

CHAPTER
18

The Reign of King Cotton

1865–1895

SECTION 1 Postwar Changes to Texas Farming

SECTION 2 Railroads Lead to Commercial Farming

SECTION 3 Cotton: The King of Texas Crops



VIEW THE **Texas on Tape**
CHAPTER 18 VIDEO LESSON.

*Away here in Texas
the white cotton fields
Look like plains covered
over with snow,
And corn in abundance
at everywhere yields
And oats most
luxuriantly grow. . . .*

Folk song
“Away Here in Texas,”
author unknown



Clara McDonald Williamson, *Chicken for Dinner*

1865

1865 Civil War ends; Texas slaves are freed

1875

1872 Immigrants begin to arrive in Texas to farm cotton

1876 Era of great railroad expansion begins

1885

1885 Robert Munger develops new cotton ginning process

1890 James Hogg is elected governor of Texas

1895

1894 Boll weevil infests Texas cotton crops



SKILL BUILDER

Reading Social Studies



Rev. Johnnie Swearingen, *Cotton Picking*

Before You Read

Can you think of agricultural products that you use every day? Perhaps you are wearing a T-shirt or blue jeans made from cotton. Or you may eat Texas-grown fruits and vegetables. Many farms in Texas provide food and materials for making common items.

Think about

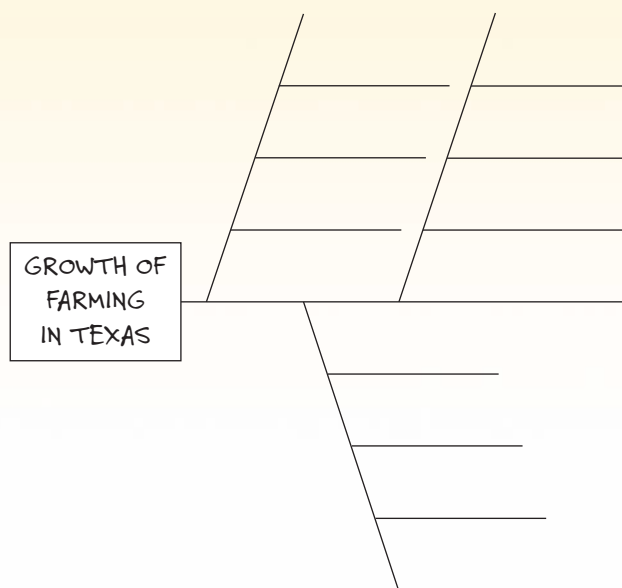
- the different kinds of crops grown in Texas
- how these crops reach local grocery stores
- products made from Texas-grown crops
- agriculture-based festivals and cultural events

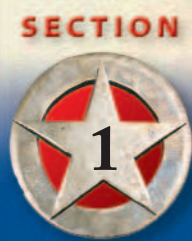
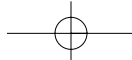
As You Read

The Civil War left the Texas economy in ruins. Many Texans returned to farming to support themselves and their families. Thanks to a combination of events, many farmers eventually were able to buy enough land to grow food to sell to others as well as to feed their families. Completing this graphic organizer for Chapter 18 will help you to understand some of the factors that led to the development of commercial agriculture in Texas.

- Copy the fishbone map in your Texas Notebook.
- As you read, look for the causes that helped promote the growth of commercial agriculture in Texas. Write this information on the diagonal lines.
- Write the supporting details for each of the three causes on the straight lines.

Organizing Information





Postwar Changes to Texas Farming

Why It Matters Now

Traces of the economy and society that developed after the Civil War can still be seen in Texas today.

TERMS & NAMES

bond, credit, commercial farming, subsistence farming, barter, tenant farming, sharecropper, landlord, mortgage, cycle of poverty

OBJECTIVES

1. Analyze the economic effects of the Civil War on Texas.
2. Analyze the social effects of the Civil War on Texas.
3. Express and defend a point of view about postwar events in Texas.

MAIN IDEA

After the Civil War, life in Texas changed dramatically. Economic problems led to a return to the small family farm, and the freed slaves faced the problems of earning a living in conditions that were often unfair.

WHAT Would You Do?

Write your response to *Interact with History* in your *Texas Notebook*.



INTERACT WITH HISTORY

Imagine that you are a slave on a Texas plantation. After years of dreaming of a better life, you suddenly are told that you are free. You now have the right to live wherever and however you wish, as long as you follow the laws of the land. What would be your plan of action? How would you make a living? Where would you live? How might these plans change if you had family members with you?

Economic Conditions After the War

Because most of the Civil War battles were fought in other states, Texas suffered little physical damage. But even though the land remained intact, the economy did not. The war left Texas and its people financially ruined. To begin with, many people's entire savings were tied up in Confederate **bonds**. When the Confederacy was broken up, these pieces of paper became worthless.

Many businesses also fell into financial ruin. Before and during the war, businesses had sold goods to the Confederate government on **credit**. Now these debts would never be paid. This was a fatal blow to many businesses that owed debts of their own.

The Return of the Small Farm

As more and more businesses failed, many men and women found themselves without jobs. For many, the only way to survive was to grow their own food. The small family farm was once again common in Texas.

Although many Texans had farmed before the Civil War, little about farming life remained the same after the war. Soldiers returned home to find their farms in desperate need of repair. Plows, wagons, barns, and

bond *certificate issued by a government or company promising to pay back a borrowed sum with interest*

credit *an agreement in which a buyer is allowed to pay over a period of time, usually with interest or fees added*



◀ The Civil War and the emancipation of slaves left Texans providing for themselves on a smaller scale. Some had to spin their own cotton to make clothing. ● **How do you think subsistence farming affected the Texas economy?**

fences had to be repaired or replaced. To make matters worse, lines of transportation were underdeveloped and inefficient. Building new roads, railways, and shipping centers was made more costly and time-consuming by the economic conditions in postwar Texas and the state's size. As a result, farmers often could not obtain the supplies they needed.

The lack of efficient transportation in Texas also made it difficult to send crops to market. Without a low-cost way to ship these goods, Texans saw little reason to pursue **commercial farming**. Instead, most farmers returned to **subsistence farming** after the war. That is, farmers generally grew only enough food to meet their own family's needs.

