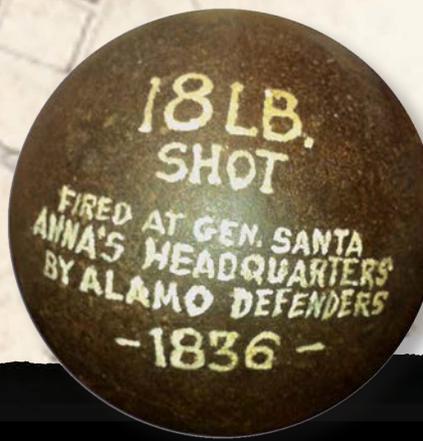
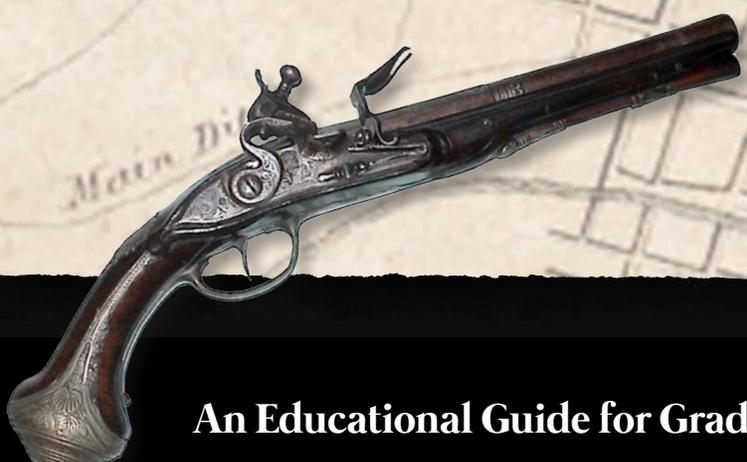


BATTLE FOR TEXAS

THE EXPERIENCE SM

LEGENDS, HEROES & LEGACY



An Educational Guide for Grade 4

Battle For Texas.com



BATTLE FOR TEXAS

THE EXPERIENCE

LEGENDS, HEROES & LEGACY

To Teachers and Students

In the history of Texas, there have never been 13 days as significant as the Battle of the Alamo.

That is because the Battle of the Alamo was not just an event that helped put Texans on the path to independence. It was an event that became a symbol of what it means to be a Texan.

Every student in the state learns early on to “Remember the Alamo.”

But what needs to be remembered is more than the individual names and actions of the people involved. Just as important are the reasons the Mexican forces of General Antonio López de Santa Anna took action at the Alamo; the conflicts over land in the history of early Texas; and the beliefs of the Alamo defenders who took a stand for independence.

Most important of all are the spirit and character demonstrated by the Alamo defenders, because those qualities have come to represent the qualities that Texans take pride in and seek to live by.

These are the qualities that have made Texans successful from frontier days to the present.

The courage and determination demonstrated by those defenders, for example, were the same that were needed to settle Texas when it was still undeveloped territory.

The willpower they showed in the face of long odds was the same willpower needed to become an independent Republic.

The commitment to their cause — and to each other — was the same as the commitment needed to organize and become a state of the United States.

And the unity and pride they demonstrated were the same Texas has demonstrated over and over in efforts to become a strong and successful state.

The spirit of the Alamo lives on because it is the spirit that Texans LIVE BY.

The Alamo is not just a landmark in Texas history. It is a symbol of qualities Texans seek to live by.

Goals of this Learning Guide.

This Learning Guide has been created to introduce students to the educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience** and to give them greater appreciation and understanding of what they will see, feel and learn by visiting.

Battle for Texas: The Experience brings history to life by taking students inside the Battle of the Alamo to experience it as the defenders experienced it. It is an immersive approach in which students will gain greater understanding not only of WHAT the defenders went through, but HOW they would have felt going through it.

As students advance through the re-created rooms of the Alamo, and feel the tensions of the battle rise, they will gain greater understanding of the hardships the defenders had to deal with.

They will gain greater understanding of the desperation that mounted with each passing day.

