

Educational Resource for Social Studies Teachers



Texian Market Days - *Overview*

These program summaries are to assist teachers in planning activities related to Texian Market Days events. Sharing these with students who plan to attend the Festival will help them select topics and plan their festival day. Each summary includes 8th grade social studies TAAS targets relevant to that program. The summaries include:

The Jones Stockfarm
Sugar Cane Press
Archeological Excavation
1865 Military/Civilian Encampment
Native Americans
Snigging Competition
1890's Cowboy Camp
J.H.P. Davis Mansion
Henry and Nancy Jones Memorial Cemetery
Blacksmith Shop
Antique Tractors and One-Cylinder Engines
1930's Working Cattle Ranch
The George Ranch House
The Wild Horsecatcher

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

1.2 Analyze the effects of societal values on individual beliefs and attitudes

1.3 Explain the effects of civic participation

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

4.2 Determine how physical features of Texas, the United States, and the world influenced population movements and patterns of settlement

5.1 Analyze the contributions of significant individuals in the history of Texas, the United States, and the world.

The Jones Stockfarm

The year is 1830, and political feelings run deep through Austin's Colony. Friends and relatives have gathered at the Jones Stock Farm to celebrate a harvest festival. The Decree of April 6, 1830 has left the future growth and political organization of the colony uncertain. The Mexican Government has halted immigration into the Colony and has rebuffed President Andrew Jackson's offer to buy the Department of Texas. The earlier liberal policies of the Government towards the colony are changing in ways that are unpopular. Many are here to frolic and fraternize, but debates about the future of Austin's Colony are numerous.

Although the colonists had agreed to adopt the regulations of the Republic of Mexico when they immigrated, many miss the religion, customs and traditions of their earlier life in the United States. The lax enforcement of these regulations appears to be coming to an end. Stephen F. Austin and his secretary, Samuel May Williams, are here, and must answer pointed questions from the colonists. Elections to the "ayuntamiento" are scheduled for November, and the debates about who will best serve the interests of the colony are heated. You will certainly want to join the colonists in celebrating their harvest festival, but you may find yourself drawn into the controversies that will determine the future of Austin's Colony.

Vignettes are presented at each half-hour depicting one of the following:

A betrothal

Songs and dances of the period

A boundary dispute

A search by a Mexican military patrol for illegal immigrants

Political debates and election of delegates to the "ayunta-

Ongoing activities include:

Pioneer cooking, including roasting a pig

Corn shucking, shelling and grinding

Cotton and wool dyeing, spinning and weaving

Herb growing, drying, and uses

Livestock - pigs, chickens, horses, and oxen

Soap making, basket weaving, and other domestic skills

Bullet-molding and black-powder firearms demonstrations

Leather working, furniture-making, and woodworking skills

Games of skill and chance from the period

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

4.3 Analyze the distribution of economic resources on the development of the United States

Sugar Cane Press

Sugar Cane Production on the Brazos

Visitors to the military encampment area of Texian Market Days can squeeze the sugar juice from actual stalks of cane. Did you know that Stephen F. Austin's colonists brought sugar cane plants with them from Louisiana when they first settled Texas in 1821?

These plants grew well in the rich south Texas earth where rainfall, temperature, soil and level land combined for bountiful crops of sugar cane. As more colonists arrived, the growth of the crop spread until the entire valley around the lower Brazos River was planted and became known as the "sugar Bowl".

Early production of the sugar cane began when mule-powdered mills were built to grind the sugar cane and squeeze the sweet juice from the cane stalks. Cane juice was boiled in large cast iron kettles set up under covered sheds. Sugar cane grew prolifically and milling of cane quickly became a profitable means of livelihood. In the 1850's sugar was the major crop in the four county area surrounding the George Ranch. Over 40 mills were grinding cane and shipping it down the Brazos River.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

7.2 Translate information from one medium to another

7.5 Classify social studies materials as primary or secondary sources

9.1 Draw inference and conclusions from social studies information

Archeological Excavation

Fort Bend Archeological Society

Members of the Fort Bend Archeological Society conduct an excavation on the grounds of the George Ranch House during Texian Market Days.

Visitors will be exposed to the methods and procedures of the professional and vocational archeologist and will be invited to pick up a trowel and help at the excavation site which is located near the large oak tree planted in 1824 by Nancy Stiles Jones. Excavations are an effort to uncover foundation features of the original ranch house that burned to the ground in the late 1880's.

