These high school lessons combine geographical and historical perspectives to help students consider how location influences how we view the past. Specifically designed for students who live along the border with Mexico, the lessons employ a variety of activities that require students to analyze relevant materials, formulate an informed opinion, and articulate their thoughts both individually and as a group via written responses and a debate format.

Focus/Summary
The purpose of this lesson is for students to study American History from a South Texas and Mexican American perspective. Beginning with the Adams-Onis Treaty and ending with current events and Mexican American Identity in the United States, students will examine the course of history from a different viewpoint than most textbooks present. As wars were fought, treaties were signed, and settlement occurred, the culture, politics, and power structure of what is now South Texas evolved. Through the following lesson extensions, student will examine how these changes occurred and where they, from recent immigrants to Americans whose families have been in the United States for centuries, fit into American History.

Texas State Standards
3. History. The student understands the political, economic, and social changes in the United States.
   D. describe the optimism of the many immigrants who sought a better life in America

13. Geography. The student understands the causes and effects of migration and immigration on American society. The student is expected to:
   A. analyze the causes and effects of changing demographic patterns resulting from migration within the United States, including western expansion and rural to urban
   B. analyze the causes and effects of changing demographic patterns resulting from legal and illegal immigration to the United States.

Guiding Questions
How did the Adams-Onis Treaty and Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo impact the culture and politics of South Texas as well as the United States? What challenges arise when borders move or become permeable?

How do settlement efforts such as Stephen F. Austin’s 500 Families (6/14/1824) compare and contrast with Mexican immigration throughout the 20th and 21st centuries? How does who has power affect the quality of life of migrants?

Resources
Dialetical Journal Document G (at least 5 entries from reading material)


Day 1 (50 Minutes)

Engage
Start class by having students freehand a map of the United States and Mexico. (3 minutes)
Have students pair up and share their maps with one another (2) minutes.
Show students Image A on the projector. Give students an opportunity to read the sign and think
about what it might mean.

Project the following question on the board:
"Has the border between the United States and Mexico always been in the same place?"
Have students write out response to the question quietly. After 1 minute project the next questions
"Does it matter if the border has moved? What might have caused the border to move? What
happens to the people when the border moves"
Allow students 3 more minutes to think about these questions and write their thoughts. Encourage
them to come up with examples if they can or write out their own questions. Push them to think
about the “what if” if they can’t think of historical examples. (5 minutes total)

Have students share with a partner what they wrote. (2 minute) Have students call out responses to
the question or new questions they developed. They can call out their response or their partners
response. (3 minutes)

Short Lecture. Explain to students that the border between the United States and Mexico has
changed over time. Show them Map B and C. (7 minutes)

Divide students into mixed ability groups of three and assign roles (reader, timekeeper, and
recorder). Hand out Document D, Articles II and III of the Adams-Onis Treaty and APPARTS
Document Analysis Worksheet. Give students 15 minutes to work through the Treaty and complete
the worksheet.

Read Document E, summary of the Treaty, as a class. Give students an opportunity to fill in any
missing information, ask questions and clarify their understanding of the Treaty.

Introduction of Final Project: Textbook Chapter for American History Book about Influence of Rio
Grande Valley on American Politics and Identity

Assessment: Students will present excerpts of their textbook chapter to the class as well as turn in
a final copy of their textbook chapter. Students will be evaluated in terms of their abilities to
support their assertions and opinions with evidence from the texts. Their textbook chapters will be
assessed in terms of three criteria: the apparent depth of their understanding of the history of the
Rio Grande Valley (changing borders, populations and culture, political structure and important
people, economic structure and important industries), the clarity of their assertions and logic of
their reasoning, and the amount of effort they appear to have put into the assignment. See the
attached rubric for further details. The methods used to assess the students’ contributions to the
class discussion and their written assignments will help teachers to determine what skills the students need to continue building, what concepts they already understand, and what ideas they need to spend more time working on.

**Rubric for Textbook Chapter Activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PROFICIENCIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content (65 total points)</strong></td>
<td>The students’ chapter demonstrates a clear command of the topic and assignment at hand. They address all aspects of the task and reveal a thorough understanding of the history of the Rio Grande Valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization (25 total points)</strong></td>
<td>The students’ claims are fully articulated and richly supported by evidence from a variety of primary and secondary source documents. Their chapter is logically structured, maintains focus, and includes worthwhile and relevant information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effort (10 total points)</strong></td>
<td>The students’ chapter is at least four pages in length, grammatically sound, and well written. It includes at least four visuals and a bibliography, engages the audience, and holds their attention throughout. It is clear that they have put a considerable amount of thought and effort into the assignment.</td>
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**Closure**

3Ws. Students will answer the following questions on a note card and turn in before they leave.
1. What did we learn today?
2. So what (why is important)?
3. Now what (where are we going with this, how does this fit in, what’s next)?