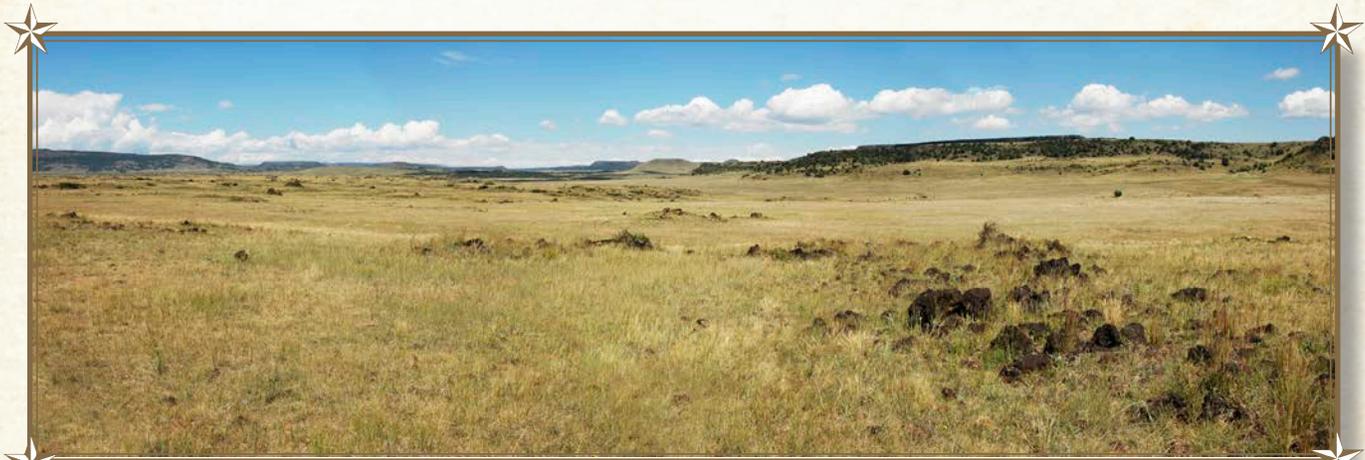
And by the end of **Battle for Texas: The Experience**, students will have gained greater appreciation of the character and courage of the defenders — and why the spirit of the Alamo lives on.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been crafted to support the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards in Social Studies and English Language Arts and Reading for Grade 4 — one of the two grades in which Texas students deeply explore Texas history. The guide contains self-contained learning units that may be presented as single lessons or as a series of lessons, before, during or after a visit to **Battle for Texas: The Experience**. Each unit contains

interpretive text highlighting an aspect of the attraction. This text may be read by students on their own, read as a class or presented by the teacher. Each unit also contains Social Studies and English Language Arts/Reading activities that will further students' understanding of the Battle of the Alamo and the nature of historical and archaeological study through the artifacts and presentations of **Battle for Texas: The Experience**.



This Learning Guide is designed to help students understand the role land issues played leading up to the Battle of the Alamo.

§113.15. Social Studies, Grade 4

(a)(1) In Grade 4, students examine the history of Texas from the early beginnings to the present within the context of influences of North America. Historical content focuses on Texas history, including the Texas Revolution, establishment of the Republic of Texas, and subsequent annexation to the United States. Students discuss important issues, events and individuals of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Students conduct a thorough study of regions in Texas and North America resulting from human activity and from physical features. ... Students identify motivations for European exploration and colonization and reasons for the establishment of Spanish settlements and missions. Students ... identify characteristics of Spanish colonial and Mexican governments in Texas. ... Students use critical-thinking skills to identify cause-and-effect relationships, compare and contrast, and make generalizations and predictions.

(a)(2) To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as documents, biographies, novels, speeches, letters, poetry, songs, and artworks is encouraged. Where appropriate, local topics should be included. Motivating resources are available from museums, historical sites, presidential libraries, and local and state preservation societies.

(b)(2)(A) The student understands the causes and effects of European exploration and colonization of Texas and North America. The student is expected to summarize motivations for European exploration and settlement of Texas, including economic opportunity, competition and the desire for expansion.

(b)(2)(E) The student is expected to identify the accomplishments and explain the economic motivations and impact of significant empresarios, including Stephen F. Austin and Martín de León, on the settlement of Texas.

(b)(3)(A) The student understands the importance of the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas and the annexation of Texas to the United States. The student is expected to analyze the causes, major events and effects of the Texas Revolution, including the Battle of the Alamo, the Texas Declaration of Independence, the Runaway Scrape, and the Battle of San Jacinto.

(b)(3)(B) The student is expected to summarize the significant contributions of individuals such as Texans William B. Travis, James Bowie, David Crockett, George Childress and Sidney Sherman; Tejanos Juan Antonio Padilla, Carlos Espalier, Juan N. Seguin, Plácido Benavides and José Francisco Ruiz; Mexicans Antonio López de Santa Anna and Vicente Filisola; and non-combatants Susanna Dickinson and Enrique Esparza.

(b)(19) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to Texas.

(b)(21)(A) The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to differentiate between, locate and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States and Texas;

(b)(22)(A) The student communicates in written, oral and visual forms. The student is expected to use social studies terminology correctly.

(b)(22)(B) The student is expected to incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication.

(b)(22)(C) The student is expected to express ideas orally based on research and experiences.

(b)(22)(D) The student is expected to create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.

§110.15. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4

(b)(11)(A) Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to summarize the main idea and supporting details in text in ways that maintain meaning.

(b)(11)(C) Students are expected to describe explicit and implicit relationships among ideas in texts organized by cause-and-effect, sequence or comparison.

