

## Mexican-American War Act-It-Out

Follow the narration below to create an act-it-out about the Mexican-American War. When your teacher says *Action!*, the actors will move, act, and speak as described. When your teacher says *Audience!*, the audience members will say “It is our manifest destiny!” loudly and in unison.

**Locations:** Your teacher will point out the locations of Washington, D.C., the Rio Grande, Nueces River, New Mexico, and California on the floor map, as well as Mexico south of the map.

**Characters and starting places:** President Polk (Washington, D.C.), two Mexican officials (Rio Grande), two U.S. soldiers (near Rio Grande), three more U.S. soldiers to play the U.S. Army (stay seated)

### Narration

- In 1845, Mexico owned the California and New Mexico territories. **President Polk** offered to buy these territories, but Mexico refused. Polk was disappointed and began pacing the floor, trying to think of a way to gain these lands. (*Action!*)
- Relations between Mexico and the United States were strained at this time. The United States had recently annexed Texas and claimed the Rio Grande as the border. **Mexican officials** pointed to the Rio Grande and said, “The Rio Grande is in *our* land!” (*Action!*)
- These **Mexican officials** also pointed to the Nueces River and said, “You belong here, north of the Nueces River!” This conflict would only become worse. (*Action!*)
- One day in 1846, **U.S. soldiers** were patrolling along the Rio Grande. Believing that the U.S. soldiers were on Mexican land, a group of Mexican soldiers attacked. When it was all over, 16 **U.S. soldiers** were wounded or lay dead on the ground. (*Action!*)
- When **President Polk** heard the news, he was outraged. “Mexico has invaded our land!” he declared. (*Action!*)
- Congress declared war on Mexico, and some Americans celebrated. (*Audience!*)
- The Mexican-American War raged for the next two years. First, the **U.S. army** invaded New Mexico and easily took the territory without firing a shot. (*Action!*)
- The **U.S. army** then invaded California and captured the territory with very few problems. (*Action!*)
- Next, the **U.S. army** invaded Mexico, where they faced fierce fighting. (*Action!*)
- Eventually, the Mexican army surrendered. By early 1848, the United States had won the war and gained control of half of Mexico’s lands. Many Americans cheered and celebrated. (*Audience!*)