

Instructional Recipe

How Would You Blog Your Way through Texas?

4th Grade
Social Studies

Step 1 – Ask

Objectives:

Students will compare the regions of Texas with regions of the United States and other parts of the world.

Introduction: Examine the pictures with your students. Discuss favorite places and people to visit in these or other Texas cities.



Dallas Skyline -- Image Date: 17/09/1999 -- Image Date: 17/09/1999
© Getty Images



Austin at Night -- Image Date: 17/09/1999 -- Image Date: 17/09/1999
© Getty Images



The Alamo -- Image Date: 24/06/1999 -- Image Date: 24/06/1999
© Getty Images

Ask:

- ★ What do you enjoy about traveling?
- ★ What are your favorite places in Texas?
- ★ Have you traveled outside of Texas? What did you see on your travels?

Vocabulary:

- ★ region – a specified district or territory
- ★ blog – a weblog; keep a journal on a website

TEKS:

- (4.7C)** compare the regions of Texas with regions of the United States and other parts of the world.
- (4.8C)** describe the location of cities in Texas and explain their distribution, past and present.
- (4.22D)** identify different points of view about an issue or topic.

Technology Application TEKS:

- 4A** Apply appropriate electronic search strategies in the acquisition of information including keyword and Boolean search strategies.
- 6A** Apply critical analysis to resolve information conflicts and validate information
- 6B** Determine the success of strategies used to acquire electronic information
- 6C** Determine usefulness and appropriateness of digital information.
- 7A** Use software programs with audio, video, and graphics to enhance learning experiences
- 7B** Use appropriate software to express ideas and solve problems including the use of word processing, graphics, databases, spreadsheets, simulations, and multimedia
- 7C** Use a variety of data types including text, graphics, digital audio, and video
- 10A** Use font attributes, color, white space, and graphics to ensure that products are appropriate for the defined audience
- 10B** Use font attributes, color, white space, and graphics to ensure that products are appropriate for the communication media including multimedia screen displays, Internet documents, and printed material
- 11A** Publish information in a variety of media including, but not limited to, printed copy, monitor display, Internet documents and video

Step 2 – Investigate

Search the Texas Heritage Online website and K-12 Databases for articles about the regions of Texas.

Texas Heritage Online:

- ★ Thrall, Homer S.. *A pictorial history of Texas, from the earliest visits of European adventurers, to A.D. 1879. Embracing the periods of missions, colonization, the revolution the republic, and the state; also, a topographical description of the country ... together with its Indian tribes and their wars, and biographical sketches of hundreds of its leading historical characters. Also, a list of the countries, with historical and topical notes, and descriptions of the public institutions of the state..* St. Louis, Mo.. The Portal to Texas History. <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph5828/>. Accessed July 7, 2009.
- ★ Gannett, Henry. *A gazetteer of Texas.* Washington. The Portal to Texas History. <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph5873/>. Accessed July 7, 2009.

EBSCO Resources:

- ★ "**Texas.**" Britannica Elementary Encyclopedia. 2009. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition. 7 July 2009
<<http://school.eb.com/elementary/article?articleId=345528>>.
- ★ "**United States.**" Britannica Elementary Encyclopedia. 2009. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition. 7 July 2009
<<http://school.eb.com/elementary/article?articleId=345812>>.
- ★ World atlas.Full Text Available Scholastic Update, 10/8/93, Vol. 126 Issue 3, p4, 14p; (**AN 9401271548**)
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=prh&AN=9401271548&site=srck5-live>>
- ★ Regions of the United States. Junior Scholastic; 1/9/2006, Vol. 108 Issue 10, p14-15, 2p; Reading Level (Lexile): 820; (**AN19429182**)
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=prh&AN=19429182&site=srck5-live>>
- ★ Texas (TX). Sherman, Melissa. *Our States: Texas*, 2008, p1-16, 16p, 2 color; Reading Level (Lexile): 1220; (**AN 11089950**)
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mih&AN=11089950&site=ehost-live>>

Additional Websites:

- ★ Regions of Texas
<http://www.mcallen.lib.tx.us/library/child/homework/txreg.htm>
- ★ Regions of the United States
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/qmdhtml/rhtml/regdef.html>

Books:

- ★ Douglas, Deborah. *Gone for the Day: Family Fun in Central Texas.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995.




