

Texas Historical Commission

Dr. Anson Jones Architect of Annexation

Grade 7

BARRINGTON PLANTATION

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

Washington, Texas

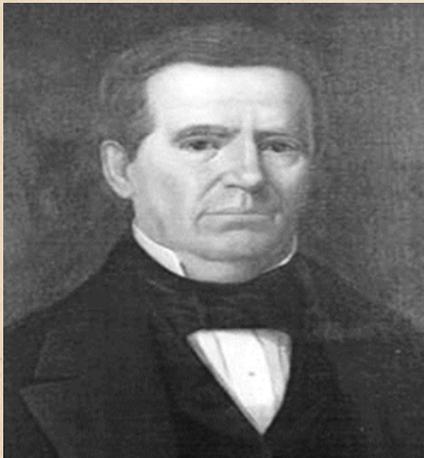


Virtual Field Trip

TEXAS
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Drawing of Dr. Anson Jones. Image courtesy of Barrington Plantation State Historic Site.

Dr. Anson Jones: Architect of Annexation

Overview: A New Beginning for Texas

As the last elected president of the Texas Republic, Dr. Anson Jones was instrumental in the process of moving Texas from an independent republic to statehood in the United States. In these activities, learners investigate the annexation of Texas through primary source transcripts, including speeches from Dr. Jones and U.S. president John Quincy Adams, a map of the Republic boundaries in 1845, a ballot tally, and political cartoons of the period.

Objectives

- Demonstrate understanding of the annexation forces that led Texas from being an independent republic to the 28th U.S. state.
- Identify the processes through which Dr. Jones contributed to Texas' annexation.
- Analyze primary source documents.

Social Studies TEKS

4th Grade: 113.15.a (2)

7th Grade: 113.18.19 (A -D)

Additional Discipline TEKS

4th- History 113.15.b.3 (A, C, D, E)

7th- History 113.19.b.4 (A-C)

Resources

- Activity 1: Analyzing Primary Sources with worksheet
- Activity 2: Cartoon Commentary with worksheet
- Activity 3: Pros and Cons of Annexation with worksheet
- Activity 4: A Congressional Proposal with worksheet
- Primary Source: John Quincy Adams speech text, 1838
- Primary Source: Texas Republic boundaries map, 1844
- Primary Source: Annexation vote ballot sheets, 1845
- Primary Source: Dr. Anson Jones Texas statehood speech (excerpt), 1846
- Primary Source: Marriage of Texas political cartoon, 1844
- Primary Source: Texas Coming In political cartoon, 1844

Vocabulary

annexation (an nex ZAY shun) noun: the act of adding territory to one's own territory

chargé d'affaires (SHAR zhay dah fehr) noun: a diplomatic official who temporarily takes the place of an ambassador

free state (free stayt) noun: a state that, by law, prohibited the purchase, sale, trade, and use of enslaved people

primary source (PRY meh ree sorss) noun: an immediate, first-hand account of an event, created by a person who was involved in the event

slave state (slayv stayt) noun: a state that, by law, allowed the purchase, sale, trade, and use of enslaved people

Historical Context

Dr. Anson Jones was the fourth, and last elected, president of the Republic of Texas (December 1844-February 1846) before its **annexation** to the United States.

Texas had previously sought annexation, but the U.S. declined, not wanting to upset the **slave state** and **free state** balance, and wanting to stave off war with Mexico, who had never officially recognized Texas' independence.

Although they were living in an independent country, many Texas citizens (most of them former U.S. citizens) were looking for the power and protection that the U.S. offered. Others, like Dr. Jones, had a vision of a Republic just beginning to grow in its power and international presence.

Charles Elliot, Dr. Jones' **charge d'affaires** from England, was a go-between for negotiations with Mexico. (Dr. Jones would name his second son after him). England and France had already entered trade agreements with the Republic and would be major players in working with the Mexican government to recognize Texas' independence, retaining their economic rights to Texas commodities.

Dr. Jones was able to reach a peace agreement between the Republic of Texas and Mexico— a feat unattained by the previous Republic presidents— which would ultimately put pressure on the U.S to annex Texas, even though the agreement forbade Texas joining it.

