

SSWH14: Analyze the Age of Revolutions



LATIN AMERICAN
REVOLUTIONS

Element B: Identify the causes and results of the Latin American Revolutions (1808-1825)

Latin American Revolutions (1808-1825)

- Like many pre-revolutionary states, Latin America was a deeply divided society.
 - Political power was virtually monopolized by a European born elite known as peninsulars.
 - Economic power and wealth was primarily in the hands of American born whites known as creoles.
 - The rest of the population, the vast majority, was made up of mixed race mestizos, Indians, and free and enslaved Africans.
- The opportunity for revolution in Latin America came with Napoleon's invasion of Spain and Portugal.
 - Many of the creoles of Latin America were educated in Europe where they picked up the ideas of the Enlightenment.
 - When the Spanish king was replaced with a Frenchman, these creoles refused to support the foreign monarch and revolution ensued.
 - Early creole revolutionaries faced defeat because they failed to rally the mestizo, Indian and African populations to their cause.



Latin American Revolutions (1808-1825)

- With time however, leaders like Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín built large armies in South America by promising Enlightenment inspired reform.
 - Bolívar and Martín fought Spanish forces from 1811 to 1824 winning independence for all of Spanish South America.
- A similar, though more conservative process played out in Mexico leading to Mexico's independence in 1821.



Latin American Revolutions (1808-1825)

□ The early revolutionary movement in Mexico started among the Indian and mestizo peasants in 1810 when a Spanish priest named Miguel Hidalgo led an attack on Mexico City.

- This peasant uprising scared the creoles who cooperated with peninsulars in putting it down.
- But, by 1821 Mexico's creoles were ready for independence which they achieved September of 1821.



□ Brazil's path to independence lacked the violence of the other independence movements of the Americas.

- The royal family of Portugal fled to Brazil after Napoleon's invasion.
 - In 1820, King John VI returned to Portugal to restore this power and left his son Pedro as regent of Brazil.
- Pedro was deeply inspired by the Enlightenment and declared Brazil an independent empire in 1822.
 - Pedro proved to be more liberal and reform minded than his subjects which eventually led to his abdication in 1831.
- His son, Pedro II took power and ruled until 1889 when the monarchy ended and Brazil became a republic.