Most farm families grew corn and other grains and raised a few barnyard animals. Gardens provided fresh vegetables for the family table. Any extra eggs, milk, or vegetables were **bartered** or sold to neighbors or to merchants in town. This was a way for farm families to obtain goods and services that they could not produce themselves.

The Rise of Tenant Farming

Before a family could begin farming, it needed land. Unfortunately, few Texans owned land. Many lost their land because of financial difficulties during and after the Civil War. Some plantation owners, however, had large amounts of land going to waste. These landowners divided their plantations into smaller sections that could be sold to farm families. If the families could not afford to buy the land outright, they could rent it. The practice of renting land for farming is known as **tenant farming**—a way of life that Texans would maintain for decades to come.

The problem with tenant farming is that it seldom allows a tenant farmer to earn enough money to buy the land. Unlike purchase payments, rental payments never end. Even after years of payments, a tenant farmer is no closer to owning the land than when he or she started. Few families had the cash to pay for land, so tenant farming was a way to survive. It

commercial farming *producing crops for sale*

subsistence farming *producing almost all the goods needed by the farm family, usually with a little extra for sale*

barter *to trade one product or service for another*

tenant farming *the practice of renting the land on which one lives and farms*



To Mathematics

Taking out a loan was risky for poor tenant farmers. Often, lenders would charge an interest rate of up to 150 percent. This meant the farmer had to pay back two and a half times as much as he or she had borrowed. As a result, even a small loan could put a family in debt for years. ● **At an interest rate of 150 percent, how much would a farmer owe on a loan of \$100?**

Multicultural Connections

Overcoming Illiteracy

One thing that kept many families trapped in a cycle of poverty was illiteracy, or the inability to read and write. Before the Civil War, slave owners purposely kept African Americans from learning to read. As a result, most freed slaves were illiterate. This put them at a great disadvantage in matters of business and politics.

The Freedmen's Bureau, which operated in Texas for a few years following the Civil War, recognized the need for literacy. It set up more than 100 Texas schools for African Americans. By 1900 the literacy rate for African Americans had risen to 60 percent. • **Why do you think slave owners wanted to keep African Americans illiterate?**

sharecropper *a tenant farmer who receives a share of the value of the crop, minus charges for rent and other expenses*

landlord *the owner of property that is leased or rented to another*

provided a family with land on which to live and grow the food they needed. As a result, the number of tenant farms in Texas increased from about 38 percent of all farms in 1880 to about 50 percent in 1900.

Sharecropping

A few farm families were able to pay their rent in cash. However, many families were too poor for that. Instead, they paid with a share of the crop. These tenant farmers were known as **sharecroppers**.

There were two main types of sharecroppers. Some owned their own farming equipment and bought their own supplies, such as seed and fertilizer. These families owed the **landlord** only for the use of the land. Poorer renters started out with little more than their own labor and skills. The landowner furnished the farm equipment, seed, and other supplies, as well as the land. These renters usually owed as much as half of their crops to the landlord. Often the landlord would sell the crop and then pay only a "wage" to the sharecropper. Sharecroppers could never be completely sure about the landlord's honesty in such a deal.

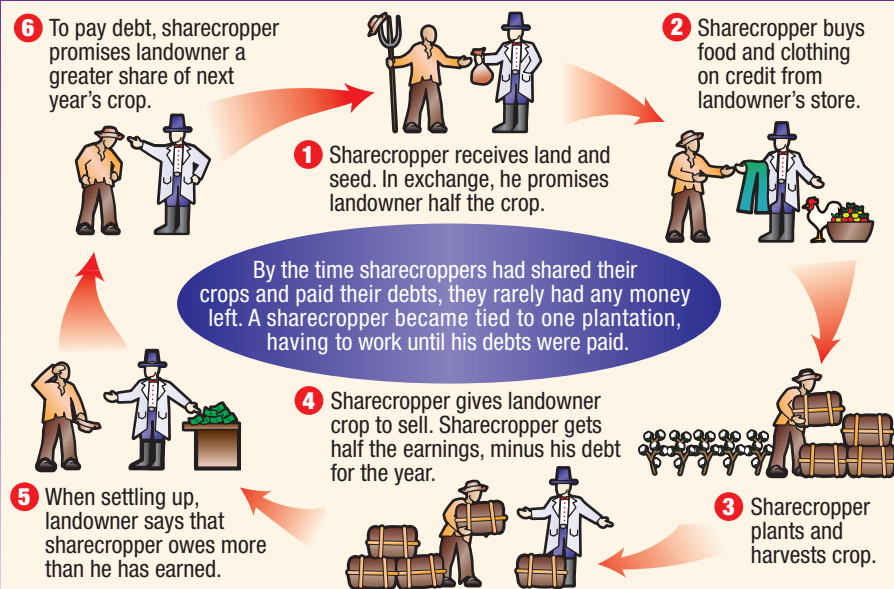
TEXAS VOICES

When he'd sell it, he'd say, "You get \$20, Joe." Well, you had to take his word for it. You didn't know what he got for the cotton or what he got for nothing. All you got to do is take his word.

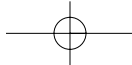
Bubba Bowser, Navasota sharecropper

In addition to owing much of their crop to the landlord, most sharecroppers had to buy food, clothing, and other necessities on credit.

SHARECROPPERS' CYCLE OF POVERTY



▲ Although Texas's agricultural future looked bright, many Texans remained poor because of a cycle of poverty. • **How did the debt cycle favor landowners?**



To secure this credit, the renter's remaining share of the crop was **mortgaged**. If the loan was not repaid, the renter's share of the crop could be taken as payment.

mortgage to give a lender legal claim to property as security until a debt is repaid


Social Adjustments After the War

The failing economy was not the only challenge Texans faced after the war. They also found themselves in a changing society. For instance, a large part of society was now missing from everyday life. Thousands of Texas families had lost husbands, fathers, and brothers in battle. Many more saw their loved ones return home sick, hurt, with missing limbs, or emotionally scarred by the war.

Furthermore, the very face of Texas society was changing. Freed African Americans now often lived, worked, and farmed alongside their white neighbors. Many white Texans were bitterly disappointed by the outcome of the Civil War. These individuals made life even more difficult for the freedmen. However, many white and African American Texans tried to work together productively.

