



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

## Meet the Originals

*Texas Originals* is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Moses Austin. Then, answer questions about it.

### Moses Austin 1761–1821

Moses Austin, the patriarch of Anglo settlement in Texas, died before his colonial dream became a reality.

Austin was born in Connecticut in 1761. As a young man, he opened dry goods stores in Philadelphia and Richmond. After winning the contract to roof the new Virginia capitol, Austin acquired the state's richest lead deposit and brought miners from England. In establishing the American lead industry, he became a wealthy man.

In 1798, Austin moved into the Spanish territory of Louisiana and founded the first Anglo settlement west of the Mississippi River at what is now Potosi, Missouri.

However, the economy of the early American republic was highly unstable, and, by 1819, Austin found himself deeply in debt. Ever the schemer, he developed a plan to establish an American colony in Spanish Texas. In 1820, he traveled to San Antonio, where the Baron de Bastrop convinced the Spanish governor to approve Austin's plan. Austin soon received a land grant in what is now the state of Texas.

Austin contracted pneumonia on his return to Missouri and died two months later. Two days before his death, he called his wife to his sickbed and begged her to tell his son Stephen to take his place as leader of the Texas colony. It was left to Stephen F. Austin to fulfill his father's dream.

**Check for Understanding:** Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Moses Austin. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How did Moses Austin make his wealth?
2. When Austin later found himself in debt, what was his new plan to make money?

**Going Further:** Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** In 1820, Austin traveled to San Antonio to gain permission for his settlement plan. Why did Austin need permission to establish a colony in Texas?