



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 Stephen Fuller Austin. Then, answer questions about it.

Stephen Fuller Austin 1793–1836

Stephen F. Austin wrote, "I have learned patience in the hard School of an Empresario." That was six years after Austin brought his first settlers to Texas. Colonizing Texas would become his life's work, but without his patience and years of sacrifice, Texas as we know it today might not exist.

Austin came to Texas in 1821 to continue his father's work. Moses Austin received permission to bring Anglo colonists into Spanish Texas but before his plan took shape, Moses Austin died. His dying wish was for his son Stephen to fulfill the dream. The opportunities he found were real and so were the challenges. The government of Mexico was in upheaval, the colonists were stubborn, and Indigenous peoples resisted the colonization of their lands.

Despite this, Austin's colonies prospered. The new Texans began to resent the Mexican government. In 1834, Mexican officials arrested Austin, hoping to prevent a rebellion. It didn't work. Removing Austin's moderating influence only aided settlers who favored a revolution. When Austin was released from prison, his patience had run out, and he promptly joined the fight for independence.

Austin died of pneumonia shortly after the war was won. "The Father of Texas is no more," declared President Sam Houston. Houston had been a political rival of Austin, but upon his death, he recognized the debt owed by Texas to the state's first empresario.

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

1. Why did Stephen F. Austin become involved in colonizing Texas?
2. Name three challenges Austin faced in setting up his colony.

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. **Taking a Position.** What was the unintended consequence of Austin's arrest? Do you think there might have been a different outcome if he had not been arrested? Why or why not?