



**Dear Educator,**

Here at the Alamo, we know that your time is precious, and we appreciate the work you do in educating our future leaders, innovators, and thinkers. Therefore, we have created this TEKS aligned lesson plan to be utilized in your classroom, so that you can spend more time doing what you love – teaching our youth. Please feel free to use this guide as you see fit, and let us know if you have any questions or suggestions by emailing us at: **education@thealamo.org**.

**Sincerely,**

**The Alamo Education Department**

## WHY DE ZAVALA?

Lorenzo de Zavala allows students a perfect view of the motivations for the Texas Revolution from inside Mexico. Not only does the brilliant Zavala provide a fascinating character study, he helped to shape our great state. From his hand in colonization to his mark on the Texas Constitution and Declaration of Independence, he has earned his place in Texas history.



## TEKS Alignment

### Grade 4 Social Studies

- (2) D, E
- (3) A
- (7) A
- (8) A
- (14) B
- (15) A
- (17) D
- (21) C

### Grade 7 Social Studies

- (1) A, B, C
- (2) D, F
- (3) B, C
- (4) A
- (8) A
- (9) A, B
- (11) A
- (17) C
- (18) A



# BIOGRAPHY

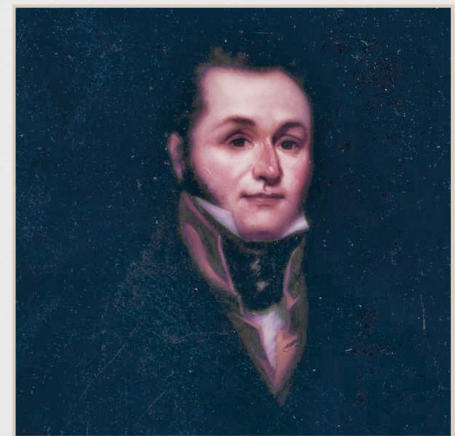
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Manuel Lorenzo Justiniano de Zavala y Sáenz was born in New Spain (what would become Mexico) on October 3, 1788 – squarely between the ratification of the United States Constitution and the French Revolution. He was born into revolutionary times and into the state of **Yucatán** known for its independent spirit. It was an auspicious time and place for a man who would help craft two constitutions and two republics in his life.

Zavala attended school in Mérida – the capital of Yucatán. He excelled, but at nineteen, his education ended because his family did not have the means to send him to university. Shortly thereafter, he entered into what is believed to be an arranged marriage.

However, **Zavala** was not meant for obscurity. He had been interested in politics during school and began writing articles criticizing the Spanish government. A new constitution was adopted in 1812 that allowed for freedom of speech, and Zavala and his political friends took advantage of this new liberty.

Unfortunately, the government soon took away the newly granted freedoms, and Zavala, as one of the reformation's most outspoken champions, was sent to **prison at the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa** in 1814. Zavala used the time in prison to teach himself English, and he read enough medical textbooks to be qualified to practice medicine – which he proceeded to do when he was released from prison as a means to support his family.



Lorenzo de Zavala



Fortress San Juan de Ulúa





King Ferdinand VII



Stephen F. Austin

The Constitution of 1812 was restored in 1820 after a revolt in Spain, but Zavala proved more cautious after his prison stay. Rather than throwing his weight behind an independent Mexico, Zavala supported the Spanish monarch, **King Ferdinand VII**, by stating “If the king will protect our rights, we will obey him, but if he will not, then we must secure our independence.” Ultimately, the king’s refusal to recognize the constitution led Zavala to more strongly advocate independence.

After Mexico achieved independence in 1821, Zavala was elected as a deputy of the constituent congress in Mexico City. He took the time to ask his constituents what they were hoping for in a new government and was assigned to several committees – including one on colonization. This assignment foreshadowed his future as it introduced Zavala to foreign settlers wishing to settle Texas including **Stephen F. Austin**.