President Jones laid out two options to the Texas Congress: remain an independent republic, or agree to annexation by the United States. Jones personally hoped to keep the republic independent, but he saw himself as a “statesman” who worked for the will of the people.

Ultimately, the Texan Congress overwhelmingly voted for annexation, and when put to a public vote, the citizens voted for annexation, too. The U.S. agreed and received its 28th state, as well as Texas’ \$10 million debt. Annexation to the U.S., however, rocked relations with Mexico. War loomed on the horizon. Within a year, the Mexican American War erupted.

The end of Dr. Jones’ presidency was a time of change, not just for Texas, but for the United States. Feelings of upheaval increased across the nation as Texas entered the union as a slave state. President Jones’ private and public correspondence shows the responsibility he felt to be a strong leader for the future state of Texas.

After Texas became a state, Dr. Anson Jones retired as president of the former republic and retired to Barrington Plantation, located near Washington-on-the-Brazos. Texas Historical Commission’s Barrington Plantation includes the original home of the Jones family, who lived at the farm for over a decade, building a successful cotton farm using enslaved labor.



Home of Dr. Anson Jones. For more photos, videos, and information about Barrington Plantation, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/BarringtonPlantation/>.

Activity 1: Analyzing Primary Sources

45 minutes

Using four primary source documents and the **Just the Facts** worksheet, learners analyze the documents to understand the dynamics surrounding Texas' annexation process: 1) **John Quincy Adams' 1838 speech**, 2) **1844 map of the Texas Republic's boundaries**, 3) **1845 annexation ballot**, and 4) **Dr. Jones' 1846 ceremonial speech on Texas' statehood**. Share responses when complete.

Preview the documents. Discuss any challenges in reading historical documents, including vocabulary and context. Remind learners that primary sources give us a window into historic events and reflect the time and place they were created.

Before beginning the activity, discussion questions for each document might include:

- What makes this a primary source?
- How does this document help tell the story of Texas?

Answer Key

- ★ On the map activity, the six states carved from the Republic of Texas were Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Wyoming.
- ★ On the ballot activity, the county with the highest number of votes for annexation was Montgomery, and the county with the lowest number of votes for annexation was Galveston.

Activity 2: Cartoon Commentary

45 minutes

Political cartoons can be primary sources that use art and emotional appeals to represent ideas, social issues, or party platforms. Using the **Cartoon Commentary worksheet**, learners analyze two 1844 political cartoons, **Marriage of Texas** and **Texas Coming In**, to identify the use of symbols, emotions, and main ideas in reference to Texas' annexation. Share responses when completed.

Cartoon notes:

- **Marriage of Texas:** President Tyler (in a black robe) is shown as presiding over the marriage of Texas (represented as a young masculine star) and the U.S. (represented as "Columbia," a woman in a flag-themed dress). Mexico is represented by the eagle, cactus, and snake. *Image: "The Marriage of Texas." Andrew Jackson Houston Papers #3445, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.*

- **Texas Coming In:** Standing on the deck of the ship Texas, pro-annexation representatives Stephen F. Austin (L) and Sam Houston (R) sail toward annexation with future U.S. president James A. Polk (far right) waving them in. Below the ship, trying to hold them back from completing their goal, are the anti-annexation politicians Henry Clay, and four other men. The lone abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison floats on a barrel in the river, ignored. *Image: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661429/>.*

Extension: As an extension to the political cartoon activity, have learners choose from the following activities:

- Create a visual presentation that shows how political cartoons today are alike and different from previous historical cartoons.
- Create a visual representation that demonstrates the commentary role of social media in present-day political campaigns/issues.
- Create a political cartoon representing a current issue.



Activity 3: Pros and Cons of Annexation

15 minutes

In this activity, learners use the **Pros and Cons of Annexation worksheet** to think through specific issues impacting the annexation decision. Encourage learners to think about the social and political dynamics in Texas and the nation around this decision in the 1840s: What would people in the Republic of Texas consider to be the pros and cons of joining the Union? What would people in the United States consider to be the pros and cons of having Texas join the Union? Discuss learners' pro/con choices when completed. Suggested answers include seven pro choices and five con choices in each of the Texas and U.S. columns.