Step 3 – Create

Students can work individually or with partners to create a chart that organizes the information they learned about the regions of Texas. Here are some suggested topics:

Regions of Texas	Features/Unique Characteristics/Interesting Places
Coastal Plains	
North Central Plains	
Great Plains	
Mountains and Basins	

Regions of the U.S.	Features/Unique Characteristics/Interesting Places
West	
Southwest	
Middle West (Midwest)	
Northeast	
Southeast	

Allow students to share and discuss their charts as an entire class.

 Technology Link – Use Microsoft Excel or Word to create a table to gather data about the regions.

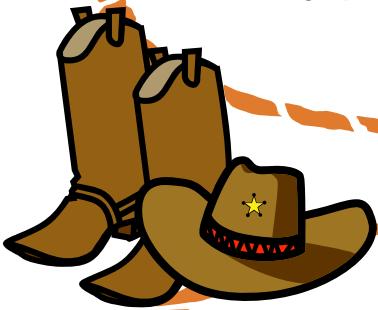


Step 4 – Discuss

Students may choose to complete one of the following projects:

- ★ **Write a song that describes your journey through the regions of Texas.** You may use a popular tune or children's song to describe the route you choose. Include information about major cities, landforms, events, or places of interest in each of the 4 regions of Texas.
- ★ **Write a journey journal on a blog that describes your journey through the regions of Texas and the United States.** You may write your journal as a diary, a series of journal entries or a blog. Include information that distinguishes one region from another such as cities, landforms, events, or places of interest.

🔗 Technology Link – Use a word processing, desktop publishing, or blogging website (such as <http://edublogs.org>) to produce the written song lyrics or journey journal. Use the EBSCO image collection or the Texas Heritage Online images to locate graphics to include in your journey journal.



Step 5 – Reflect

Allow students to present their projects to the rest of the class. Use the following suggested rubrics to assess the students' work. Make sure that the students are familiar with the rubric *before* they begin creating their project. They should refer to the rubric repeatedly to monitor their progress in creating their project.

🔗 Technology Link: You can also create your own rubric with your students at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Song Rubric: Regions of Texas

Teacher Name: _____

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.
Stays on Topic	Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.	Stays on topic most (99-90%) of the time.	Stays on topic some (89%-75%) of the time.	It was hard to tell what the topic was.
Vocabulary	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Extends audience vocabulary by defining words that might be new to most of the audience.	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Includes 1-2 words that might be new to most of the audience, but does not define them.	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Does not include any vocabulary that might be new to the audience.	Uses several (5 or more) words or phrases that are not understood by the audience.
Comprehension	Student is able to accurately answer almost all questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer most questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer a few questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is unable to accurately answer questions posed by classmates about the topic.
Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.

Blog Through Texas Rubric

Teacher Name: _____

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Point of View - Purpose	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains a clear focus throughout.	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains focus for most of the presentation.	There are a few lapses in focus, but the purpose is fairly clear.	It is difficult to figure out the purpose of the presentation.
Point of View - Awareness of Audience	Strong awareness of audience in the design. Students can clearly explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students can partially explain why they felt the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Some awareness of audience in the design. Students find it difficult to explain how the vocabulary, audio and graphics chosen fit the target audience.	Limited awareness of the needs and interests of the target audience.
Images	Images create a distinct atmosphere or tone that matches different parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors.	Images create an atmosphere or tone that matches some parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors.	An attempt was made to use images to create an atmosphere/ tone but it needed more work. Image choice is logical.	Little or no attempt to use images to create an appropriate atmosphere/ tone.
Voice - Consistency	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible throughout the presentation.	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible throughout the majority (85-95%) of the presentation.	Voice quality is clear and consistently audible through some (70-84%) of the presentation.	Voice quality needs more attention.