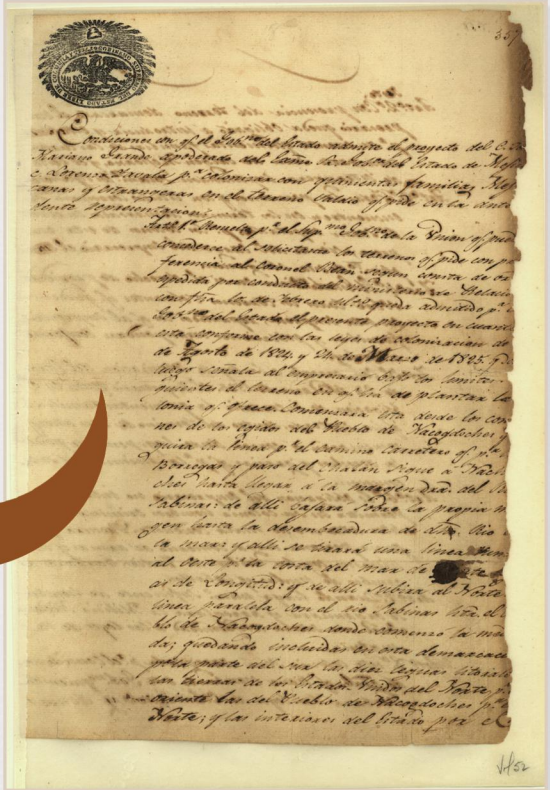
The revolutionary ideas he had proclaimed in Yucatán were brought to fruition when he helped craft the Mexican Constitution of 1824 – the same constitution that rebel Texians would praise a decade later after it was replaced with a more harsh and controlling form of government led by the centralists. For now, a federalist government, which brought more power to the people, reigned.



After serving as a deputy, Zavala became a senator from Yucatán, and in 1827, he became the governor of the State of Mexico (the area around Mexico City). He made changes in hopes of improving libraries, schools, roads, and land rights for Native Americans. As Zavala had little income in his role as governor, he applied for an **empresario contract** in Texas.

**Empresario Contract**

Empresarios were granted large amounts of land under Mexican law with the intention of settling the land with colonists.



Zavala's Texas empresario contract

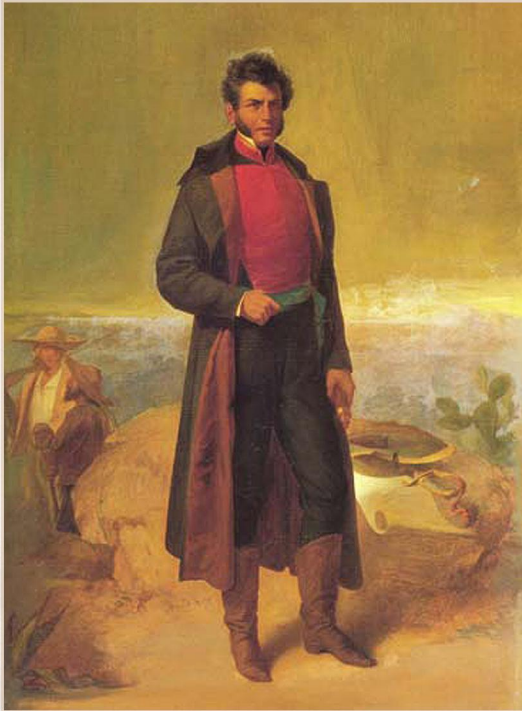
Unfortunately for Zavala, the political climate of Mexico changed once again after the firestorm of the second Mexican presidential election in 1828. Though Zavala attempted to remain neutral, the president-elect, Gómez Pedraza, put out orders for his arrest, forcing Zavala into hiding. He then worked with Vicente Guerrero and **Antonio López de Santa Anna** to overthrow Pedraza. In 1829, Guerrero became president, and Zavala was made secretary of the treasury and reinstated to his governorship.

The centralists, who wanted to return more power to the army officers, clergy, and land owners, made his governmental roles difficult, and an even deeper cut came when his native state of Yucatan rebelled. Zavala was sent to try to quell it, but he was arrested, told to leave, and given the message that he would be shot if he returned.

