

Name _____



Date _____

The Alamo

By Cathy Pearl

The Alamo is in Texas. It was first used as a mission. Missionaries and Native Americans who became Christians lived in the mission for almost seventy years. In 1793, the mission land was given to Native Americans that still lived in the area. They farmed the fields. They also helped San Antonio begin to grow into the city it would become.

In the early 1800s, Spanish soldiers used the mission. They started calling it the Alamo. This is the Spanish word for "cottonwood." A grove of cottonwood trees grew nearby. The military would stay in the mission until the Texas Revolution.

In Mexico, Santa Anna had become a dictator. Settlers in Texas were worried about what he would do. The settlers felt it was time to take action. They had the support of many Tejanos. These were Mexican people who had been born in Texas. The Tejanos didn't always care if Texas became free. They did want to get rid of Santa Anna.

In 1835, the town of Gonzales battled Mexican troops. They forced the troops to leave the town. Santa Anna was not happy. He marched north from Mexico with his army.

Volunteers from the army went to the Alamo. They worked to make the defenses even stronger. They knew that Santa Anna would be coming to attack the city.

The Texans did not have a lot of equipment. They did not have a lot of ammunition. There was not a lot of food or water in the mission, either. If the Texans were trapped in the mission for a long time, they would run out of things to eat and drink.

In February of 1836, Santa Anna's army got to the Alamo. There were 6,000 men in his army. There were about 150 men in the mission.

William Travis was in charge in the mission. Also inside were Jim Bowie and David Crockett. These men were famous for what they had done on the frontier. Bowie was also a famous knife fighter. Crockett was known for how well he could shoot. There were also some women and children inside the Alamo.

Santa Anna surrounded the Alamo and began a siege. This is where an army tries to capture a fort by attacking it over and over again. Santa Anna wanted the fighters in the Alamo to surrender. They would not.

Travis tried to get more help for the Alamo. He sent letters asking people to come. About forty men got through enemy lines and into the Alamo. But no large group of men came to help.

On the twelfth day of the siege, Santa Anna decided it was time to end it. He planned on attacking the next morning. The other Mexican soldiers were surprised. There wasn't any need to do this. The walls of the Alamo were falling apart. The Texans were almost out of supplies. They would have to give up soon.

Santa Anna did not listen to his other military men. At dawn the next day, he attacked. At first the Texans kept the Mexicans back, but they were badly outnumbered. Soon the Mexican army had made it inside the Alamo. They killed most of the people inside. The assault had only lasted about ninety minutes.

There were about seven men that survived the battle. These people were brought to Santa Anna. He ordered them executed. The women and children were allowed to live. Santa Anna wanted them to tell other Texans what had happened at the Alamo.

The Mexican victory came at a high cost. Almost 1,500 Mexicans were dead. The Texans lost 189 men. Research



Name _____



Date _____

still goes on to figure out if this is the correct number for the Texans. Some think it could go as high as 257.

The fall of the Alamo had Americans calling for revenge. New volunteers joined the Army. Santa Anna was defeated in 1836.

Today the Alamo is a historic site. Millions of people visit every year to witness the bravery of men who would not give up even though the odds were against them.

The Alamo

Questions

_____ 1. What happened to the men that survived the battle?

- A. Santa Anna let them go.
- B. They were executed.
- C. They ran away.

_____ 2. Who was in charge at the Alamo?

- A. Jim Bowie
- B. William Travis
- C. David Crockett

_____ 3. What was Jim Bowie famous for?

- A. Hunting
- B. Knife fighting
- C. His shooting skills

_____ 4. What does the word *alamo* mean in Spanish?

- A. Water
- B. Freedom
- C. Cottonwood

5. How many men were in Santa Anna's army?

6. What did Santa Anna decide on the twelfth day of the siege?
