

Two Texas Documents

Read how two documents shaped Texas government.

4.13.A “identify the purposes and explain the importance of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Texas Constitution;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence that tells the purpose of each document. Circle two details that show why the documents were important.

Texas Claims Independence and Sets Rules

- ① In March 1836, delegates met at Washington-on-the-Brazos. They wrote the Texas Declaration of Independence. Its purpose was to announce that Texas would no longer be part of Mexico. The declaration listed complaints, called grievances, about the Mexican government's actions. By stating reasons for separating, the document explained to Texans and other nations why Texans wanted a free and independent republic.
- ② Texas later became a state. The Texas Constitution, adopted in 1876, is the state's basic plan for government. Its purpose is to set rules for how Texas is governed. It describes the jobs and limits of the governor, Legislature, and courts. It also protects important rights, including freedom of speech and religion. Texans can use the constitution to understand what their state government may and may not do.
- ③ These documents matter for different reasons. The Declaration of Independence gave Texas a public statement that it was leaving Mexico and explained why. The Texas Constitution is important because it provides rules for state government and limits its power. Together, they show how Texans claimed independence and how a government should serve its people fairly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What was the purpose of the Texas Declaration of Independence?

2 How did the list of grievances help explain why Texans wanted independence?

3 What is the purpose of the Texas Constitution? Name one part of government it describes.

4 Why are both documents important to Texas?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Pretend your town is forming its own government. Write four sentences that explain what its declaration would say, what its constitution would do, and why both documents would matter.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence that tells the purpose of each document. Circle two details that show why the documents were important. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What was the purpose of the Texas Declaration of Independence?	Its purpose was to announce that Texas would no longer be part of Mexico.
2	How did the list of grievances help explain why Texans wanted independence?	The grievances gave reasons for separating from Mexico and explained the choice to Texans and other nations.
3	What is the purpose of the Texas Constitution? Name one part of government it describes.	Its purpose is to set rules for how Texas is governed. It describes the jobs and limits of the governor, Legislature, or courts.
4	Why are both documents important to Texas?	The declaration announced and explained Texas independence. The constitution provides rules for state government and limits its power.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town's declaration would announce that our town will govern itself and give reasons for the change. Its constitution would set rules for choosing leaders and making fair laws. The declaration would tell others why our town made this choice. The constitution would help leaders use their power fairly and protect people's rights.

Accept equivalent explanations that distinguish the declaration's role in claiming independence from the constitution's role in organizing and limiting government. For the open response, accept a clear four-sentence plan that includes both documents and their importance.