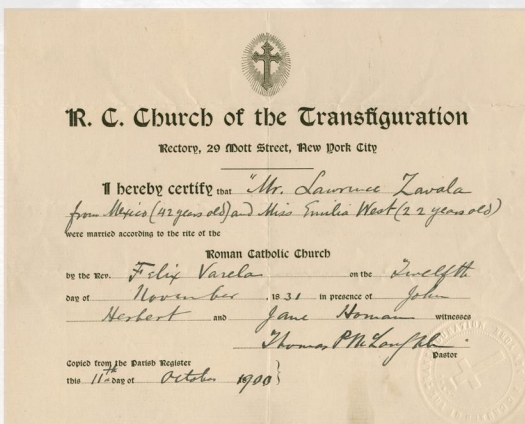


Antonio López de Santa Anna





President Vicente Guerrero



Copy of Zavala and Emily West's marriage certificate



It was the beginning of the end for the federalist government as **President Guerrero** was executed shortly thereafter, and Zavala was held and tried before being cleared of all charges and leaving the capital in May of 1830 to go into exile.

At the age of forty-one, Lorenzo de Zavala was leaving Mexico without his wife and daughter, and had few prospects. His oldest child, Lorenzo Jr., was in school in New York. The only property he still possessed was his empresario contract in Texas. Zavala sailed to New York to reunite with his son. While there, he met **Emily West, whom he later married** after his first wife died.

As proven by the tumultuous years following Mexico's independence, all Zavala had to do was wait for the government in Mexico to change once again. In 1832, General Santa Anna revolted against centralist President Bustamante. Zavala decided it was time to return to his home country, and after his arrival, he was reappointed to his place as governor of the State of Mexico.

By late November 1833, Zavala was named as minister to France. Little did he know when he traveled to **Paris**, he would never return to **Mexico City**, and trouble from home soon began to cloud Zavala's work. In April, Santa Anna rejected the federalist reforms he had allowed his vice-president, Valentín Gómez Farías, to enact. Zavala was so disgusted with Santa Anna's new centralist government, that he resigned his position in August of 1834. Zavala wasn't the only one upset by this sudden change – many Texas citizens agreed with the Mexican politician.

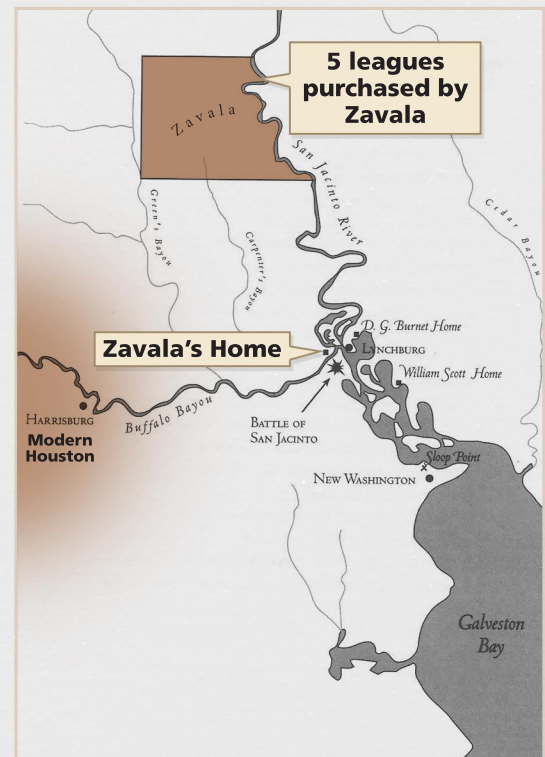


Zavala's thoughts turned to independent-minded Texas and the land he owned there. He knew that it was unsafe to return to Mexico, although the government was ordering him to do so. Lorenzo Jr. went ahead of the family to Texas and found a **home for the family at the junction of Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River** – just across the river from where the famous battle would take place. After stopping in New Orleans to meet with other exiled Mexican officials, Zavala himself arrived in Texas in July of 1835. The territory was in an uproar after hearing of Santa Anna's atrocities in another Mexican state, Zacatecas.