(b)(14)(A) Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to explain the positive and negative impacts of advertisement techniques used in various genres of media to impact consumer behavior.

(b)(16)(B) Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to write poems that convey sensory details using the conventions of poetry (e.g., rhyme, meter, patterns of verse).

(b)(17) Writing. Students write about their own experiences. Students are expected to write about important personal experiences.

(b)(18)(A) Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to create brief compositions.

(b)(18)(C) Students are expected to write responses to literary or expository texts and provide evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding.

A STORY ROOTED IN THE LAND

The Battle of the Alamo is one of the most inspiring stories in Texas history.

It shows the love of freedom Texans have felt, both in the past and today. It also shows their love of the land that makes Texas special.

The story of the Alamo is rooted in the richness of that land and the opportunities it offered.

The land of Texas was why settlers were willing to travel great distances for a new start in the Texas frontier. Spanish-speaking Tejano pioneers relocated from Mexico and English-speaking Anglo pioneers came from states and territories all over the United States to make new lives in Texas. The Anglo settlers later became known as Texians.

Their love of the land was deeply established long before the 13 days when the Battle of the Alamo was fought in February and March of 1836. The Texians and Tejanos who defended the Alamo were willing to put their lives on the line for the land and freedom they loved.

Early Settlers

Native Americans had lived in the Texas frontier for thousands of years before Europeans began settling the area when it was ruled by the European nation of Spain. The Spanish established missions, villages and forts throughout the region.

Settlement speeded up a lot when Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821. Mexico wanted to strengthen its new nation and invited settlers to relocate from the United States and other nations.

A key figure in the early settlements of English-speaking Texian pioneers was Stephen F. Austin. He organized a group of 297 families to create the Austin Colony in East Texas in 1823-24. The success of this group — known as “the Old Three Hundred” — led Austin to bring 900 more families to Texas in 1825 and another 800 in 1831.

Austin is often called the “Father of Texas,” and he was a very creative salesman. He was a great speaker in person, and had a knack for writing posters that made Texas sound like the greatest opportunity ever. He knew how to get people to come to Texas, and he took steps to protect them when they

arrived. He formed militias to protect his settlements, which were known as “Ranging Parties” at first and later as the Texas Rangers.

Facing Hardships

Life was not easy for settlers when they got to Texas.

Just getting to the settlement areas was a hardship. They traveled in horse-, mule- or ox-drawn covered wagons and could only move at about 2 miles per hour. At that speed they could only cover 12 to 20 miles on the best of days.

At that rate, the 80-mile trip from today’s Austin to San Antonio — which can be covered by car in just over an hour — would have taken four days or more. The 275 miles between Dallas and San Antonio would have taken at least 14 days. The 350-mile journey to San Antonio from the Louisiana border at Joaquin would have taken 17.5 days or more.

Once settled, frontier families had no guarantee of success. It was backbreaking work to plow through sod and plant crops. Livestock could be threatened by predators or disease. Weather was always a worry, from scorching summer heat to winter storms.

Growing Tension

Austin’s settlements were the beginning of what would later become the Republic of Texas.

There were, however, early signs of tension that would lead to bloodshed at the Alamo. Settlers had to become Mexican citizens and embrace the Roman Catholic faith, even if they had been Protestants before. Settlers relocating from the United States discovered religious freedom and the other rights in the U.S. Constitution were not guaranteed rights in the new Mexican nation.

When even tighter controls were set up by the Mexican leader, General Antonio López de Santa Anna, the Texians revolted in 1835. They took up arms and captured San Antonio, then known as Béxar (pronounced “BAY-har”).

Santa Anna vowed to crush the rebellion, and sent thousands of troops north to San Antonio. They arrived at the Alamo on February 23, 1836 to battle for the land of Texas.



Early settlers traveling in horse-drawn covered wagons could only cover 12 to 20 miles per day.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LAND

The educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience** takes visitors inside the Battle of the Alamo. But before that, it explores the importance of land in the history of Texas. The activities on this page look at land issues in the time of the Alamo battle and today.

Objective: To examine how lifestyle activities and attitudes can be determined through the study of artifacts.

TEKS Standards: Social Studies (a)(1); (a)(2); (b)(2)(A); (b)(2)(E); (b)(21)(A); (b)(22)(A). ELA (b)(14)(A).

Before You Visit

In the 1820s, tens of thousands of Americans left their homes to move to Texas. Making a move back then required planning. Many people had to travel weeks or even months to get to Texas. They could only take what they could carry on horseback or by wagons pulled by horses, mules or oxen. They not only had to prepare to build shelters and earn a living; they had to carry or find enough food to sustain themselves and their livestock on their journey. Before you visit **Battle for Texas: The Experience** imagine your family has decided to try for a better life in a place it takes two weeks to get to. You have only one vehicle in which to carry everything you wish to take. What would you pack to survive the trip and set up a new home when you get there? You have set aside money for gas, but you'll have to plan what to eat and where to stay on the way to travel as cheaply as possible. On the lines below, record what you would take, and discuss as a class.