Answer Key (shaded boxes are suggested answers)

What Texas Offers the U.S.			What the U.S. Offers Texas		
Pro	Con	Has an expanding cotton market	Pro	Con	Has large and powerful military
Pro	Con	Has an established international port (Galveston)	Pro	Con	Doesn't allow independent trade with other nations
Pro	Con	Has a growing population of taxpayers	Pro	Con	Offers trade opportunities
Pro	Con	Would expand the number of slave states	Pro	Con	Wishes to expand westward to the Pacific
Pro	Con	Would enter with great voting power in Congress (due to Three-Fifths Compromise)	Pro	Con	Half of its states (free states) prohibit slavery
Pro	Con	Has debt of \$10 million	Pro	Con	Can absorb \$10 million debt
Pro	Con	Has independent treaties with American Indian tribes	Pro	Con	Has well-established monetary system backed by gold
Pro	Con	Has little silver or gold, but has own currency, the Texas "redbacks," worth about 37 cents to the U.S. dollar	Pro	Con	Many states don't honor fugitive slave laws and don't return runaways (Constitution Article IV, Section 2, Clause 3)
Pro	Con	Follows a system of laws based on the U.S. Constitution	Pro	Con	Has established federal government with authority over individual state law
Pro	Con	Is periodically at war with Mexico	Pro	Con	Has tariffs on imported foreign goods
Pro	Con	Has a broad territory of 389,166 square miles	Pro	Con	Charges taxes on exported goods such as cotton
Pro	Con	Has strong trade ties with Great Britain	Pro	Con	Has racially broad and diverse free population

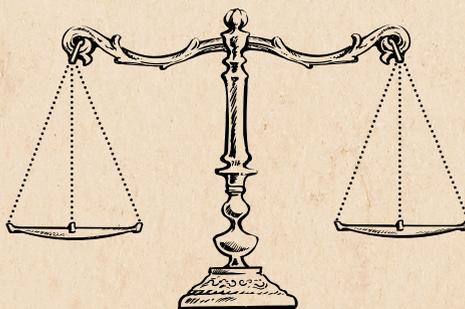
Background information: Texas' annexation process took ten years, but ultimately, Texas and the U.S. Congress and President Polk decided annexation was in the best interest of both countries. This decision was supported by most Texan citizens. Some of the major issues included:

PROS

Size: Texas borders would eventually be divided up into other states according to the Compromise of 1850, including portions of Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Wyoming. This aligns with the concept of Manifest Destiny, the U.S. goal to acquire land all the way to the Pacific Ocean, greatly increasing the size of the country. Citizens living in Texas also increased U.S. revenue through a taxable population.

Cotton: Cotton production was increasing during the Republic period, and this provided a steady supply of raw materials to both the U.S. and Britain. These industries, well sustained with sea-going ships from ports like Galveston, contributed to the global economy.

Trade: Ongoing relationships with Native peoples and other countries increased chances of creating more treaties, temporary or permanent. France and England already did a great deal of business in Texas, and the U.S. wanted to benefit.



CONS

Slavery: American politicians and voters had struggled with the morality of slavery since 1776. Slavery was legal when Texas joined the Union. The enslaved population was growing due to the economic advantage the system provided to slave holders and industry in the North. The number of enslaved people increased the number of representatives Texas received in the U.S. Congress and created an unbalanced number of slave versus free states in the Union (fifteen vs. thirteen in 1845).

Debt and War: Texas had substantial debt, even though land was cheap for families to purchase: \$0.125/acre in Texas, vs. the U.S. average of \$1.25/acre. This made Texas vulnerable to war since money was not backed by gold or silver, and worth very little. Mexico knew Texas had trouble funding an army and conducted incursions into Texas throughout the whole Republic period, considering them a state in rebellion.

Boundaries: The Mexican/Texas border was under dispute, and the instability of the Mexican government prevented a resolution, increasing tensions with the U.S. once Texas became a state. Texas' annexation led to the Mexican American War of 1846-1848.

