

# Natural Texas and Its People: Unit Plan

(11 Estimated Instructional Days, or 17 days with Optional Extension and Review Activities)

## Era Overview

In Natural Texas and its People (prehistory to 1528), students examine Texas' geographic features and explore how the Native peoples in Texas interacted with the natural Texas environment before European colonization. The geographic differences between the many regions that would come to be known as Texas were vast, stretching from the rich soils and lush vegetation of East Texas' piney woods, to the swampier coastal plain along the Gulf of Mexico, to the drier and starker valley of South Texas, to the grasslands of the Texas central and high plains, to the arid and mountainous vistas of West Texas.

The first people of Texas were intimately connected to the physical geography of where they lived, with some groups prospering because of ample local resources while others struggled in challenging environments. Over many centuries, various native groups adapted themselves to all of Texas' major geographic zones. The Caddo thrived in the fertile eastern piney woods, where they built large-scale villages and extensive trading networks. The Atakapa and Karankawa hunted, gathered, and fished in seasonal villages along the Texas coast. Various Coahuiltecan tribes often struggled in the more arid conditions of South Texas, while the Apache roamed the Plains on foot in search of bison. The Jumano in West Texas moved between established villages and hunting along the Plains, while the Wichita grew crops in the cross-timbers region that would become North Texas. By the time the first Europeans arrived in Texas in 1528, each American Indian group had carefully adapted themselves to the particular regions in which they lived.

## Pacing

This unit is an eleven-day study of the Era of Spanish Exploration and the Age of Contact between the Spanish and the American Indians, specifically in Texas. There are an optional three days of extension activities which include primary source documents for analysis. There are three additional review lessons to prepare students for testing. Suggested pacing minutes are based on the average time it will take a class to complete each lesson; however, as the educator, use your best judgement based on the average pace of your class learning needs and styles.



**Unit Pacing by Day**

<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Essential Questions</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Student Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
45 – 60	What are the major themes of Unit 1: Natural Texas and Its People?	This lesson is an introduction to the main ideas of the unit including the characteristics of the four regions of Texas, the characteristics of various Texas tribes, and the significance of geography to the lives of the early people of Texas.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Identify and summarize the main themes and ideas of the era of Early Texas People.            Recognize that Texas is made up of different regions with distinct characteristics that affect the people who live in them.            Make inferences about the topic based on primary source image analysis</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>The Big Picture</b></p>
45 - 60	How do we know what we know about the past?	This lesson is a study on how history is recorded and presented, including concepts like bias and points-of-view.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Identify and give examples of primary and secondary sources, including understanding the strengths and weaknesses of various sources.            Make inferences about the past based on primary source artifacts from the unit.            Understand how points-of-view and bias might influence primary source items in the study of the past.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>How do we know what we know?</b></p>
90 – 110  (Additional 45 minutes with an optional vocabulary quiz)	What key terms do we need to know in order to be successful in this unit?	This lesson introduces significant vocabulary terms through brief reading passages within the context of the unit.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Correctly use social studies terminology within the context of the unit.            Identify the main idea, examples, and supporting evidence from short reading passages.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>Vocabulary</b></p>

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
			<p>Creating visual representations of social studies terminology.</p> <p>Understand significant themes in this unit including the relationship between geography and patterns of human settlement and activity.</p>	
90 – 110	<p>What are the significant environmental characteristics of each region of Texas?</p> <p>How might the distinct characteristics of each region affect early American Indians who settled there?</p>	<p>In this lesson, students will examine information about the climate, landforms, natural resources and plant and animal life of each region to complete an informational chart. Students will use their charts to compare and contrast regions.</p>	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Identify the distinct characteristics that make up each region of Texas.</p> <p>Make connections between geographic features and patterns of human settlement in Texas.</p> <p>Locate and compare the Mountains and Basins, Coastal Plains, North Central Plains, and Great Plains regions.</p> <p>Make inferences and predictions about where American Indians were most and least likely to have settled based on geographic factors.</p> <p>Make a claim and support it with evidence.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>Texas Regions</b></p>
90 – 110	<p>What are the characteristics of various early American Indian tribes of Texas ?</p> <p>How do the environmental differences between the regions affect how American Indian tribes lived across Texas?</p>	<p>In this lesson, students will examine information about the various American Indian tribes of Texas and how they land they lived on affected their daily lives.</p>	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Analyze how geographic features of Texas affected the lives of early Texas people.</p> <p>Compare and contrast the lives of tribes living in different regions of Texas.</p> <p>Develop writing and categorizing skills based on social studies information.</p> <p>Identify ways in which people modify and adapt to their environment.</p> <p>Summarize significant social studies information related to American Indian tribes and the regions of Texas.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>American Indian Tribes of Texas</b></p>

