

Texas Through Eras

Read how historians organize Texas history into meaningful periods.

7.1.A "identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, and explain the purpose of dividing the past into eras, including Natural Texas and its People; Age of Contact; Spanish Colonial; Mexican National..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each bold era name, then write 1 through 12 beside the names in chronological order to show how historians organize Texas history.

Why Texas History Has Eras

- ① Historians divide Texas's long past into eras, or sections of time with shared conditions and major changes. This helps people organize events, compare causes and effects, and see both change and continuity. **Natural Texas and its People** describes the land and the Native peoples who adapted to its regions before Europeans arrived. The **Age of Contact** began when Europeans and Native peoples met, bringing exchange, conflict, and disease. During the **Spanish Colonial** era, Spain claimed Texas and built missions, presidios, and settlements. The **Mexican National** era began after Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821.
- ② The **Revolution and Republic** era includes Texas's fight for independence and the Republic of Texas, an independent nation from 1836 to 1845. **Early Statehood** started when Texas joined the United States. The era called **Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction** includes secession, war, emancipation, and the difficult rebuilding years. In **Cotton, Cattle, and Railroads**, farming, ranching, and rail lines connected towns to markets. These labels focus attention on dominant forces, but they do not mean every Texan had the same experience.
- ③ The **Age of Oil** began in 1901, when the Spindletop discovery showed how petroleum could reshape jobs, cities, and state wealth. **Texas in the Great Depression and World War II** covers economic hardship in the 1930s and wartime training, factories, and military bases in the 1940s. The **Civil Rights** era includes struggles to end segregation and expand equal rights. **Contemporary Texas** examines recent decades of growth, diversity, technology, and ongoing challenges. Era boundaries are useful guideposts, not sharp lines. Changes often begin before an era and continue afterward.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 According to the passage, what are two purposes of dividing Texas history into eras?

2 Which era came after Spanish Colonial, and what political change began it?

3 Name two defining characteristics of **Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction**.

4 How did the Age of Oil differ from Texas in the Great Depression and World War II?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose three era names from the passage: one from before 1821, one from 1821 to 1900, and one after 1900. For each row, give a defining characteristic and explain how it helps distinguish that era from a different era.

ERA NAME	DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC	HOW IT DISTINGUISHES THE ERA

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each bold era name, then write 1 through 12 beside the names in chronological order to show how historians organize Texas history. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	According to the passage, what are two purposes of dividing Texas history into eras?	Eras help people organize events and compare causes and effects. They also help people see change and continuity.
2	Which era came after Spanish Colonial, and what political change began it?	Mexican National came after Spanish Colonial. It began after Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821.
3	Name two defining characteristics of Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction .	Accept any two: secession, war, emancipation, or difficult rebuilding years.
4	How did the Age of Oil differ from Texas in the Great Depression and World War II?	The Age of Oil began with the 1901 Spindletop discovery and petroleum's effects on jobs, cities, and wealth. Texas in the Great Depression and World War II included 1930s hardship and 1940s wartime training, factories, and military bases.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

ERA NAME	DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC	HOW IT DISTINGUISHES THE ERA
Natural Texas and its People	Native peoples adapted to Texas regions before Europeans arrived.	It distinguishes life before European contact from later eras of contact and colonization.
Revolution and Republic	Texas fought for independence and was an independent nation from 1836 to 1845.	It distinguishes Texas as a republic from the Mexican National and Early Statehood eras.
Civil Rights	Texans struggled to end segregation and expand equal rights.	It distinguishes rights movements from eras focused mainly on oil, war, or railroads.

Accept equivalent descriptions that match the passage and correct era titles. For the open table, students may choose different valid eras as long as their dates, characteristics, and distinctions are accurate.