Clothing:

Tools:

Furniture:

Food:

When You Visit

Battle for Texas: The Experience takes visitors inside the Alamo to feel what it would be like to be attacked and under siege. The exhibits and artifacts also reveal what it was like to live in the Texas frontier before and during the battle. Artifacts found in the kitchen, officers' rooms, soldiers' barracks and storage rooms help show what everyday living was like in Texas in the early 1800s. As you walk through each of these rooms, imagine men like William B. Travis, James Bowie, David Crockett and other defenders living there just before the battle. Use what you see to answer the questions below.

How were their daily activities similar to what you do every day?

How were they different?

What objects and tools did they use that we still use today, even if a bit modernized?

What would have made their lives more difficult than ours?

Discuss what you see with your classmates. When you return to class, use what you have seen to write a poem or short paper "Living at the Time of the Alamo."

THE CHARACTER OF HEROES

All of the men who gave up their lives defending the Alamo are considered heroes, but some are better remembered than others. Three who are mentioned most often are William B. Travis, James Bowie and David Crockett. A fourth hero, Tejano leader Juan Seguin, also served at the Alamo, but was sent away through enemy lines before the battle to deliver a message to Sam Houston, commander-in-chief of the Texian Army.

William B. Travis

William B. Travis was born in South Carolina and came to Texas in 1831 after working as a lawyer in the state of Alabama. He quickly became involved in the War Party, a political movement that wanted to separate from Mexico and form an independent Republic of Texas. He was made an officer in the newly created Texian Army, and at the young age of 26 led 30 men to the defense of the Alamo against the approaching Mexican Army. There he shared command with adventurer and knife expert James Bowie. Travis was among the first to join the fighting at the north wall when the final battle at the Alamo began on March 6. He was also one of the first to fall when he was shot in the head. Much of what



we know of Travis's heroism during the battle was retold by his slave Joe, who was one of the few survivors. During the days leading up to the final battle, Travis sent several letters pleading for supplies and reinforcements. He showed his bravery and commitment in a letter he wrote on February 24: "I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country," he wrote. "Victory or Death."

James Bowie

James Bowie was born in Kentucky and moved around with his family before settling in Louisiana. There he developed excellent hunting and fighting skills. He was especially skilled using a large hunting knife designed by his brother, who was a blacksmith. The Bowie knife became very popular throughout the frontier of Texas and the American West. As a young man he left Louisiana to seek his fortune, first as a slave trader and later buying and selling land in Louisiana and Arkansas. He was well educated and could speak and write French and Spanish as well as English. By 1830, he had moved to Texas, buying up land until he owned 700,000 acres. He settled in San Antonio de Béxar, where he became a Mexican citizen, converted to the Catholic faith and married a woman from one of the most successful families in the region. In January of 1836, Bowie and a small group of volunteers were sent by General Sam Houston to the Alamo with orders to blow up the fort. Houston felt it was too hard to defend and didn't want to risk it falling into the hands of



the Mexican Army. After arriving at the Alamo, Bowie became convinced of its importance. He decided to defend it, rather than destroy it. Bowie wrote to Houston, "...we will rather die in these ditches than give them up to the enemy." By the time of the final battle, Bowie had fallen so ill that he turned command over to Colonel William B. Travis. He spent most of the time during the battle in his bed, where he was eventually killed. Although his last moments remain a mystery, legend has it that he died fighting.

David Crockett

David Crockett — also known as "Davy" — was the most widely known of all the defenders of the Alamo. When he arrived in San Antonio to help fight off the Mexicans, he stood in the plaza of the town and spoke to the people. "I have



come to aid you all that I can in your noble cause," he said. "...All the honor that I desire is that of defending ... the liberties of our common country." The citizens were so excited they held a party, called a fandango, in his honor. Born in eastern Tennessee in 1786, Crockett left home at age 12. He became a skilled frontiersman, hunter and, later, a soldier. He served as U.S. congressman

from Tennessee for three two-year terms. When he lost his bid for a fourth term, he packed up and headed for Texas to look for business opportunities. His charm, humor and story-telling ability made him popular among the citizens and soldiers at the Alamo. During the battle, Crockett was seen all around the fort encouraging the men. On March 6, the day of the final battle, he and his Tennessee riflemen defended the south wall. According to some accounts, David Crockett was among the last to perish. How he exactly died we'll never know, but his story is the stuff of legends.

