



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 Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar. Then, answer questions about it.

Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar 1798–1859

Poet, politician, and historian, Mirabeau B. Lamar is claimed by Texas, although he was a Georgia native and lived there for three decades.

Lamar served in the Georgia state senate and made two unsuccessful bids for Congress. In 1835, he followed his friend James Fannin to the Mexican province of Texas, where he fought in the war for independence from Mexico.

In 1838, Lamar became the second President of the Republic of Texas, inheriting a nation beset by problems that included a bankrupt treasury. Undaunted, Lamar promoted his vision of Texas as a prosperous, sprawling empire. Less admirably, his vision included the practice of slavery and excluded the presence of Native Americans. Lamar forced the Cherokees out of Texas and waged a costly war against the Comanche.

Many of Lamar's grandest projects failed and he vastly overspent public funds, but he is celebrated for having persuaded Congress to set aside public lands to fund Texas schools and universities—earning him the title "Father of Texas Education." Lamar famously wrote, "The cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy," a pronouncement that inspired the motto of The University of Texas.

In later years, Lamar served in the Second Texas Legislature and was an ambassador to Costa Rica and Nicaragua. He died in 1859 and is buried near his home in Richmond, Texas.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. What vision of Texas did Mirabeau Lamar promote as the second president of the Republic of Texas?
2. What are three critiques of Lamar's policies as Texas's second president?

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.** Lamar is famously quoted as saying, "the cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy." Do you agree with Lamar's stance that an educated population is important for a successful democracy? Explain.