Dialetical Journal **Document G** (at least 5 entries from reading material)
Day 2 (50 minutes)

Engage
Four corners: Write the following quotations about immigration on big pieces of paper/big post-it notes. Hang papers around the room

“Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists.”

“A nation that cannot control its borders is not a nation.”

“I take issue with many people's description of people being "Illegal" Immigrants. There aren't any illegal Human Beings as far as I'm concerned.”

“There is no great difference in the reality of one country or another, because it is always people you meet everywhere. They may look different or be dressed differently, or may have a different education or position. But they are all the same. They are all people to be loved. They are all hungry for love.”

Have students stand up and walk about the classroom, reading each quotation silently. After four minutes have students go stand by the quotation that they are most intrigued by or identify most with. Give students the opportunity to talk to other group members about their choices. (7 minutes total)

Have students return to their seats and take out their map from Day 1. Ask them when the borders changed and when South Texas became part of the United States. Have students write their answer in journal. (2 Minutes)

Show students Document H, Stephen F. Austin issues a land title to a Texas Colonist. Have them use the analyzing the visual graphic organizer (Document I)
Also have students think about the following questions and use their background knowledge and the visual to make an inference about Anglo-American Colonization of Texas.

1. Who is Stephen Austin?
2. Is he American? Spanish?
3. Why/How does he have the power to grant land in Texas? Who might have given him this power?
4. What else do you know about Texas History that might help you analyze this visual? (10 Minutes)

Have students share answers with another group and then call out answers to whole class. Have one students make a list to project to the class. (7 Minutes)

Divide students into groups of three. Assign roles. Give each student Transcript of Second Colony Contract Authorizing Stephen F. Austin to Settle 500 Catholic Families in the State of Coahulia and Texas, June 4, 1825.

Give students the APPARTS worksheet to complete and project the following guiding questions for them to think about.
1. What types of people were allowed in the colony? What types of people were excluded?
2. What land was Austin allowed to grant? What region was to remain in control of the Spanish?
3. What types of organizations and institution was Austin supposed to establish? What was his role in these organizations and institutions after they were founded?
4. What language was supposed to be used for official communication and in institutions?

(15 Minutes)

Give students five minutes to read individually:

Short lecture on Anglo American Colonization in Texas. (5 minutes) Provide students with note taking expectations or teacher created graphic organizer.
For more information, see teacher notes at Focus on Texas History: Anglo America Colonization in Texas: http://www.cah.utexas.edu/texashistory/annex/anglo/index.php?s=2#top

Closure:
Key Ideas: Students list key ideas of lesson and why they were important.

Dialetical Journal Document G (at least 5 entries from reading material)
**Day 3 (50 minutes)**

**Engage**

Project the following quote as well as a **Map J** of the United States and Mexico after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

"The [Mexican] race is perfectly accustomed to being conquered, and the only new lesson we shall teach is that our victories will give liberty, safety, and prosperity to the vanquished, if they know enough to profit by the appearance of our stars. To liberate and ennoble not to enslave and debase is our mission. Well may the Mexican nation, whose great masses have yet tasted liberty, prattle over their lost phantom of nationality. . . . If they have not in the profound darkness of their vassal existence the intelligence and manhood to accept the ranks and rights of freeman at our hands, we must bear their ignorance. But there is no excuse for the man educated under our institutions, who talks of 'wronging the Mexicans' when we offer them a position infinitely above any they have occupied, since their history began, and in which, for the first time, they may aim at the greatness and dignity of a truly republican and self-governing people." --New York Sun, October 22, 1847

Instruct students to examine the changes on the map as well as the opinion put forth by the New York Sun about Mexicans in 1847.

1. Which country benefitted more from the treaty in terms of land? Are there any interesting borders or changes?
2. Where does the Rio Grande Valley fit into the changing borders?
3. What is the tone of the New York Sun excerpt? What do you think the purpose of the excerpt is?
4. What is the author of the excerpt arguing? Are there phrases you’ve heard before being used in a new way?
5. Is this excerpt negative or positive? Does it depend on your point of view?

Have students share their responses with a partner. (7 minutes for map/quote/discussion total)

Divide students into groups of two and give each student a copy of **Document K** - Articles XIII and IX of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Have an even number of groups read each Article, using the following questions as a guide.