Freedmen Turn to Sharecropping

After the war, freed African Americans entered society in need of jobs. Since most of their skills related to farming, many hoped to find work as farmhands. Unfortunately, there simply were not enough jobs to go around. This caused many African American families to turn to sharecropping. As with poor whites in Texas, this established a cycle of debt from which it was hard to break free.



IN THIS LAND OF OURS

REGION

At the end of the Civil War, an estimated 250,000 African Americans lived in Texas—making up about 30 percent of the population. Most of these were former slaves who had few job skills and could not read or write. The Freedmen's Bureau tried to help the freed slaves find jobs and establish stable lives. Some Confederate veterans resented the fact that such aid was not available to them. ● **Why do you think the government showed preference to the freed slaves over Confederate veterans?**

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

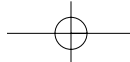
<p>Terms & Names</p> <p>Identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bond • credit • commercial farming • subsistence farming • barter • tenant farming • sharecropper • landlord • mortgage 	<p>Organizing Information</p> <p>Use a sequence chart like the one shown to identify the post-Civil War events that led thousands of Texans to become sharecroppers.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>The Confederacy is broken up.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;"/> </div> <p>Poor whites and freed African Americans turn to sharecropping.</p>	<p>Do you think Texans still would have become sharecroppers if the Texas economy had been strong after the Civil War? Explain.</p> <p>Critical Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did the Civil War change the farming economy in Texas? 2. Describe one positive way and one negative way that Texas society was affected by the Civil War. 3. Overall, do you think government aid to the freedmen was helpful or harmful? Defend your answer. <p>Interact with History </p> <p>Review your response to <i>Interact with History</i> in your Texas Notebook. How do you think unemployment and discrimination would have affected your plans? Do you think you would have become a sharecropper? Why or why not?</p>
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ACTIVITY

Citizenship

Research Texas towns that were established by African Americans after emancipation. Choose one of the towns and present a report on its location, founders, and history.

Go to www.celebratingtexas.com to research the Activity topic.



SECTION



Railroads Lead to Commercial Farming

Why It Matters Now

Without the development of railroads, Texas might never have become the agricultural leader it is today.

TERMS & NAMES

commerce, Panic of 1873, James S. Hogg, Blackland Prairie, Robert Munger

OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the effects of transportation on Texas agriculture.
2. Identify the railroads' impact on geographic distributions in Texas.
3. Explain the impact of technology on farming in Texas.

MAIN IDEA

To sell their crops, farmers needed a reliable and inexpensive way to transport goods. Railroads solved this problem. Soon, commercial farming became a major Texas industry.

WHAT Would You Do?

Write your response to *Interact with History* in your *Texas Notebook*.



INTERACT WITH HISTORY

Imagine that your family lives on a small farm in the 1870s. One day, while traveling, your wagon comes to a halt at some railroad tracks. This is the first time you have seen one of the new railroads that you have heard about. You hear a loud rumble, and a giant iron engine speeds past, pulling cars of grain, goods, and people. How do you think the railroads will change your life on the farm? Interview a classmate on the same topic. Pose questions about the connection between railroads and population distribution.

commerce *the buying and selling of goods for transport from place to place*

An ox cart hauling cotton

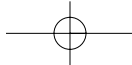


Transportation Problems in Texas

After the Civil War only a few farms in Texas grew cotton or other cash crops. Most Texas farmers were stuck in a life of subsistence farming. Commercial agriculture can survive only when there is an efficient way to bring goods and people together. Farmers need to ship crops to the people who want to buy them, and they need to have goods and equipment shipped to their farms. Transportation in postwar Texas was very limited. The rivers could support shipping only for about 50 miles inland. The rest of the state was limited to transportation by ox cart, which was slow and costly. As a result, many Texans were almost completely isolated from **commerce**.

Railroads Provide a Solution

Before the Civil War, railroads began to cross the United States, providing a fast, efficient form of transportation. Understanding the benefits of this new



technology, the Texas government allowed railroad companies to begin building tracks in the state. The construction was paid for with land grants along the path of the tracks.

By the time the war started, however, only slightly more than 100 miles of track had been built. The Civil War caused the government to focus on more urgent matters. Then the country underwent a severe economic depression known as the Panic of 1873. Eastern banks ran out of money after making bad loans. The panic led to banks closing across the country and the collapse of the stock market. Many railroad companies, which depended on the banks for loans, went out of business or stopped operations. Work on the Dallas and Wichita Railroad, for example, stopped until 1877, when Dallas citizens voted to use city funds for the project.

Eventually, the postwar economy settled down. The period from 1876 to 1885 was a time of rapid expansion for railroads. Almost half the track in Texas was built during that time. By 1890 the state had more than 8,000 miles of track. By the turn of the century, Texas led the nation in miles of railroad track constructed.