Juan Seguín

Juan Seguín was a leader among the Spanish-speaking Tejano forces that fought for the independence of Texas. He was born and grew up in San Antonio and became "alcalde," or mayor, in 1833. When Mexican president Antonio López de Santa Anna repealed the constitution and restricted the rights of settlers, Seguín began recruiting troops for the Texian Army. He was made a captain by Stephen F. Austin and participated in the capture of the Alamo by Texians and Tejanos in December 1835. Seguín was not present during the final Alamo battle of March



6, having been sent out through enemy lines with a message for Sam Houston requesting supplies and reinforcements. By the time he could return, the battle was over. He continued to fight as a cavalry officer with the Texian Army, leading a troop in the Texians' final victory over Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto. He was sent in 1837 to find and bury the remains of the Alamo defenders. After Texas became a republic, Seguín commanded forces protecting San Antonio and the western border. During the period of the Texas Republic, he served as a Texas senator and mayor of San Antonio. He continued to captain a force protecting settlers from Comanche raids and attacks by the Mexican Army.

HEROES FOR A CAUSE

The word “hero” often calls to mind characters from books or movies who were known for their amazing deeds. When we talk of the heroes of the Alamo, however, we’re talking about real people, who were ordinary in many ways. Because of the way they sacrificed their lives for a cause that Americans have always believed in, we regard them as genuine heroes. The activities in on this page explore the qualities that make people heroes, whether fighting for freedom at the Alamo or living their everyday lives.

Objective: To define the qualities and skills that make people heroes in special situations or in daily life.

TEKS Standards: Social Studies (a)(1); (a)(2); (b)(3)(B); (b)(21)(A); (b)(22)(A); (b)(22)(B). ELA (b)(14)(A); (b)(18)(A).

Skills

William B. Travis

James Bowie

David Crockett

Juan Seguín

When You Visit

Before they arrived at the Alamo, the Texian and Tejano defenders lived day-to-day lives much like many other settlers. William B. Travis was a lawyer. James Bowie was a successful land owner. Juan Seguín was a local government official. David Crockett was a frontiersman and hunter before becoming a congressman and businessman. Yet after the 13-day siege and battle at the Alamo, they became heroes of Texas history. They are remembered for what they accomplished through their skills and/or personality traits. When you visit the educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience**, you will learn a great deal about these men. As you go through the exhibit, use the spaces below to make notes about the skills and personality traits that help define them as heroes.

Traits

William B. Travis

James Bowie

David Crockett

Juan Seguín

After You Visit

As a lasting tribute to their heroism, statues of Travis, Bowie, Crockett and Seguín have been erected in Texas and in other states. When you return from **Battle for Texas: The Experience**, re-read the introduction to these activities. Then think of someone from our modern era who might be considered a hero, as a result of his/her actions. On a sheet of paper, list skills or traits that make this person a hero. Then write a letter to the mayor or city council of a community where that person would be thought a hero. Make the case for erecting a statue to recognize this special person. Be sure to support your argument with details about that person’s skills and character. Use the space at left to draw a sketch of your proposed statue or monument, and share with the class.





LESSON
THREE

AN INSPIRING FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

The Battle of the Alamo was only one episode in the fight for Texas independence from Mexico. It stands out, however, as a symbol of courage and spirit in defense of the rights and freedoms all people seek. It was fought between a small company of perhaps 200 Texians and Tejanos, and an Army of more than 2,000 Mexican soldiers.

The Mexican army was led by General Antonio López de Santa Anna, the president of Mexico. When he came to power in 1833, he feared losing control over Mexico's northern territories, which included Texas. His government tightened restrictions on settlements, immigration and the right to self-rule. Texians and Tejanos were angry with these new laws and began discussing the need for an independent Texas republic. Mexican soldiers were sent to control these rebellious settlers. After a small force of Texas rebels took the Alamo from the Mexican Army in December 1835, an angry Santa Anna assembled an army of more than 6,000 soldiers and cavalry and began a 700-mile march north in the cold of winter. In January of 1836, Sam Houston was named commander-in-chief of the newly organized Texian Army. He sent adventurer and Texian settler James Bowie with a force of 30 men to the Alamo, which was under the command of James C. Neill. William B. Travis was sent with an additional 30 men. After Neill left and some arguments over who was to be in charge, Bowie and Travis agreed to share the duties.

The Alamo consisted of a small, unfinished chapel and a series of other low buildings on about 3 acres of land. With a force of a little more than 130 men, it would be difficult to defend the 1,320-foot boundary of the perimeter walls. To make matters even more difficult, it took a team of five men to operate each of the Alamo's 18 workable cannons. From January into February, Travis and Bowie had the men dig trenches, mount cannons and reinforce the walls of the fort.

