

Answers Chapter 12 Blood and Tears

1. Muguara
2. the appearance of the captive girl
3. the treacherous murder of 12 Comanche chiefs
4. the huge herd of stolen horses.
5. he missed his wife and things were bad in Texas
6. to secure Texas' claim to that area and to obtain financial gain
7. Houston called him a "hog thief"
8. they would go home/ they were sent to Mexico City
9. as a visual aid to reinforce his themes of industry and economy
10. from becoming a "vassal" of France (there would be a lien on public lands)
11. a disregard of law
12. inability (financial and otherwise) and legal inappropriateness (giving too much power to the president, stepping outside the bounds of law)
13. Allen Morrell was captured by the Mexican army

Discussion/Essay:

1. The failure of the Comanches to bring all the captives and the horrible appearance of the Lockhart girl are the ostensible causes of the Council House fight; however, from the Comanche perspective, the Indians were coming to negotiate, not merely surrender and agree to the whites' ideas. Each side was presumptuous. Also, each side was somewhat ignorant of how the other side would react -- that of the whites to the girls' appearance, the Indians to the threat of being held hostage. That aspect makes the conflict tragic, as each side did want peace.

So both were at fault, and neither. The darkness of the Comanche society, without the light of the gospel and without cultural influences such as writing, resulted in cruelties that the Texans could not countenance. A Texan could understand drunkenness, or even a murder in hot blood; but he could not understand torture or sexual abuse. Those things

placed the Indians “beyond the pale” in their minds and contributed to the demise of the red man. A Texan did not think of an Indian as his equal.

These points may be used by students to defend their opinion; it would be “wrong” to claim that only one side was at fault. It also might be required that the student mention the tragic aspects of the event.

2. President Lamar sent volunteers to secure Texas’ claim to the prairie west of Austin all the way to Santa Fe, as agreed in the treaty of Velasco (which Mexico never ratified). There was a strong financial interest involved; merchants accompanied the soldiers, bringing their goods, and also, Lamar hoped to secure the right to collect duties on goods passing along the Santa Fe Trail, which had proved to be a good source of revenue for Mexico. Lamar labeled the effort as a “peace mission,” inviting the citizens of Santa Fe to join their cause and their Republic.

As to why sane men attempted such a trip, a number of points might be valid. First, there was ignorance regarding the exact nature of west Texas; the volunteers may not have realized the climactic conditions (hot and dry) they would soon be experiencing. Second, Lamar, whose visionary character sometimes seemed more like a lack of touch with reality, portrayed the citizens of Santa Fe as willing to join the Republic, and the letter passed around the eve of the departure must have assured the volunteers that this was so; finally, Texas was still infected with “adventurers” who had no responsibilities. It might even be said that a lack of females contributed to hare-brained schemes like this. Married men who needed to think about their families would have been less susceptible to going on “adventures.” (This last point is no joke: Alexis de Tocqueville attributed the greatness of the United States to her women.)

3. This is another aspect of the rule of law. Santa Anna could be viewed as an evil dictator, a usurper, but Houston insists that a man need not have an evil intent to do wrong in usurping authority. Houston is again placing law above expediency, and the history of the United States provides many examples of the tension between these two rivals. For example, Abraham Lincoln went beyond the Constitution in order to save the Union, and this is still a source of debate. The students need not include examples like these in their essays, but practical examples might liven up a discussion. They do need to be reminded that the only guardian of liberty is the rule of law, since a rule by expediency makes a way for unjust men to oppress a people. This whole principle is based on the unpleasant fact of the sinful nature of man, and thus the necessity of protection against that evil tendency.

4. Heroism always includes selfless behavior, risking danger or making a sacrifice on behalf of another. Many times we think of “heroism” in the context of military action, where the battles and the dangers are clearly seen. But the purpose of Morrell to “spend and be spent” for Texas, for the sake of souls, in service to his Master, and the quiet steadfastness of Houston, clinging to the rule of law and common sense in the face of personal danger, are both types of “heroism.”