Activity 4: A Congressional Proposal

30 minutes

In this activity using the **Congressional Proposal worksheet**, learners synthesize information to write a speech to be delivered to the U.S. Congress to persuade them to support the annexation of Texas to the Union. They may choose to be an historic figure or a regular citizen. Encourage consideration of these issues in the speech: What do Texas and the U.S. have in common? What does Texas have to offer to the U.S. that would make joining the Union a good proposition?



Lowering the Texas flag in Austin, 1846

https://tsl.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/IO_86aa4453-948a-4f1d-8713-e53ffaf5f8c4

Activity 1 Resource: Just The Facts pg. 1

Analyze the four primary source documents to understand the dynamics surrounding Texas' annexation process. Write your responses to the questions.

John Quincy Adams speech

- Who is the audience for this speech?
- What issue is Adams speaking about?
- What words or phrases does Adams use to make sure the audience understands how he feels about this issue?

Texas Republic's boundaries map, 1844

- How is this map similar to and different from maps of Texas today?
- After statehood, the Republic of Texas was divided into six states. What were they?

Annexation ballots, 1845

- What information on these documents helps us know what they are?
- How do the results on this document affect the story of Texas's history?
- Who do you think was eligible to vote in this election in 1845?



Activity 1 Resource: Just The Facts pg.2

Annexation ballots, 1845 continued

- Which county had the highest number of votes for annexation?
- Which county had the lowest number of votes for annexation?
- Why do you think the counties voted differently from each other? What would influence a county's votes for/against annexation?

Dr. Anson Jones Texas statehood speech (excerpt), 1846

- What words or phrases does Dr. Jones use to let his audience know how he felt about Texas' annexation?
- How do you think the audience responded to Dr. Jones' speech? Why?

Summary Questions

- How do primary sources like these help us understand Texas history better?
- List three primary sources that exist now that you think would be helpful to preserve for future generations. What would these resources tell future Texans about the Texas of today?



Activity 2 Resource: Cartoon Commentary

Analyze the two 1844 political cartoons about Texas' annexation. Look at both the drawings and the words. Write your responses to the questions.

Marriage of Texas

★ Each figure in this cartoon represents a country involved in Texas's annexation. (One country is represented by two figures). Write which country you think each figure represents.

- woman:
 - man in black robe:
 - star figure:
 - eagle with cactus and snake:
-
- What is taking place in this cartoon?

 - What emotion is shown in this cartoon? Which figure(s) is/are showing emotion? Why?

 - Why do you think the artist chose to represent Texas' annexation in this way?

Texas Comes In

- What are the two main ideas depicted in the cartoon?

- Compare the emotions of the people in the top half of the cartoon and the bottom half. What do you think each group of people represents?

- What are examples of symbolism in this cartoon?

- Do you think the artist was for or against Texas's annexation? What clues support your answer?

- Why do you think the artist chose to represent this issue in this way?



Activity 3 Resource: Pros and Cons of Annexation

Think about what was happening in the Texas Republic before annexation, including slavery, commerce, immigration, and foreign relations. What reasons would persuade the people of Texas and the people of the United States to be either for or against annexation? Read the lists below. Circle either Pro or Con for each reason in the Texas and U.S. columns to make a case for or against annexation.

What Texas Offers the U.S.			What the U.S. Offers Texas		
Pro	Con	Has an expanding cotton market	Pro	Con	Has large and powerful military
Pro	Con	Has an established international port (Galveston)	Pro	Con	Doesn't allow independent trade with other nations
Pro	Con	Has a growing population of taxpayers	Pro	Con	Offers trade opportunities
Pro	Con	Would expand the number of slave states	Pro	Con	Wishes to expand westward to the Pacific
Pro	Con	Would enter with great voting power in Congress (due to Three-Fifths Compromise)	Pro	Con	Half of its states (free states) prohibit slavery
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Pro	Con	Has a broad territory of 389,166 square miles	Pro	Con	Charges taxes on exported goods such as cotton
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Primary Source: John Quincy Adams speech, 1838

This is the text of a speech given to the U.S. House of Representatives by John Quincy Adams in opposition to the annexation of Texas. July 16th-July 7th, 1838.