1. The border has suddenly moved. What happened to the people living in this region? Did they remain Mexicans or did they suddenly become Americans? Were they given a choice?
2. Is this really more complicated than which country you are a citizen of? What about culture, politics, etc.? What changes there?
3. What happened to their property? What types of things do you think they are referring to when they talk about property? (10 minutes)

After the partners have read and analyzed their article, have them pair up with a group that read a different article (Expert Jigsaw) and explain their findings (5 minutes)

Give students copies of excerpt from Griswold del Castillo concerning **Botiller vs. Dominguez (1883)** Supreme Court Case.

Have students read the excerpt and consider the following questions:

1. Did the United States uphold the promises made in Articles XIII and IX in the Treaty? (give examples)
2. What was the Supreme Court’s reason for their decision in *Botiller vs. Dominguez*?
3. What effect do you think the loss of land had on Mexican Americans in the 1800s and beyond?

(15 Minutes)

**Closure:** History Frame for Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (students may also choose to incorporate Anglo-American Settlement of Treaty and Adams-Onis Treaty) with a partner.

(10 Minutes)

**Homework:**  
Dialetical Journal **Document G** (at least 5 entries from reading material)
Days 5/6

Field Trip to Museum of South Texas History

Focus on Rio Grande Legacy Exhibit which includes Spanish colonial treasure, battlefield relics, and artifacts from the region's heydays as a steamboat route and, later, a cattle kingdom. [http://mosthistory.org/Exhibitions](http://mosthistory.org/Exhibitions)

**Historical Tour of Rio Grande City, Texas**, which is one of the oldest settlements in South Texas. In 2001, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Los Caminos del Rio to its list of 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. [http://www.cityofrgc.com/historicsites.html](http://www.cityofrgc.com/historicsites.html)

Students will explore the [Tejano Voices: University of Texas at Arlington Center for Mexican American Studies Oral History Project](http://library.uta.edu/tejanovoice/gallery.php) and include a biography of at least one interviewee from Region 10 (Edinburg, McAllen, San Benito, and Harlingen) in their Textbook Chapter Project. [http://library.uta.edu/tejanovoice/gallery.php](http://library.uta.edu/tejanovoice/gallery.php)
Map B

Mexico and the United States before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
Map C

Mexico and the United States after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPARTS: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUTHOR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PLACE AND TIME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PRIOR KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>AUDIENCE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REASON</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THE MAIN IDEA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SIGNIFICANCE</strong></td>
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The Adams-Onís (or Florida) Treaty, signed on February 22, 1819, by John Quincy Adams for the United States and by Louis de Onís for Spain, renounced the United States claim to Texas. It fixed the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase as beginning at the mouth of the Sabine River and running along its south and west bank to the thirty-second parallel and thence directly north to the Río Roxo, or Red River, "then following the course of the Río Roxo westward to the degree of longitude 100 west from London and 23 from Washington; then, crossing the said Red River, and running thence, by a line due north, to the river Arkansas; thence, following the course of the southern bank of the Arkansas to its source, in latitude 42 north; and thence by that parallel of latitude to the South Sea. The whole being as laid down in Melish’s map of the United States".

Map F
Document G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE MATERIAL</th>
<th>PAGE #</th>
<th>RESPOND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Provide a direct quotation or paraphrase and put a parenthetical citation)</td>
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<td>(Why do you find this passage interesting or important?)</td>
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In addition to the original land grant he received, Austin obtained three more contracts to settle a total of 900 additional families.

**Document I - People, Objects, Activities: Analyzing a Visual Graphic Organizer**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
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What inference can you make about this visual?
ARTICLE VIII
Mexicans now established in territories previously belonging to Mexico, and which remain for the future within the limits of the United States, as defined by the present treaty, shall be free to continue where they now reside, or to remove at any time to the Mexican Republic, retaining the property which they possess in the said territories, or disposing thereof, and removing the proceeds wherever they please, without their being subjected, on this account, to any contribution, tax, or charge whatever.

Those who shall prefer to remain in the said territories may either retain the title and rights of Mexican citizens, or acquire those of citizens of the United States. But they shall be under the obligation to make their election within one year from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty; and those who shall remain in the said territories after the expiration of that year, without having declared their intention to retain the character of Mexicans, shall be considered to have elected to become citizens of the United States.

In the said territories, property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States.

ARTICLE IX
The Mexicans who, in the territories aforesaid, shall not preserve the character of citizens of the Mexican Republic, conformably with what is stipulated in the preceding article, shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States. and be admitted at the proper time (to be judged of by the Congress of the United States) to the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of the United States, according to the principles of the Constitution; and in the mean time, shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property, and secured in the free exercise of their religion without restriction.