towns and Choctaw communities made their own choices about alliances. Britain received France's regional claims in 1763, and Spain captured Mobile from Britain in 1780. During the Creek War of 1813 to 1814, Red Stick Creeks fought U.S. forces and Creek opponents. The 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson then took land from Creek allies as well as enemies.

Accept accurate descriptions that distinguish an imperial claim from Indigenous governance. In the museum label, check for six sentences, at least three correctly ordered dated events, and two named Indigenous groups or factions.