freedom. I say that, when the slaves shall have, to a great extent, been drained off, the interest of the slaveholder will prompt him to do the same thing here. It will then be his interest, as it is now his duty, to put an end to the whole system. And, if it shall once be abolished there—as in my prayers to Almighty God I nightly and daily invoke Him that it may be—slavery in Texas will fall of itself. A slave State, like Texas, could not exist between two States like this Union and Mexico, both free. But if Texas is to be admitted; and if we are to hear lessons in philosophy, such as we have lately had addressed to us, teaching that slavery is a blessing and a virtue; if, I say, we are to have schools where it shall be taught to our children and youth that slaves are chattels—that slavery is a benevolent institution of God—and this shall be accompanied by the decree of a sovereign State, making it death to deny the doctrine—then, indeed, I believe that slavery will not be confined to the States south of the Potomac; and the inevitable consequence will be, that all laws against the slave trade are cruel and tyrannical, and that the slave trade ought to be restored.

https://books.google.com/books/content?id=XocvAAAAYAAJ&g=PA82&img=1&zoom=3&hl=en&sig=AC-fU3U0O1fJmtgAEDgNmDo8XJNUuV_jOaw&ci=120%2C534%2C742%2C434&edge=0



Primary Source: Annexation Ballot Sheet pg. 1

These are ballot sheets showing the number of For/Against Annexation votes in Texas counties on October 13, 1845. Images <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/earlystate/annex-doc.html>

Statement of the number of votes polled in the several Counties of the Republic on the 13th. Oct. ultimo for the ratification or rejection of Annexation, the Constitution & Ordinance

Counties	Annexation		Constitution		Ordinance	
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against
Austin	114	1	124	3	112	11
Bastrop	166	"	156	6	143	5
Bexar	138	17	86	68	36	110
Colorado	168	"	167	"	167	1
Fayette	287	3	277	11	262	15
Fort Bend	166	1	165	1	139	21
Galveston	287	125	324	84	309	66
Goliad	16	"	12	"	12	"
Harrison	498	5	485	5	486	5
Jackson	58	"	58	"	52	2
Jasper	200	1	200	"	195	1
Lamar	238	7	237	7	195	22
Liberty	297	3	297	3	277	4
Matagorda	140	"	110	"	124	12
Montgomery	534	25	509	114	467	54
Robertson	271	22	248	40	275	9
San Patricio	56	35	56	17	46	26
Shelby	286	3	307	11	172	73
San Augustine	227	13	221	5	221	6
Travis	107	6	105	7	102	11
	4254	267	4174	312	3790	454

Department of State
Nov. 10th 1845.

The above statement of votes is the whole number returned to this Department up to this date and were compared by the President and such members of his cabinet as were present on this day.

J. C. Edrudge 
Acting Secy. of State



Primary Source: Annexation Ballot Sheet pg. 2

Now that you have read all the petitions from colonists to fill positions in your government, complete the roster with the names of your selections and the reasons for your choices.

Statement of the number of votes polled in the several Counties of the Republic on 15th Oct. 1845 for the adoption or rejection of "Annexation," the "State Constitution" and "Ordinance concerning Colony Contracts," the returns of which were not received at the Department of State until after the 10th day of Nov. 1845

Counties	Annexation		Constitution		Ordinance	
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against
Brazoria	230	"	227	5	209	3
Brazos	85	"	80	1	70	1
Bowie	269	"	281	1	234	3
Hannin	226	8	227	7	225	5
Gonzales	164	4	162	6	145	13
Harris	324	50	299	68	249	72
Houston	344	30	330	39	261	88
Jefferson	92	"	92	"	92	"
Milam	80	14	77	17	66	14
Nacogdoches	401	4	400	7	367	16
Red River	288	15	287	17	277	24
Rusk	283	4	283	9	263	20
Sabine	103	"	102	"	101	"
Victoria	95	3	94	4	73	19
Washington	430	31	412	43	372	53
	3,410	163	3,353	224	3,007	331
<i>add. number of votes polled prior to 10th Nov. 1845</i>	4,254	267	4,174	312	3,790	454
<i>Total No. of votes polled</i>	7,664	430	7,527	536	6,797	785

Department of State.
 Approved by 1846. (TX)
 Joseph C. DeWitt
 Acting Secretary of State