Previous digs at the site reached the 23 inch level and revealed fragments of ceramics, charcoal, iridescent glass, brick, some shot, building materials, a stove hinge and an intriguing button! Many of these items have been researched and cataloged and are on display during the Festival.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

1.2 Analyze the effects of societal values on individual beliefs and attitudes

1.3 Explain the effects of civic participation

5.1 Analyze the contributions of significant individuals in the history of Texas, the United States, and the world

5.6 Analyze major events in the history of Texas, the United States, and the world

9.2 Make generalization from social studies information

1865 Military/Civilian Encampment Confederate Area

Drilling and preparation of Confederate troops is taking place at a training encampment in the Richmond area. The year is 1862. The troops have been stationed in the area after reports of Federal foraging and scouting parties that may have made their way into the area after landing in Galveston. The company is waiting for official orders to join other troops from the surrounding areas at Camp Bee in Houston. From there they will travel by train to Bryan Texas before joining the Army of Tennessee for the last campaign of the year

Drilling of the Troops

The troops practice maneuvers, formations, and firing weapons. Bayonet drill is also performed on hay-filled burlap sacks. Some of the men are of low physical endurance, some are a little slow witted and are trying to learn from the veteran troops. Despite these challenges all the men are in good spirits due to the rumors of new orders that will get them back to the action.

Civilians

Family members and local civilians have camped in the trees next to the soldiers to be nearby in case orders arrive that will send the troops back to the front. Some local gamblers, hustlers, musicians and merchants have also gathered in the hope of taking advantage of the gathering.

The Confrontation

When orders arrive for departure, the men begin to prepare to march to Houston. The Lieutenant announces that he and his fiancée will be wed in a brief ceremony. The ceremony gets under way, but before it ends a rider approaches, announcing that Yankee troops have just been spotted across the river and that they are heading towards the camp. Unsure whether or not the Yankees are aware of the Confederate camp, the ceremony abruptly ends and the men hurriedly done their gear and march out into the field to meet the Yankee troops.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

6.1 Analyze the cultures of various ethnic groups and their contributions to the United States

6.2 Describe instances of cultural borrowing among societies

Native American Area

Members of the Intertribal Council of Houston present traditional singing, dancing, colorful costumes, crafts demonstrations and cultural programs throughout the Texian Market Days weekend.

The Native American Area includes a market featuring artists and craftsmen from Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas. Craftsmen demonstrate and sell beadwork, leatherwork, feather paintings, pottery, beautiful silver and turquoise jewelry and other Native American art forms.

Visitors are encouraged to participate in group dances at scheduled times throughout the Festival weekend.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 evaluate the cause and effect of economic developments

6.4 Describe developments in art, music, literature, drama and other cultural activities in the United States.

Snigging Competition

Snigging is competitive animal drawn farming, logging and plowing. These competitions demonstrate skilled farming and ranch ability before the days of machine driven equipment. Snigging Competitions were a common part of community gatherings and county fairs in the “old days” and often included a variety of farm or ranch animals: horses, ponies, donkeys, mules, and oxen.

Competitions include:

Animal driven cart competitions

Adult and youth logging - hook riggings to a log and negotiate a course of cones and other obstacles

Straightest row contest - adult or youth driving the animal, adult handling the planter (plow the straightest row and win)

Single and Pairs open waddling race - rig an animal to a sled loaded with three blocks of wood; at the mid point of pattern exchange the clocks of wood and finish, unhooking at the starting point.

Open feeding race - rig an animal to a sled, load the sled with hay and grain then drive to feeder. Place feed in feeder and return to starting point to unhook.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

4.3 Analyze the distribution of economic resources on the development of the United States

6.4 Describe developments in art, music, literature, drama, and other cultural activities in the United States

1890's Cowboy Camp

The time is the latter half of the 19th century. The location is one of many throughout Texas and the central United States. Cattle have been delivered to their final destination and it's time for the cowboys to collect their wages, clean up and let off a little steam, buy new duds, get a new hat and boots and a special surprise for that girl back home, gather up their belongings, and grab a train or coach back home. There are also other preparations being made. The chuck wagon is fixing one last meal before getting the lead steer and heading back to Texas. It was a successful drive and the hands are busy taking care of last minute business before heading off to their next job. At the end of the drive there were many things a working cowboy had to do before moving on. These could be complex or as simple as turning the horse around and heading back home. Returning from a short drive meant you could be home in a couple of days, but if you worked on a drive to Billings Montana it might take a month or more to make your way home.