A 'Blood Red Flag'

Santa Anna and his lead force of about 1,500 men arrived on February 23. He set up camp in the town of Béxar on the opposite side of the San Antonio River from the Alamo. He showed his intention to leave no prisoners by flying a "blood red flag" from the steeple of the church in town. Colonel Travis responded with a cannon shot from the fort. The next 13 days were ones of siege, with Santa Anna surrounding the Alamo and willing to wait until the forces inside were starved and exhausted. There were some skirmishes during the day when small groups of Mexican soldiers attempted to get close enough to fire at the defenders. But the soldiers in the Alamo had better weapons — Kentucky long rifles that



Mexican soldiers at the time of the Alamo wore brightly colored uniforms and hats. Above is a Mexican helmet with gold-colored trim. At left is a Mexican Infantry shako hat.



could hit a target at 200-300 yards. The Mexican muskets were only effective at 70 yards. Santa Anna did have artillery cannons, and he bombarded the thick walls of the Alamo night and day. The bombardment kept the defenders awake at night and tired them out.

A group of 32 men from the town of Gonzales joined the defenders, and with a few other additions the Alamo force totaled about 189. Additionally there were a number of civilians, women and children, who hid in a small room by the chapel during the battle. They were the only survivors, along with Travis's slave, Joe.

Assault Before Dawn

On the night of March 5, Santa Anna began to prepare his troops for a final assault. Just before dawn on March 6, the forces advanced quietly toward the Alamo. The Mexicans were hoping to surprise the defenders, but a bugler blew the sound to advance and soldiers began shouting "Viva Santa Anna! Viva Mexico!" Hearing this, the Texian sentry on guard duty alerted the forces in the Alamo. Men scrambled to their positions and began to try to fight off the attack. Travis and Joe ran to the north wall, which was the most at risk. Travis took a bullet to the head and fell. Seeing him fall, Joe ran to hide for the remainder of the battle.

David Crockett and his Tennessee volunteers manned the south wall and repelled several advances with their sharp-shooting. James Bowie, who was known as a fierce knife fighter, was too ill to get out of bed and remained in his room. After two assaults, the Mexican forces were able to scale the walls and fighting continued within the compound. Santa Anna's soldiers moved from room to room, shooting or bayoneting the rest of the Texian and Tejano fighters. The entire battle was over in about 90 minutes.

INSIDE A RAGING BATTLE

The battle for the Alamo lasted 13 days. The first 12 were a test of how long the force of Texians and Tejanos could hold out against the much larger Mexican Army. Mexican cannons pounded the walls of the fort trying to break through. Much of the cannon fire came at night, preventing the defenders from getting any sleep. During the days, shots were fired back and forth. The activities on this page examine what participants in the Battle of Alamo experienced.

Objective: To reconstruct the experience of being at the Battle of the Alamo through the artifacts and personal accounts of those who were there.

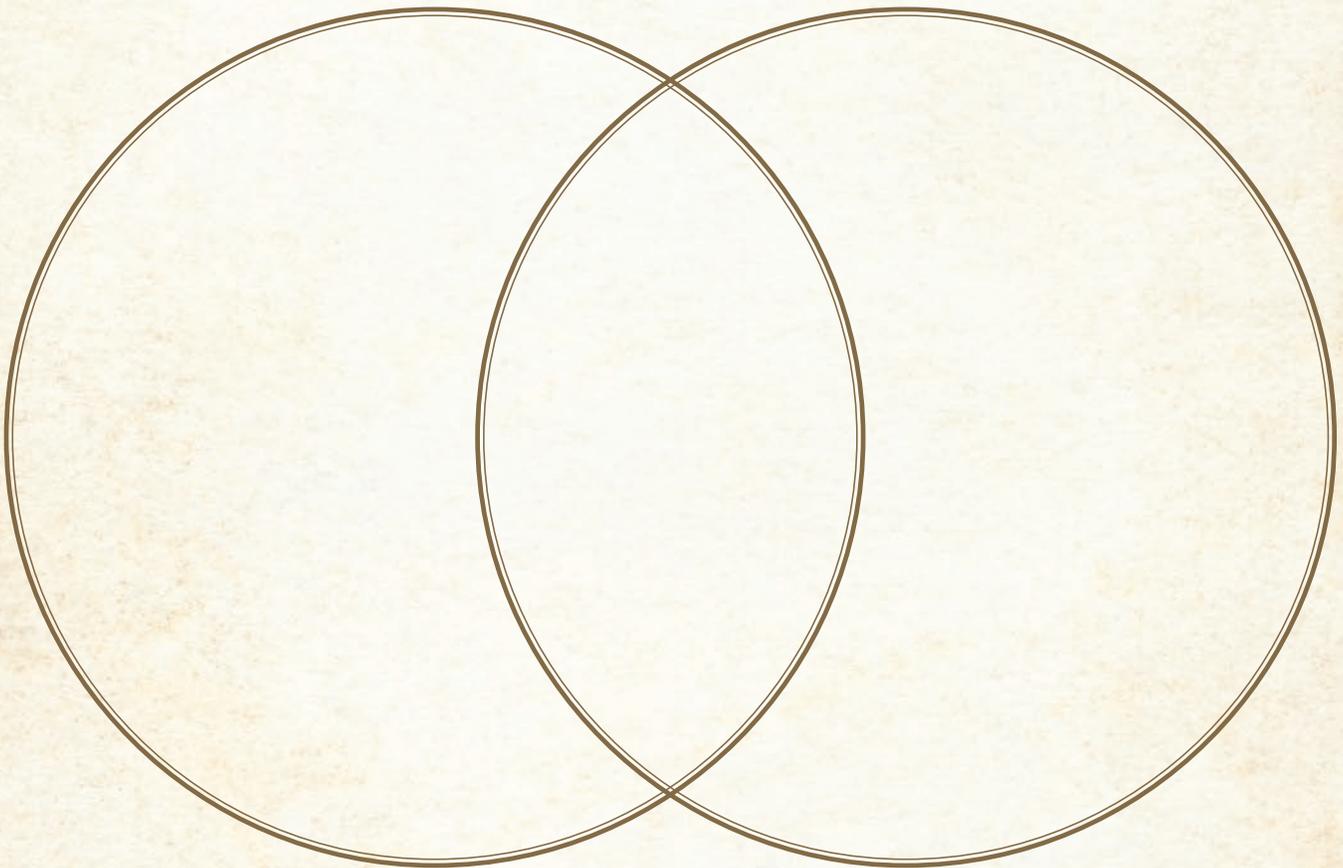
TEKS Standards: Social Studies (a)(1); (a)(2); (b)(21)(A); (b)(22)(A); (b)(22)(B); (b)(22)(D). ELA (b)(11)(A); (b)(11)(C); (b)(14)(A); (b)(18)(C).