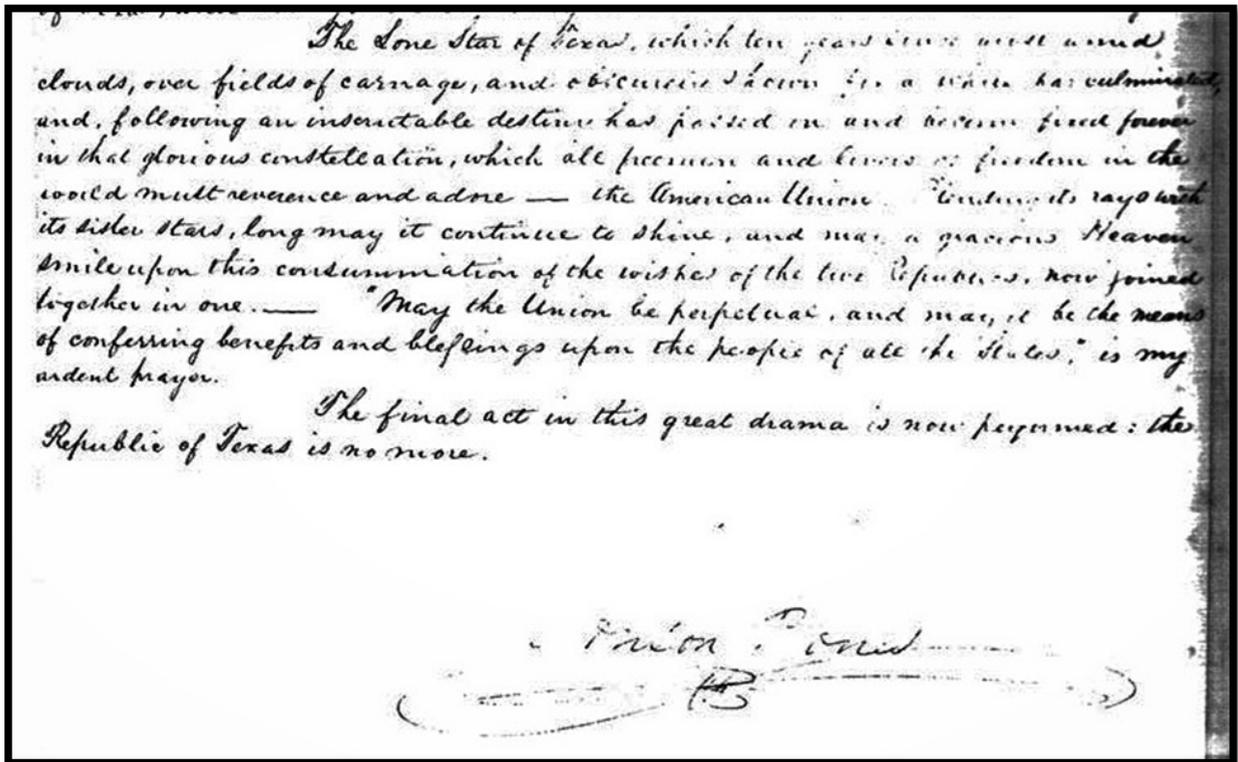
91-14



Primary Source: Dr. Anson Jones speech excerpt, 1846

This is the text of the last paragraph of Dr. Anson Jones' ceremonial speech in Austin on the event of Texas' formally becoming a U.S. state on February 19th, 1846.

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/earlystate/nomore-1.html>



Transcription:

The Lone Star of Texas, which ten years since arose amid clouds, over fields of carnage, and obscurely shone for a while, has culminated, and following an inscrutable destiny, has passed on and become fixed forever in that glorious constellation, which all freemen and lovers of freedom in the world, must reverence and adore- the American Union. Blending its rays with its sister stars, long may it continue to shine, and may a gracious Heaven smile upon this consummation of the wishes of the two Republics, now joined together in one. "May the Union be perpetual, and may it be the means of conferring benefits and blessings upon the people of all the States," is my ardent prayer.

The final act in this great drama is now performed: the Republic of Texas is no more.

Anson Jones



Primary Source: Marriage of Texas political cartoon, 1844



<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/exhibits/annexation/part4/page1.html>