Railroads Encourage Expansion

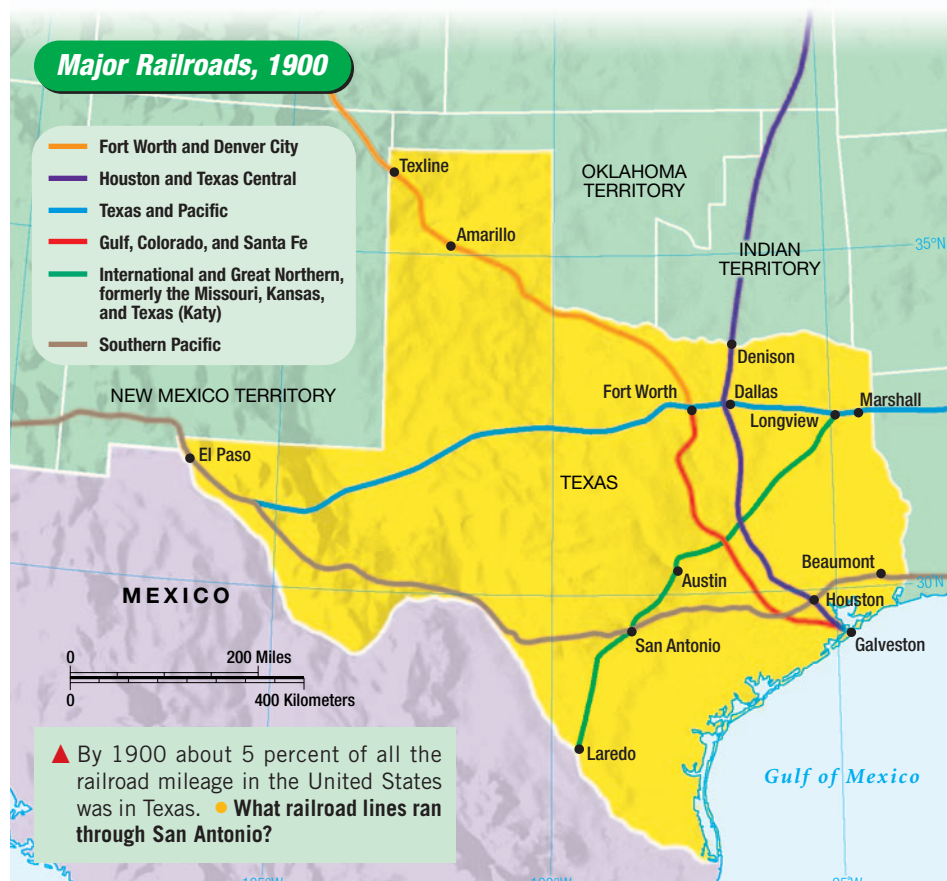
By the early 1900s goods could be shipped to any place in the United States from almost anywhere in Texas. This encouraged farmers to buy land for large, commercial farms. The railroad companies, which controlled



James Stephen Hogg



James Hogg, the first governor born in Texas, was elected in 1890 for his views on railroad regulation. He argued that some businesses, including the railroads, were not respecting Texas law. He wanted to bring them under government control. Hogg and the legislature established the Texas Railroad Commission in 1891 to fight unfair practices, establish fair rates, and encourage competition among railroad companies. ● **What do you think might have happened if the Texas government had not regulated the railroads?**



Advertisement for the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad



- ▲ The railroad bridge over the Pecos River, built in 1892, was the highest railroad bridge in North America and the third highest in the world.
- **What do you think were the advantages of traveling across the Great Plains by train rather than by wagon?**

a great deal of Texas land, now saw an opportunity to profit. They divided up the land on either side of the tracks and sold it at low prices to farmers and businesses. Farms near the railroads could easily ship their goods to market, and local businesses hoped to sell goods to the farmers. Over time, many bustling cities grew up along Texas railroads.

Another effect of railroad land sales was the expansion of farming into West Texas. Until then, the dry lands of West Texas had attracted only a handful of settlers. In hopes of selling more land, the railroads encouraged farmers to move to the vast Texas plains. Brochures and fliers described the rich soil and wide-open spaces of West Texas. In some cases, farmers were taken to see model farms in the region. There they saw the types of crops that could be grown and state-of-the-art methods of farming.

Farmers Discover a Water Source

Settlers came from other parts of Texas, other states, and overseas to buy cheap railroad land in West Texas. But land was cheap because rainfall was limited. However, settlers soon discovered underground water on the plains. Windmills could pump that water to the surface for the settlers and their livestock. The settlers used the water for drinking, bathing, and washing, and for watering small gardens. Soon windmills dotted the plains of West Texas.

Windmills became very popular in West Texas. Because almost every farm had one, they soon became a symbol of civilization on the barren plains. One observer described the landscape.

TEXAS VOICES

There were no roads, no towns for miles and miles. You moved from windmill to windmill, and you got your directions from windmill to windmill.

Cowboy James Stallings, ca. 1890



HOW WINDMILLS WORK

A well is drilled to an underground water source. Next, a hollow pipe is driven through the well, and a pump is attached to the pipe. The pump—which is activated by a large, wind-powered fan—sucks the water up through the pipe and into a tank or barrel where it can be stored for later use.

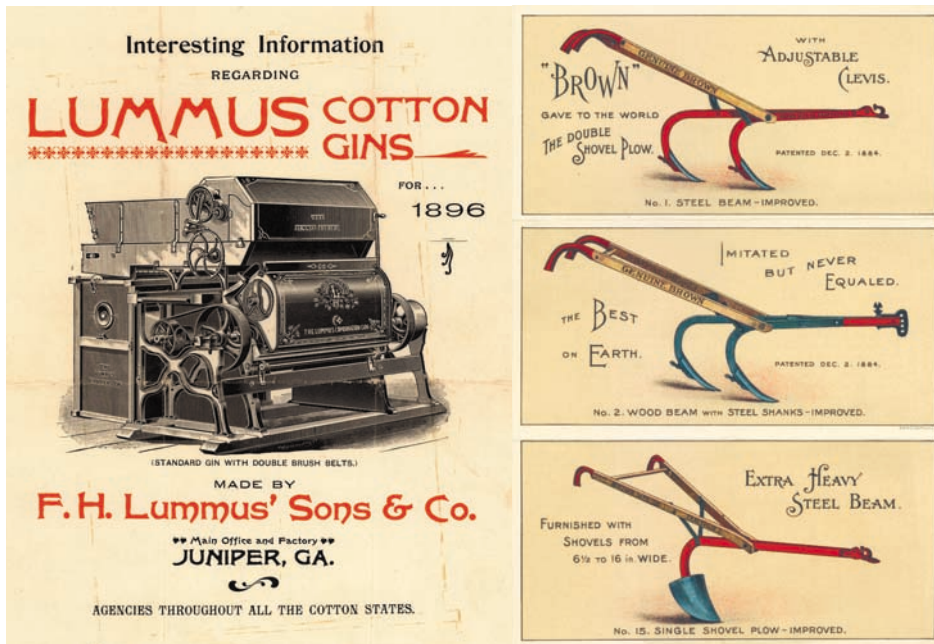
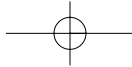
- **Why do you think the windmill is well suited to West Texas farming?**



Technology Revolutionizes Farming

The railroads allowed farmers to move goods to market faster and cheaper. Shipping a 500-pound bale of cotton from Denison to Houston by ox cart cost about \$15 and took two weeks. This same bale could be sent by rail in one day at a cost of about \$4. It is no wonder that Texas farmers considered the railroads miracles of modern technology.