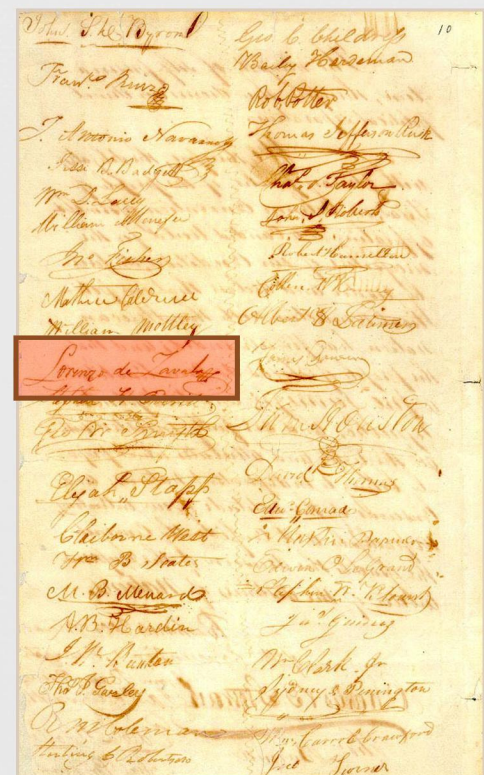
Zavala wasted no time joining in Texian politics. He wrote letters to leading figures, and when Stephen F. Austin returned to Texas from his prison stay in Mexico, Zavala joined him in San Felipe. Zavala was named one of five Harrisburg delegates to the October 1835 Consultation where he was made a member of the Permanent Council, and in February of 1836, Zavala was voted as one of the delegates from Harrisburg to the convention at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

While there, Zavala stayed with William Fairfax Gray, José Antonio Navarro, and José Francisco Ruiz. Gray would go on to describe Zavala as “the most interesting man in Texas.”

On March 2, 1836, **Zavala signed the Texas Declaration of Independence** along with Navarro and Ruiz – the three signers of Mexican descent. He was then placed on the committee to craft a new constitution – putting his experience to good use.

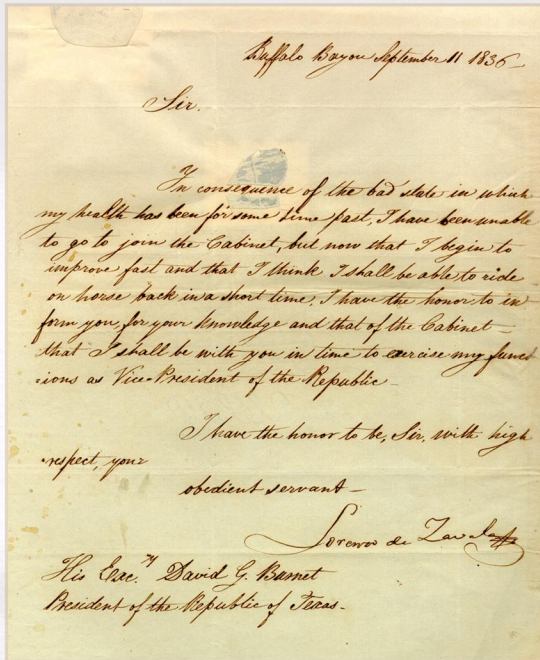


Zavala's Texas home

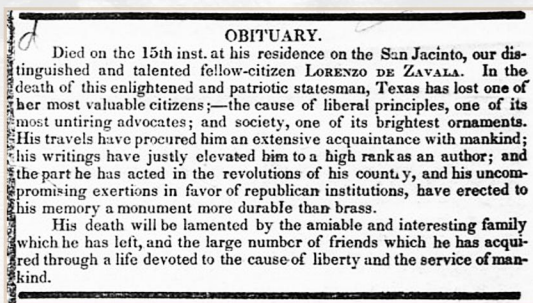


Texas Declaration of Independence signed by Zavala





Letter from Vice-President Zavala to President David Burnet



Zavala's Obituary

his predecessor in his inauguration speech saying “Governor Zavala has been the unwavering and consistent friend of liberal principles and free government.”