These exciting times are the theme of the 1890's Cowboy Camp at Texian Market Days. The living history enactors from The Texas Historical Shootist Society bring to life many of these experiences. Displaying many of the tools, clothing, and personal effects of the working cowboy they bring to life a time and life style of long ago. These enactments correct many of the myths about the cowboy way of life.

Activities

Chuck Wagon - Authentic style camp cooking, the way it was done 100 years ago.

Historically correct tools and equipment

Firearms display and demonstrations - original and reproduction firearms of the west, including the most prevalent firearm: the double barrel shotgun.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

6.1 Analyze the cultures of various ethnic groups and their contributions to the United States

6.4 Describe developments in art, music, literature, drama, and other cultural activities in the United States.

J.H.P. Davis Mansion

As you walk through the door you step back 100 years to an era when this magnificent old home was the residence of the J. H. P. Davis Family - one of the oldest, most prominent in the county. It was from here that Judge Davis managed the Ryon Pasture and Cattle Company for his mother-in-law Polly Ryon. Here Polly Ryon spent the last years of her life in the her granddaughter's parlor. The same parlor in which Mamie and A.P. George were married. Learn from costumed docents, the fascinating stories and anecdotes from the lives of some of Fort Bend's most interesting and historically significant families.

The beautiful and distinctive Davis House was constructed for the successful Richmond banker J.H.P. Davis and his family in the 1880's on the current site of Polly Ryon Memorial Hospital in Richmond. In 1977 the George Foundation moved the structure in one piece on two flat bed trucks traveling side by side to the George Ranch. (The house weighed about 400,000 pounds.)

The house is built of cypress and white pine and elegantly furnished with period Victorian pieces. The outbuildings around the house reflect its original location as part townhouse and part rural residence and are reproductions of the originals with the exception of the servant's quarters, which had been moved to the ranch earlier. A barn was originally located behind this house. The greenhouse, octagonal cistern house and grape arbor were reconstructed from information found during excavation and from old photos.

Although the family inhabited the Davis Mansion for over one hundred years, the house is furnished and interpreted to reflect the year 1896, which was a year of great change for the family. Polly Ryon, the family matriarch, passed away that year and Mamie Davis married A.P. George in the house.

Most of the Victorian furnishings and accoutrements in the house belong to the family. Trained guides interpret the history of the family and their home.

Young visitors to the Davis House can assist with washday - the old fashioned way - with scrub boards, lye soap and a clothesline. The Davis House kitchen tantalizes visitors with aromas of freshly baked bread. Guides demonstrate the use of old kitchen equipment dating from the late 1800s. 1890's high wheel bicyclists take turns around the Davis Mansion to add a period feel to the setting.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

5.1 Analyze the contributions of significant individuals in the history of Texas, the United States, and the world

7.1 Sequence historical data and information

7.4 Make and/or interpret time lines graphs, charts, tables, and other visuals

9.1 Draw inferences and conclusions from social studies concepts and/or information

Henry and Nancy Jones Memorial Cemetery

Beneath the towering pecan and oak trees in the family cemetery is the final resting place for the first two generations that lived and worked on the George Ranch.

Henry and Nancy Jones, who were first to settle here as part of Stephen F. Austin's "Old 300" are buried in this cemetery alongside many of their 12 children and grandchildren. Restored by the George Foundation in 1976, the cemetery dates back to the mid 1830's with the last person buried there in 1918.

Children especially enjoy making tombstone rubbings (materials provided) from 10:00 am until 5:00 p.m..

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

4.3 Analyze the distribution of economic resource on the development of the United States

Blacksmith Shop

The restored turn of the century blacksmith shop from Oldenburg, Texas, provides the backdrop for demonstrations of traditional blacksmithing and woodworking.

Blacksmiths at the turn of the century were the jack-of-all-trades from small towns and villages. The availability of mass produced iron goods along with the industrial revolution had relegated blacksmiths to the primary roles of repairmen and horseshoers. The typical blacksmith spent about 60% of his time repairing farm machinery and shoeing horses; the rest was taken up with a multitude of various tasks.

In the early 1900's this shop was producing not only iron goods, but furniture and coffins and was selling kerosene and electricity. During Texian Market Days a master woodworker is on hand in the shop, making hand-crafted Windsor chairs and demonstrating period woodworking tools.