Another important technological development was the steel plow, which was stronger and longer lasting than iron plows of the time. The Kelly Plow Company in the Marshall-Jefferson area of Texas began producing these plows. The “Blue Kelly” soon became a standard, especially in breaking the tough soil of the Blackland Prairie.



Technology such as the cotton gin and the steel plow made cotton production more efficient. How do you think this technology affected the Texas economy?



To Technology

Even though cotton was still picked by hand, Robert Munger's cotton gin did the rest. Cotton was drawn into the steam-powered machine through a tube to a separator, where the cottonseeds were pulled from the cotton lint. The lint then traveled by conveyor belt to be cleaned. Next it flowed by air stream to a condenser, where it was formed into a batt, or a packed, square layer. Finally, the batt slid down a chute and was then made into a bale. How was this invention a step forward in processing cotton?

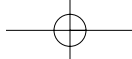
In the early 1880s Robert Munger of Mexia developed a new method of separating seeds from cotton that processed the cotton much more quickly and cheaply than before. About the same time, major technological developments made cottonseed much faster and cheaper to process. In the years to come, processing cottonseed for European markets would become a very profitable state industry. Together, all of these innovations helped create an explosion in cotton production that would change Texas forever.

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

<p>Terms & Names</p> <p>Identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commerce • Panic of 1873 • James S. Hogg • Blackland Prairie • Robert Munger 	<p>Organizing Information</p> <p>Use a graphic organizer like the one shown to list four items that helped Texans move toward commercial farming.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMERCIAL FARMING IN TEXAS</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>Explain how each item helped Texas farmers succeed at commercial agriculture.</p>	<p>Critical Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did the development of a cheap, fast, reliable source of transportation affect farming in Texas? Explain. 2. Describe how the railroads changed the population distribution in Texas. 3. Compare the windmill with methods of drawing water today. How are they alike? How are they different? 	<p>Interact with History</p> <p>Review your response and that of your classmate to <i>Interact with History</i> in your Texas Notebook. Imagine that you do not live on a farm. In this case, how do you think the railroads will change your life? Interview your classmate again. Pose specific questions about how he or she will be affected by railroads.</p>
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ACTIVITY
Science, Technology & Society

Research and debate as a class whether (1) commercial farming led to advances in farming technology or (2) advances in farming technology led to commercial farming.



SKILLBUILDER

Social Studies

Finding the Main Idea

LEARNING *the Skill*

Most paragraphs have a main idea. A main idea is the most important idea in a section of information. It summarizes what the paragraph is about. Sometimes it is stated in the paragraph. Other times it is not stated.

Often, a stated main idea is found in the first sentence of a paragraph. The details in the sentences that follow should support it. Sometimes the main idea is in the last sentence of the paragraph. When none of a paragraph's sentences express a central idea, then the main idea is unstated. In this case, you need to combine the details of the paragraph to find the main idea that relates all the sentences to one another.

To find the main idea, use the following steps:

- Read the first and last sentences of the paragraph.
- Examine the paragraph for details that support or explain one of these sentences. After studying the details, determine which sentence best summarizes them—the first or the last.
- To identify an unstated main idea, examine the details of the paragraph. What do they all have in common? What is the overall message?
- Evaluate the main idea that you have identified. Is it the most important idea of the paragraph?

PRACTICING *the Skill*

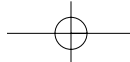
Read the following excerpt about farming in *Texas from Texas, An Illustrated History* by David G. McComb.

Texans both loved and hated their railroads. Immigrants used them to move westward, and the railway lines encouraged settlement so that they could sell the land given them by the state. Farmers and ranchers used the railroads to send their cattle and cotton to market and to receive supplies. The train became a symbol of modernity, and towns would pay to have the trains chug with all their noise and smoke right down the main street. When times were hard, however, the railroads became a target for people's anger. . . . Texans complained about railroad abuses, and at the same time wanted more railways.

1. Is the main idea stated or unstated?
2. What is the main idea of the paragraph?
3. What details support the main idea?
4. What conclusion can you draw from the paragraph?

APPLYING *the Skill*

Turn to Section 2 of Chapter 18. Choose a paragraph to examine. Use the steps at left to identify the main idea and its supporting details. Write them on a sheet of paper. Next, show the paragraph you selected to a classmate and repeat the task. Then, compare your answers. Did you both identify the same main idea? If not, why not?



SECTION



Cotton: The King of Texas Crops

Why It Matters Now

Today, Texas produces about one-fourth of all cotton grown in the United States.

TERMS & NAMES

manufacturing, Blackland Prairie, boll weevil

OBJECTIVES

1. Explain how cotton production affected the Texas economy.
2. Analyze the relationship between commercial agriculture, industrialization, and the growth of cities.
3. Explain why immigrants traveled to Texas.

MAIN IDEA

The success of cotton production changed the face of Texas. It created a growth in industry and caused an entire culture to spring up around cotton farming.

A REAL-LIFE STORY

Although the production of cotton ushered in a new era for Texas, life in the cotton fields was hard. Alf Muckle, a cotton farmer near Galveston, shared some of the difficulties in this letter to his cousin:

Dear Cousin,

This has been a season with me. My mind has been stretched to its utmost tension to brave the storm that we little thought would come over the country this time last year. The destroying of the crops, the long siege of the yellow fever, the low price of cotton, and other ills I have had to keep my mind steadily fixed not to break or loose [sic] my Credit. . . .

Alf Muckle, letter to Mrs. James S. Hanna, April 26, 1868

As you will read in this section, cotton farming provided Texas with great hope and an entire cotton culture.

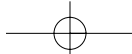
Cotton Demands Time and Resources

Cotton production ruled the farming industry in the late 1800s. The expansion of the railroad system provided more opportunities for Texas farmers to respond to the nation's and the world's demand for cotton. No crop made more money.

Growing cotton on a large scale changed the lives of Texas farmers in many ways. Farmers spent most of their time in the fields taking care of their commercial crops. Less time was spent on activities that had once been a part of their everyday routine. Household items that farmers once made themselves were now purchased from stores. Leather goods, eating utensils, clothing, and other supplies were generally bought with the money left over after selling the cotton and paying debts.