In a devastating turn of events, Zavala and his son Augustine were out in a boat when their vessel overturned. Zavala placed his son on the capsized boat and swam to shore. He developed pneumonia and died on November 15, 1836. The Texas Senate adjourned for the day when they heard the news, and the **Telegraph and Texas Register wrote a touching obituary.** “In the death of this enlightened and patriotic statesman, Texas has lost one of her most valuable citizens; - the cause of liberal principles, one of its most untiring advocates; and society, one of its brightest ornaments.”

A few days later, the members of the convention received word of the fall of the Alamo. This put a new and very serious timeline on the drafting of the constitution as Santa Anna was headed their way. It was completed on March 16th 1836, and the very next day, Zavala was elected as the **interim Vice-President of the Republic of Texas.**

With Santa Anna closing in on them, the provisional government was forced to flee on April 16. However, the chase came to a satisfying end when the Texians achieved victory at the Battle of San Jacinto five days later. The Zavalas were well represented at the victory as Lorenzo Jr. fought in the battle of San Jacinto and acted as an interpreter for Sam Houston at the surrender of Santa Anna, and the nearby Zavala home was used as a hospital.

Zavala returned to San Jacinto on April 24 and served as the translator during treaty negotiations with Santa Anna at Velasco. After the election of Sam Houston and Mirabeau B. Lamar as president and vice-president of the new republic, Lamar honored





# LORENZO DE ZAVALA TIMELINE

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- 1788** – Lorenzo de Zavala is born in **Tecoh, Yucatán, Mexico**.
- 1807** – Zavala finishes his formal education.
- 1808** – Zavala marries Teresa Josefa Correa y Correa.
- 1814** – Zavala is imprisoned for his outspoken politics and writings.
- 1817** – After his release from prison, Zavala begins practicing medicine.
- 1820** – Zavala is nominated as a Yucatán deputy and sails to **Madrid, Spain**.
- 1821-1822** – After Mexican Independence is declared, Zavala returns to **Mexico City, Mexico** and is elected a deputy of the constituent congress.
- 1824** – Zavala is elected as a senator from Yucatán and helps draft the Constitution of 1824.
- 1827** – Zavala is elected as governor of the State of Mexico.
- 1828** – Zavala applies for an empresario contract in Texas.
- 1829** – After the turmoil of the second Mexican presidential election, Zavala is reinstated to his governorship and given the position of secretary of the treasury.
- 1830** – Zavala flees Mexico and sails to **New York, U.S.A.** to reunite with his son, Lorenzo Jr.
- 1831** – Zavala marries Emily West Cresswell after the death of his first wife.
- 1832** – Zavala returns to Mexico and is reappointed as governor of the State of Mexico.
- 1833** – Zavala is named minister to **France**.
- 1834** – In response to Santa Anna's governmental changes, Zavala resigns as minister to France.
- 1835** – Zavala arrives in **Texas**, is named a Harrisburg delegate to the October Consultation, and is made a member of the Permanent Council.
- 1836** – Zavala is voted as one of the delegates from Harrisburg to the Washington-on-the-Brazos convention, signs the Texas Declaration of Independence, helps craft the Texas Constitution, is elected as interim Vice-President of the Republic of Texas, and dies after developing pneumonia at the end of the year.



# ZAVALA'S LOCATIONS

Use this 1814 map of the Americas to follow Lorenzo de Zavala's life. The red stars indicate important locations in his life. Use the **words in red** on your timeline to determine the order of his travels, and use the other maps and reading as aids to mark his journey in order with a pen or marker.



# TEXAS REVOLUTION PERSPECTIVES

When Lorenzo de Zavala came to Texas, he quickly gained the respect and trust of the Texians. Within a few short months, he was the Vice-President, he signed the declaration of independence, and he helped to draft the constitution. In the chart below, list his many qualifications (training, experience, education, etc.), and then write how he used those skills during his time in Texas.