When You Visit

As you walk through the educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience**, pay close attention to the exhibits showing Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna's tent and the rooms of defenders inside the Alamo. Notice the differences between conditions in the Mexican leader's tent and the quarters of the Texian commander, Colonel William B. Travis. Imagine what it was like each day for the two commanders. How did they dress? What did they eat? How comfortable were they? Did they have everything they needed? Fill in the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast their two experiences. Discuss the differences with your classmates and why they were important.

Antonio López de Santa Anna

Colonel William B. Travis



After You Visit

In the exhibits of **Battle for Texas: The Experience** you see, hear, smell and feel what it might have been like to be part of the battle. A number of survivors hid in the chapel during the fight. Afterwards, Ana Esparza, wife of defender Gregorio Esparza, was allowed to return with her children to their home in Béxar. Susanna Dickinson, wife of defender Almaron Dickinson, plus her three-year-old daughter Angelina, and Colonel Travis's slave, Joe, were sent by Santa Anna to the town of Gonzales to warn the Texian soldiers how dangerous the Mexican Army was. Imagine you are Joe or Susanna. How would you begin to tell Sam Houston about the fall of the Alamo? What important details of the siege and battle would be most important for Houston to hear? Use a sheet of paper to write out the most important points. Then write a short account of the battle, as if you were Joe or Susanna.



LESSON
FOUR

THE STORIES TOLD BY ARTIFACTS

The story of the Battle of the Alamo is famous throughout the United States and around the world. We know the story because we have read about it in books or seen it played out in movies. But the battle took place 180 years ago. How do we know what really happened? Historians who tell the tales of the past get their information from many sources. The most factual of that information comes from *primary* sources. They are accurate because they were created at the time of the event (“primary” means “first” or “first in time”). Secondary sources are those that are written down and analyzed by someone who has looked at primary sources. Reference books like encyclopedias, textbooks and narratives written after the fact are secondary sources.

Among the most important primary sources are firsthand accounts by the people who were at an event. These include letters, diaries, photographs and newspaper accounts written by reporters at the scene. Primary sources for your own history would include documents like birth and baptismal certificates, report cards, awards and any personal narratives you’ve written.

Even eyewitness accounts can tell different sides of the same story, and it is important to understand the point of view of each narrator of a story. For example, among the few survivors of the Battle of the Alamo were a boy who was eight years old at the time, a slave of Colonel William B. Travis, and the 22-year old wife of one of the defenders who was killed. Certainly they all experienced the events in different ways.

Paintings, photographs and maps can also be primary sources that can describe or shed light on the past.

Quotes by people who were there can give us insight into the character of those involved.

And artifacts such as tools, clothing and weapons can help us see how people lived and worked years ago.

The educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience** displays a wide variety of primary and secondary source artifacts that tell the story of the Alamo and the situation faced by the defenders. Among them are several letters sent out by William B. Travis, who was commander of the Texian and Tejano forces

The boots of Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna were sturdy and made of leather to stand up to hard use.