Cotton pickers along the Texas coast



KING COTTON

"CIRKUT" PHOTO, COPYRIGHT 1907
BY J. C. COOVERT, 63 N. MAIN.

manufacturing *producing goods either by hand or with machines for sale in large numbers*

The cotton farmers' demand for store-bought items contributed to the birth of new industries in Texas. In turn, increased **manufacturing** led to the growth of cities. As cities grew larger, lumber was needed to build houses and other buildings. By 1900 there were 637 sawmills in the state. The number of flour mills and gristmills also increased, making them leading Texas industries. Houston and Dallas became major manufacturing centers. All this industrial growth provided services for farmers and jobs to workers who lived in the cities.

Cotton Towns Thrive

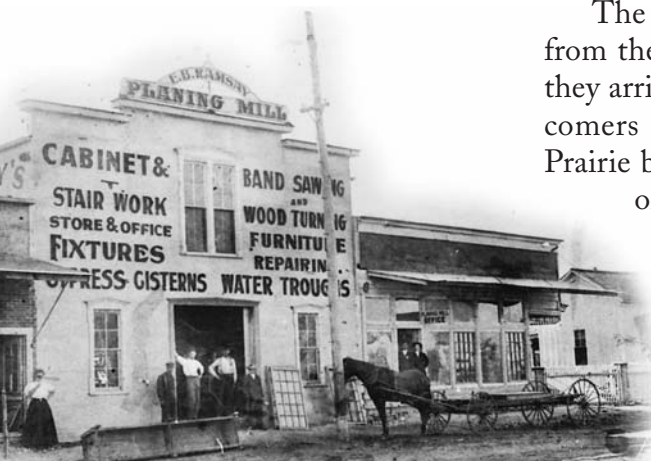
Wherever cotton was farmed and shipped by railroad, towns blossomed. The cotton industry contributed to the growth of Houston, Galveston, and Waco. Within these towns merchants, craftspeople, and other professionals provided services to the farming community. Life in cotton towns was closely tied to farming. A poor crop meant hard times for everyone. The hardware dealer and the grocer watched the sky for rain clouds just as the cotton farmer did.

The attraction of commercial farming drew thousands of immigrants from the southern United States and from Europe. Beginning in 1872, they arrived in the Blackland Prairie to grow cotton. Most of these newcomers worked as tenant farmers and sharecroppers. The Blackland Prairie became the main cotton growing region in Texas, partly because of immigration to the area and the construction of rail lines.

A Cotton Culture Emerges

During the late 1880s cotton was king—and Texans' lifestyles reflected it. Activities were planned around the cotton season. Planting began in the spring, cultivation occurred during the summer, and harvesting started in late August.

▼ Cotton towns grew to serve cotton farmers with needed supplies. This store provided furniture, cabinets, and materials to build wells. • **What other kinds of supplies do you think cotton farmers needed?**





Religious revival meetings and elections were scheduled in the summer when the farmwork was slow. Fairs, weddings, and other activities were common in October and the following months. At that time of year, the crop was in from the fields. If the crop yield was high, people had money to spend at area businesses.

If little cotton was produced, everyone felt the effects. Bad years were to be expected. Weather and cotton prices were unpredictable. The farmers and the farm-serving towns were left to survive any way they knew how. Cotton prices dropped severely several times after the Civil War. There were numerous statewide droughts in the mid-1880s. Adding to the misfortunes, the boll weevil infested cotton along the Rio Grande in 1894. This pest rapidly spread to the Sabine and Red Rivers. It was responsible for destroying countless Texas cotton crops by the turn of the century. Even though the boll weevil was a major concern for cotton communities, weary farmers did their best to keep a sense of humor.

TEXAS VOICES

The first time I saw the boll weevil, he was sittin' on the square.
The next time I saw the boll weevil, he had his whole family there!

“When the Boll Weevil Comes to Texas,” song

Credit Encourages Cash Crops

In a bad year farming families could go without new clothes and other luxuries. However, they still had to buy necessities such as seed and farming equipment. Most farmers turned to borrowing money or buying items on credit. The credit system they used was similar to today's. People bought what they needed at the time and paid for it later. Unfortunately, this caused many to acquire debts that were difficult to pay off.

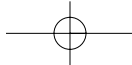
▲ The success of cotton as a commercial crop made farmers more dependent on the land. ● How did growing cotton instead of food crops change the day-to-day life of farmers?



A DESTRUCTIVE PEST

Discovered in Mexico, the boll weevil is about one-fourth of an inch long and changes its color from white to black as it gets older. In the spring, groups of these weevils feed on young cotton plants and lay their eggs in the new cotton bolls. The damaged boll falls to the ground and becomes food for the insects when the eggs hatch. It was reported that in 1894 the boll weevil destroyed 90 percent of the cotton crops in southern Texas.





Early mule-drawn cotton harvesters

Modern cotton harvesting machine

COTTON GROWTH IN TEXAS Spanish missionaries were the first to grow cotton in Texas. As early as 1745, one San Antonio mission produced several thousand pounds per year. Anglo American colonists began planting cotton in 1821. By the end of the century Texans were growing more than 3.5 million bales of cotton on

over 7 million acres of land. Today, cotton continues to be a major crop in Texas. Annual production has averaged 4.45 million bales since 1986. Most years, Texas leads the nation in cotton production, growing one-fourth of the cotton in the United States. ● **Why do you think cotton has continued to be one of Texas's main cash crops?**

Once a farmer began to buy on credit, it was very difficult to break the chain of borrowing. One year's profit typically was used to pay the debts of the year before. To feed the family and plant the following year's crop, the farmer needed to borrow again. A cycle developed that kept the farmer in debt and supported the growth of cash crops. The very fact that a farmer owed money tended to make growing a cash crop necessary. Money was needed to pay debts, and who could afford to raise crops that did not bring in cash?

Even though farmers and the workers who picked the cotton helped create the wealth that made Texas great, most failed to escape the never-ending cycle of poverty.

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

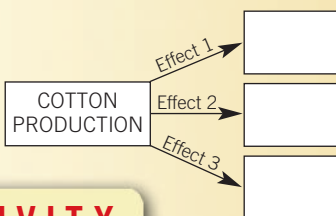
Terms & Names

Identify:

- manufacturing
- Blackland Prairie
- boll weevil

Organizing Information

The increase in cotton production resulted in many changes in Texas society. Use a cause-and-effect diagram like the one shown to organize the effects of cotton production on Texas.