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**QUALIFICATION****USE IN TEXAS**

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# THE TEXAS NAVY STEAMSHIP

## ZAVALA

When Sam Houston became the first elected president of the Republic of Texas from 1836-1838, he had little interest in spending money that the Republic did not have on a navy. However, when the presidency was turned over to Mirabeau B. Lamar in 1838, the fate of the Texas Navy took a very different turn. It was during his tenure that the name Zavala became part of Texas history once again. As the only steamship in the navy, the greatest advantage of Zavala was her ability to operate during calm weather and on rivers. She saw her first and only military campaign in 1840 when she accompanied several other Texas Navy ships to the Yucatán under the direction of the Commander of the Texas Navy Edwin Moore. When she returned to Galveston in 1841, the presidential administration had changed once again, and President Houston was unwilling to spend money on the necessary repairs for Zavala. She was left in the harbor, scrapped in 1843, and serves as the perfect example of the short-lived and controversial Texas Navy.



Zavala (left) – notice the paddle wheel and smoke stack.

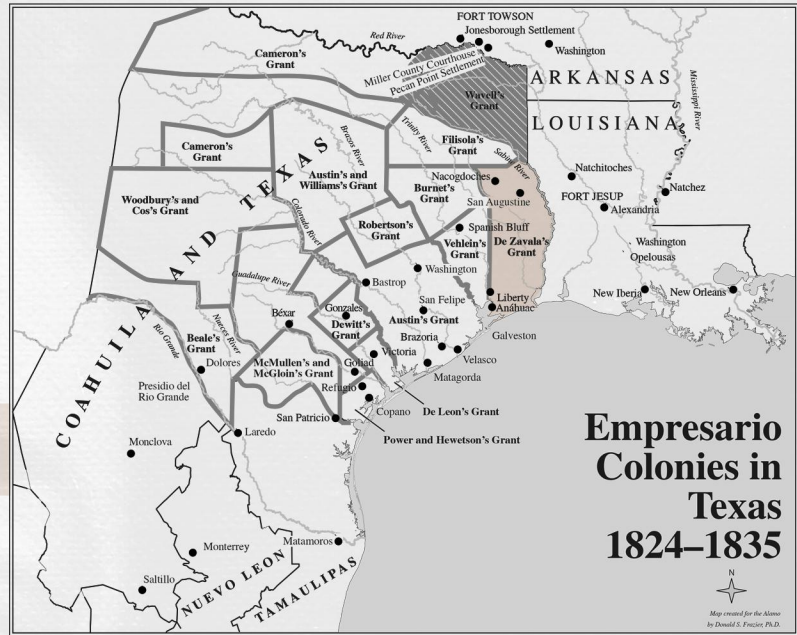
### Debate

**Find a partner and decide whether you are for or against a Texas Navy. Why or why not? Think about the cost of a navy, what it says to other nations, and how it would extend Texas' reach. Debate the issue with an opposing group, then try to find a compromise.**



# TEXAS COLONIZATION

Lorenzo de Zavala was tied to the foreign colonization of Texas from the time that Stephen F. Austin came to Mexico in 1822. This empresario system would reign until the creation of the Republic of Texas in 1836.



## Questions ?

What natural resource do all of the colonies share?

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Circle Zavala's and Austin's grants. What advantages and disadvantages do their respective locations provide?

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If you were applying for an empresario contract in this time period, what location would you choose and why?

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# RESOURCES

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Below we have detailed the resources that proved most useful in our research of Sam Houston. Please feel free to use them to find out more about this Texas hero.

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## WEBSITES

- Texas State Library and Archives Commission: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/>
- Texas State Historical Association Online Handbook of Texas: <https://tshaonline.org/handbook>
- The Diary of William Fairfax Gray at Southern Methodist University: [https://sites.smu.edu/swcenter/FairfaxGray/wg\\_cont.htm](https://sites.smu.edu/swcenter/FairfaxGray/wg_cont.htm)
- The Portal to Texas History: <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>
- Texas Military Forces Museum regarding the Texas Navy: <http://www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/articles/texasnavy/texasnavy.htm>
- Dolph Briscoe Center for American History Digital Collections: [https://www.cah.utexas.edu/research/digital\\_collections.php](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/research/digital_collections.php)
- San Jacinto Museum of History: <http://www.sanjacinto-museum.org/>

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## IMAGES

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