

Texas Tides Document Analysis Worksheet # 1 [Grade 7]

Teaching excerpt: a letter from James Pinckney Henderson to Col. W.W. Watts

Vicksburg, Miss.
March 10th 1844

My Dear Sir,

I wrote you from Galveston a few weeks since upon the receipt of your letter by Judge Morris. Since then, urged by the President of Texas as well as his political opponents, I have accepted an appointment to the U.S. on a secret mission to negotiate a Treaty of Annexation, which fact I now communicate to you in the strictest confidence, as it is all important that this matter be consummated before the British Ministry in Texas knows that it is on hand. Many Texians suspect that I am going on this business, but they do not know it. Keep it to yourself and operate quickly, as annexation may prevent, in some degree, your plans from being executed in getting claims to collect upon good terms....

....I shall be back in Texas in July or sooner, as I can finish my mission by that time if it can be accomplished. I have the strongest evidence that I can make the Treaty, and it must be done without delay to prevent England from interfering to prevent it by threats protests, etc....

Yours Very Truly,
Henderson

Answer the following questions, using this letter. Underline important sentences to help answer the questions.

What is the date of the letter? _____

According to your timeline, what was the status of Texas annexation at this point? _____

Who wrote it? _____ Was he from Texas? _____

What do you know about the author of this letter that makes his opinion seem valuable?

To whom was it written? _____ Was he from Texas? _____

Why do you think that this letter was written? Use quotes from the document as evidence.

List two things that the author tells you in this letter that help you know more about the annexation question in Texas.

1) _____

2) _____

The author of the letter appears to be worried, and asks the addressee to keep a secret. What was it?

Does the author of this letter seem to think that Texas will be annexed to the United States? Explain your answer by using quotes from the letter as evidence.

Why is this letter important in the study of Texas History?