Look again at the effects you listed. Which effect do you think had the greatest impact on Texas? Why?

Critical Thinking

1. How did cotton production affect the Texas economy?
2. What is the relationship between commercial agriculture, industrialization, and the growth of cities?

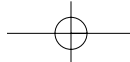
A Real-Life Story

Review *A Real-Life Story* on page 391. After reading this farmer's letter to his cousin, how do you think crop yields affected the way Texans lived?

ACTIVITY

History

Songs and poems were often written about cotton farming in Texas. Write your own poem or song about cotton or life in a cotton town and share it with your classmates.



SKILL BUILDER

Map & Geography

Analyzing a Product Map



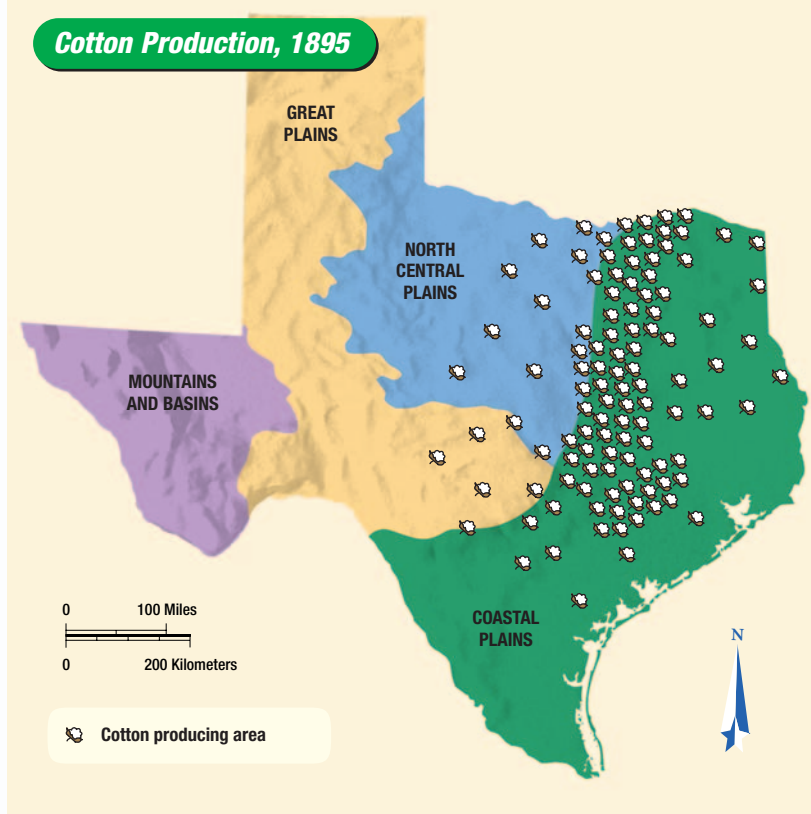
LEARNING *the Skill*

A product map shows the distribution of something grown or produced in a state, region, or country. This kind of special-purpose map may show where industrial goods such as automobiles or computers are produced, where minerals such as oil or iron ore are found, or where agricultural crops such as cotton or corn are grown. The map on this page shows you see where most of Texas's cotton was produced in 1895.

To analyze a product map, use the following steps:

- Read the map title. It tells what product is being illustrated. It often tells the area that the map is showing and the time frame that is represented.
- Read the map key. The key is important because it tells what the symbols on the map represent. For example, the map on this page uses a cotton boll to show areas where cotton was produced.
- Examine the map as a whole. What are your overall impressions of cotton production in Texas? Where are the symbols located? Are they distributed equally across the state?
- Analyze the symbols on the map more closely. Look for areas on the map where the symbols are clustered, spread out, or absent. What patterns do you see? What may account for these patterns?

Cotton Production, 1895



PRACTICING *the Skill*

Study the map above. Then answer the questions that follow.

1. Which two regions of Texas had the greatest cotton production?
2. Which two regions had little or no cotton production?
3. What pattern can you see in the map? How might this pattern be explained?

APPLYING *the Skill*

Using an almanac or online resources, research cotton production in Texas for the most recent year for which data is available. Use this data to create your own cotton production map of Texas. Compare your map to the one on this page. What areas lead the state in cotton production now? Are these the same areas that led the state in 1895? Write a brief report that compares and contrasts cotton production in Texas then and now.



Go to www.celebratingtexas.com to research this topic.

CHAPTER

18

ASSESSMENT

TERMS & NAMES

Explain the significance of each of the following:

1. cycle of poverty
2. Panic of 1873
3. James S. Hogg
4. Blackland Prairie
5. Robert Munger
6. boll weevil

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Postwar Changes to Texas Farming (pages 382–385)

1. What were the advantages and disadvantages of tenant farming?
2. Why do you think there were so few farming jobs available after the Civil War?

Railroads Lead to Commercial Farming (pages 386–389)

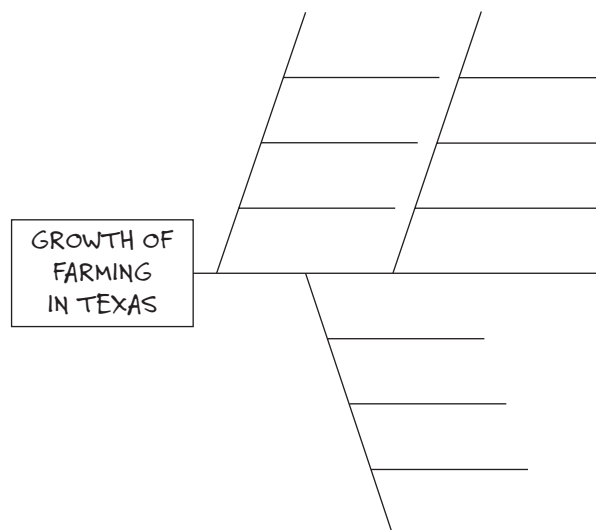
3. Why do you think the railroad companies wanted more farmers to move to West Texas?
4. What do you think accounted for the time and cost differences involved in shipping goods by ox cart and by train?