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluated the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

4.3 Analyze the distribution of economic resources on the development of the United States

Antique Tractors and One-Cylinder Engines

One cylinder or “one lung” gas engines came into use on farms during the 1920’s. They were used to run a variety of equipment such as corn shuckers, grinders, hammer mills, and bucksaws. (Maytag made a small engine to run their washing machines.) The larger engines were used to run machinery in cotton gins and old engines with belt pulleys were a common sight on oil wells powering the pumps. Tractors began replacing horse and mule power on the farms during the 20’s and 30’s, although horse-drawn equipment was made well into the mid 1940’s.

The Gulf Coast Fly Wheelers are a group of men who share an interest in the restoration, ownership, and display of antique single cylinder engines and old farm tractors and other machinery of historical value.

Some of the engines to be displayed predate the Model T Ford and World War I. These were the engines and tractors that changed the country from human power and four-legged horsepower to mechanical horsepower. The tractors were used for general farming and the engines were used to power one or more of the following:

Pump water

Generate electrical power

Grind corn

Power machine shop

Wash clothes

Grind feed

Saw wood

Power hay bailers

Power cement mixers

Power blacksmith shops

Shell corn

Grade 8 Social Studies

TAAS targets:

2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the cause and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

4.3 Analyze the distribution of economic resources on the development of the United States

1930's Working Cattle Ranch Area

The large barns and pens located behind the George Ranch House are those that A.P. George used when he worked his cattle back in the 1930's. Throughout the day, the cowboy demonstrations inside the main corral are narrated. Cattle working demonstrations will include branding and sorting of calves, yoking and stretching of steers, and working the cattle into the chute. Cattle will also be let to the dipping vat or, as children call it, "the cow's bath" where cattle were dipped in a chemical mixture to ward off disease.

Cowboys in the 1930's program area will also demonstrate horse training skills including starting a young horse, introducing whips and ropes to young horses, finishing the horse and finally, training the horse. Visitors will be invited to tour the barns on the ranch including The Tack Barn which houses all the cowboys tack and gear, harnesses for the draft horses, veterinary tools, and horseshoeing equipment. Barn II is the petting zoo where children can meet first hand a variety of barnyard animals.

Grade 8 Social Studies

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6.4 Describe developments in art, music, literature, drama, and other cultural activities in the United States

The George Ranch House

The George Ranch House was built in 1899 by A.P. and Mamie George on the site of the “Old Prairie Home” built by Henry and Nancy Jones, the great-grandparents of Mamie George. The Old Prairie home burned in 1888. The one and a half story home, designed by Galveston architect Nicholas Clayton was remodeled around 1911 to the present two-story style.

The furnishings of the George House combine inherited family pieces with those purchased by Mrs. George. The inherited pieces are a mixture of Eastlake and Art styles. The pieces purchased by the family include the Mission and historic revival taste of the 20th century.

The George Ranch House served as the residence of A.P. and Mamie George as well as the headquarters for their cattle business. Mr. George’s hobbies of hunting, fishing, and stock raising are also reflected throughout the home, especially in the “trophy room”.

Trained guides interpret the history of 1930’s and 40’s during the tour of the George Ranch House. Visitors will also view “out buildings” including the cistern house where butter and cheese were made and where food was stored before refrigeration. Other outbuildings include the smokehouse, greenhouse, tool shed and pump house, servants house, and garage.

Also on the George Ranch House grounds is a magnificent tree house, said to be built in a tree planted by Nancy Jones in 1824 shortly after she and her husband Henry settled here as part of Stephen F. Austin’s Old 300 Colonists. Albert and Mamie George had the tree house built for Mamie’s cousin Mary Jones when she and her parents lived at the George Ranch. The George Foundation reconstructed it when the ranch was opened as an historical park.

Grade 8 Social Studies

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2.3 Evaluate the factors that influence economic decisions

2.4 Evaluate the causes and effects of economic developments

2.5 Analyze the roles of profit, competition, and private property in the American economic system

The Wild Horsecatcher

Hear George Hied, a man that grew up on the Texas Frontier during the 1840's and 50's. George spins an amazing story of how he ran away from home at an early age and was adopted by the greatest horsemen in the world, Comanche Indians. From these people he learned the skill of catching and breaking wild horses.

Witness the capture and breaking of a wild stallion. Learn how the stallion is made into a warhorse, the most valuable horse anyone could own. See how an Indian rode a horse with just a small rope in its mouth. Watch as the stallion is trained to protect its rider from bandits and imagine yourself living in a time when men lived or died by the abilities of their horse.

This tale features enactor Larry Heidbreder and his registered Appaloosa stallion, Shadow Mystery. Larry, an educator with 11 years of classroom experience and 16 years of training young horses, also rides with a Civil War period cavalry.