

Answers Chapter 9 Retreat to Victory

1. because of the tremendous loss the Mexican army suffered
2. 182 (accounts differ; this is according to the alcalde)
3. 1500 (according to the alcalde)
4. three
5. fear
6. "Tories" -- Mexican sympathizers or loyalists
7. he ordered the liquor destroyed
8. it was normal to do so in "civilized" warfare
9. he gave him orders that would be more acceptable
10. he was trying to capture the Texas government
11. because of anti-Mexican feeling that had increased since Goliad
12. because the Mexicans were ready and expecting to fight
13. You should have remembered that at the Alamo.

Discussion/Essay:

1. Houston's officers grumbled because their commander kept ordering retreats. They wanted to fight and they were not used to military obedience. Did he handle them well? This is opinion, any sensible answer is correct. Someone once suggested to Houston that things might have gone better if he had explained things. My opinion is that this is questionable, they were independent types anyway. And they would have just argued. I also believe that Houston was wise in "cutting them slack" where he could, such as the time he gave Baker another assignment.

2. In a strict military sense, the defense of the Alamo was a waste of the lives of good men. However, the damage they were able to do compromised Santa Anna's military strength. Although the news of the fall of the Alamo brought panic and fueled the "Runaway Scrape," it also brought home to the colonists the reality of the situation. Farmers began to join Houston's army. The defense of the Alamo also stalled Santa

Anna long enough for the delegates at the Convention to form a government. Of these three points, you may wish to require two for the essay.

3. The students may agree or disagree. If they agree, the following points are relevant: 1) Santa Anna foolishly wasted the lives of his men at the Alamo, 2) he went against the advice of his General and aide and did not consolidate his armies, and 3) he showed carelessness at San Jacinto; you may wish to require two of the three.

If they choose to disagree, the following points are relevant: 1) Houston showed skill in keeping the army together under discouraging circumstances, 2) he did not throw away the lives of his men but maneuvered for the most favorable situation, and 3) he had the courage to keep on even when his own men were against him. A general (but non-saving) faith in God can also be mentioned; you may wish to require two of the three main points.

4. Scripturally it is wrong to lie; however, some students may wish to defend Houston. You may wish to discuss whether lying is ever right; Corrie Ten Boom lied and said that there were no Jews in the house. Houston was in a life or death situation; whether it was equivalent to Corrie's is a topic for discussion.

5. Basically, the capture of Santa Anna was what won the war. Otherwise, Houston's army would have had to fight two or three more armies; as it was, it was providential that he won the battle of San Jacinto.