The holster of Tejano hero Juan Seguín was crafted from leather and included the letter “S” to identify it as his own. Seguín was sent from the Alamo to seek help for the defenders.

trying to hold off the Mexican Army. These letters not only tell of the need for supplies and reinforcements, but they give us an idea of the character of the writer. His letters reveal the courage, leadership and determination he had as one of the heroes of the battle.

Because the bodies of the defenders who died were not recovered by their families, we don’t know what they were wearing or how they appeared at the time of the fighting. However, we do have portraits painted of men like Travis, David Crockett and James Bowie, so we know how they might have dressed. Uniforms of captured Mexican officers and soldiers give us an accurate view of their appearance. Weapons and tools recovered after the battle help fill in our knowledge of difference in supplies and armament between the two sides.

It is important to remember that much of what we know and understand about historical events and people has been pieced together from many sources, not all of which are as reliable as others. As new evidence is uncovered, our history is continually being revised.



Many items were made from the horns of sheep and cows, including this “snuff mull” used to store snuff tobacco powder.

LEARNING FROM PRIMARY SOURCES

The artifacts collected in the educational attraction **Battle for Texas: The Experience** are almost all primary source materials. As such, they give us an accurate view of the men and women who lived and died during the Alamo siege and battle. We can view how they dressed, the personal items they carried, the tools they used and the weapons they had to defend themselves. The activities on this page examine the primary sources on display in **Battle for Texas: The Experience** and what can be learned from them.

Objective: To examine how artifacts and other primary sources provide information with which to reconstruct events and experiences.

TEKS Standards: Social Studies (a)(2); (b)(3)(A); (b)(21)(A); (b)(22)(A); (b)(22)(C). ELA (b)(14)(A); (b)(18)(A).

When You Visit

We know from letters sent and records of supplies what the Texans and Tejanos at the Alamo had to work with in mounting their defense. And we can compare that with the provisions of the much larger Mexican Army. As you go through the exhibit, take note of the differences in arms and supplies between the two sides. Use the spaces below to record some of the things you see. Discuss the differences with your classmates. When you return to class, use what you have recorded to write a short paragraph detailing on which side you would have felt most secure. Be sure to include details of about clothing, shelter, weapons and food. Why do you think the Alamo defenders were able to hold out for almost two weeks?

Alamo Defenders

Mexican Army

After You Visit

Historians piece together a record of the past by looking at artifacts, including written accounts, tools and other objects left by those who used them. Sometimes archaeologists who uncover these artifacts and historians who interpret them have a lot of material to help them reconstruct events. Other times, there are many fewer objects and documents with which to work. What would social scientists of the future be able to tell about your life from a small sample of artifacts? Pick one room in your family's house or apartment. Select five or six objects from that room that an archaeologist might find buried 150 years from now. List them below and describe what future historians could tell from each about how your family lives today. What room would tell future historians the most about your family's lifestyle — a kitchen, a bedroom, a recreation room or a garage?



**LESSON
FIVE**

TEXAS PRIDE: HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

One-hundred-eighty years after it took place, the Battle of the Alamo continues to inspire Texans of all ages. The courage and character and sense of duty demonstrated by the Texian and Tejano defenders are still models of behavior that Texans want to achieve, now and in the future. For that reason, **Battle for Texas: The Experience** does not end with the closing gunshots of that milestone event in state history. It ends with a “Texas Pride” display that shows notable Texans and achievements that have taken place since the Alamo. And it challenges visitors to consider how the lessons of the Alamo can inspire achievements in the future. The activities on this page examine the challenges and opportunities Texas faces in the future, and how each student can play a role in meeting them.

Objective: To analyze how the contributions of people in different career fields have shaped Texas history and how people of different fields will contribute to future achievements of the state.

TEKS Standards: Social Studies (a)(1); (a)(2); (b)(19); (b)(21)(A); (b)(22)(A). ELA (b)(11)(A); (b)(11)(C); (b)(14)(A); (b)(16)(B); (b)(17).



When You Visit

At the “Texas Pride” display, closely study the people, achievements and career fields that are featured. In the spaces below, write out different fields of achievement that are represented and why they are important to Texas history and success. Write out which field has been most important, and why. Then write out what field you think will be most important over the next 20 years of your life.

Fields of Achievement

Most Important Field

Most Important Future Field

After Your Visit

Everyone can play a role shaping the future of Texas. The students of today will be the leaders of tomorrow — in government, business, technology, the arts and many other fields. When you return to class, think about the achievements showcased in the “Texas Pride” display of **Battle for Texas: The Experience**. Then think about your talents and interests and how they could help shape the future of Texas. Write a life plan detailing what you would like to do to make Texas’ future brighter. If you are feeling creative, write your life plan in the form of a poem, song, rap or rhyme. Share plans with your classmates and discuss the opportunities the future will bring.

*This educational guide for **Battle for Texas: The Experience** was created by www.HollisterCreative.com.*

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