Cotton: The King of Texas Crops (pages 391–394)

5. What are two industries that grew because of increased cotton production in Texas?
6. How did credit affect commercial farming?

READING SOCIAL STUDIES*After You Read*

Review your completed fishbone map. How did farming in Texas change between 1865 and 1895?

**CRITICAL THINKING***Contrasting Information*

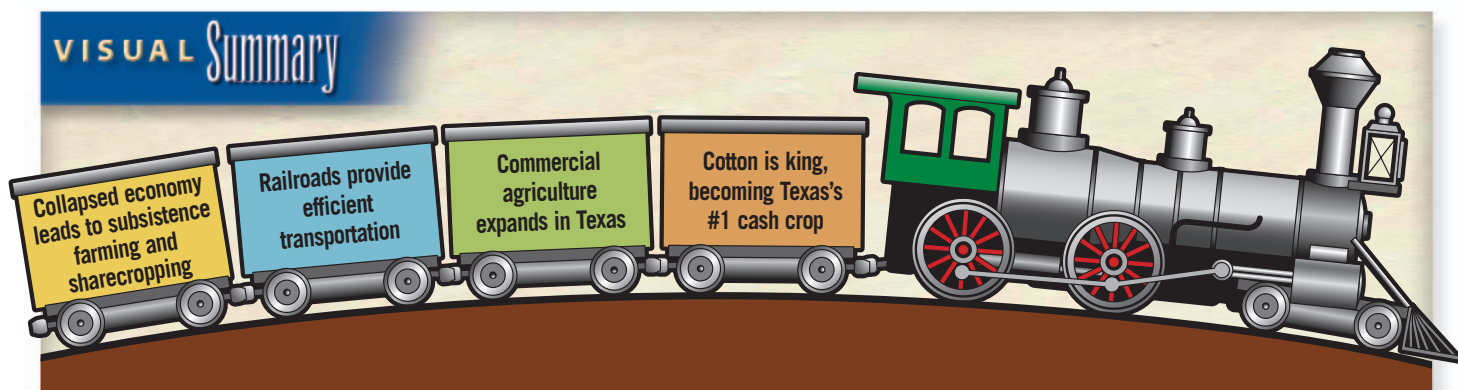
1. What do you think were the main differences between working on a farm as a slave and working on a farm as an employee?

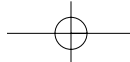
Making Inferences

2. Why do you think the government of Texas awarded large land grants to the railroad companies? How do you think most Texans felt about this practice?

Recognizing Cause and Effect

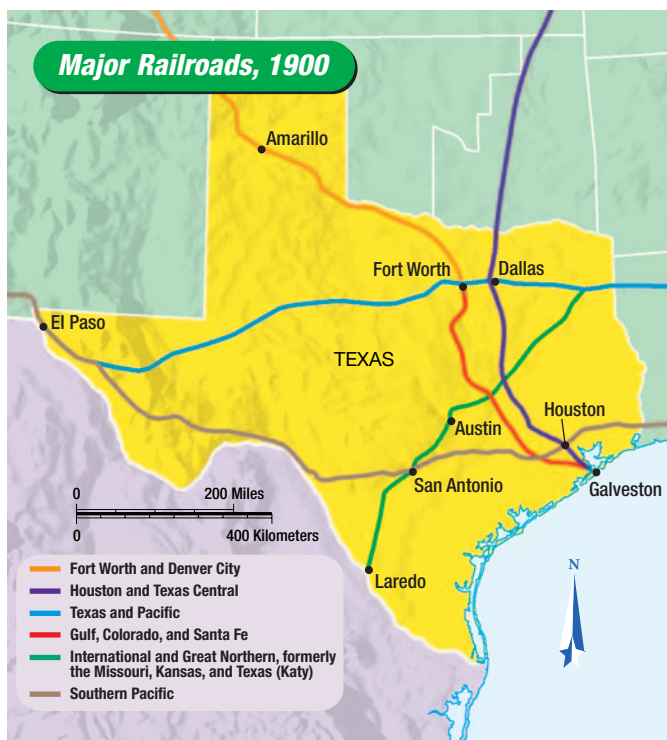
3. Why did a cotton culture develop in many Texas towns? Do you think cotton was good or bad for the towns' economies?

VISUAL Summary



MAP & GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

Applying Skills



1. In what major city does the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe line begin?
2. According to this map, what do Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston have in common?

SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLBUILDER

Finding the Main Idea

There were two main types of sharecroppers. Some owned their own farming equipment and bought their own supplies, such as seed and fertilizer. These families owed the landowner only for the use of the land. Poorer renters, however, started out with little more than their own labor and skills. The landowner furnished the farm equipment, seed, and other supplies, as well as the land. These renters usually owed as much as half of their crops to the landlord.

1. Is the main idea stated or unstated?
2. What is the main idea of the paragraph?
3. What details support the main idea?



CHAPTER PROJECT

Role-Playing Working in groups of three or four, assign each person one of the following roles: Texas sharecropper, tenant farmer, or landowner. As that character, describe your experiences in Texas before and after the railroads were built. Pose discussion questions on topics such as the following: How did the geographic distributions change after the railroads were built? What were the similarities and differences between the lives of sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and landowners?



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY ACTIVITY

Changes in Transportation

Before the Civil War Texas farmers had no efficient way to get goods to and from centers of commerce. Once the railroads arrived, however, farmers only had to travel to the nearest shipping station to carry on trade. In your Texas Notebook, write a brief essay on how do you think these Texans' lives and business opportunities improved even more with the invention of the automobile.



CITIZENSHIP ACTIVITY

Help for Farmers As a result of slavery, freedmen faced many challenges, including limited job skills. Newly freed slaves often had trouble finding jobs and were unable to obtain credit to purchase land. Many African American families resorted to sharecropping. In 1890 Robert Lloyd Smith established the Farmers' Home Improvement Society to help African American farmers. The Society fought to abolish the sharecropping system that kept families in a cycle of poverty. In addition, the society encouraged the use of improved farming methods, promoted home and farm ownership, and provided health benefits for its members. Research the work of the Farmers' Home Improvement Society and similar organizations that aid farmers today. Summarize your findings and present them to the class.



Go to www.celebratingtexas.com to research this topic.