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45 - 60	What were the dynamics between various tribes of Texas in the 1500s, prior to the arrival of the Spanish?	This lesson places the regional and tribal information from previous lessons into the context of the larger narrative of American Indian life in Texas prior to the arrival of any Europeans.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Make a claim and provide supporting evidence about American Indian tribes in Texas during this era. Understand and identify significant chronological events in early Texas prior to European exploration. Identify and understand common misconceptions about early American Indians in Texas. Understand relationship and power dynamics between early American Indian tribes of Texas.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>What's the Story?</b></p>
45 - 60	What are the defining characteristics of Texas today, and how do they compare with early Texas history?	This lesson presents information about the human geography, economy, and American Indians of Texas today. Students identify and label key cities and places on a map of Texas and its surrounding borders.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Read, label, and analyze maps. Interpret information from maps. Understand relative and absolute location. Read a social studies passage for context and make inferences. Compare and contrast geographic information regarding patterns of early human settlement with population centers today.</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>Texas Today</b></p>
45 - 60	How might the arrival of new people from a different culture affect Texas Indians and the course of Texas history?	This lesson introduces a sneak peek at themes students will see in unit 2. Students examine the first encounter between Indigenous people and Spanish explorers through a	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Use evidence to support a claim based on a primary source. Evaluate a primary source for point of view and bias. Make predictions and inferences based on a primary source passage. Recognize and identify eras in Texas history. Identify important individuals related to European</p>	<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <p><b>Looking ahead</b></p>

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		primary source by Cabeza de Vaca.	exploration including Cabeza de Vaca.	
45 – 60	What do we need to know in order to be successful on our unit 1 exam?	In this optional, one-day review lesson, students will review key terms and concepts within the unit by listening to clues to identify terms and concepts.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>The geography of Texas affected patterns of human settlement  Each region has its own distinct environment  American Indian tribes lived differently based on the regions they inhabited  Study and review of key concepts  Identifying information based on key words and phrases</p>	<p><b>Review:</b></p> <p><b>Bingo</b></p>
45 – 60	How do the key terms and concepts from Unit 1: Natural Texas and Its People connect to each other?	In this optional, one-day review lesson Students will be able to visualize how information from the unit is connected by making connections between terms on a mind map.	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Connecting terms and concepts from across the entire unit.  Justifying and providing a rationalization for those connections.  Student debate over the best placement of terms on their Mind Maps.  Creating a visual representation of Social Studies information.  Terms, concepts, people, and other social studies information from different assignments are connected in a variety of different ways.</p>	<p><b>Review:</b></p> <p><b>Mind Map</b></p>
45 – 60	What significant information from unit one do we need to study in order to be successful on our test?	Students will review key terms and information from the unit in preparation for the unit one assessment. Students will be able to	<p><b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b></p> <p>Tribes from different regions adapted to the environment of their region.  Patterns of human settlement are influenced by geography  Comparing and contrasting</p>	<p><b>Review:</b></p> <p><b>Flashcards Study Guide</b></p>

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
		identify, explain, and compare significant information from the unit.	Making connections between human activity and geography Identifying characteristics within the categories of tribes and geography. Identifying significant locations on a map of Texas. Test-taking strategies answering new STAAR item-type questions.	
45 - 60	What is one way early people of Texas told their stories, and how does it help us learn about their lives today?	This extension activity provides a reading about the White Shaman Rock Shelter pictographs. Students learn about this artifact and its significance to the study of early Texas people.	<b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b>  Early American Indians in Texas often recorded their histories through oral or pictographic traditions. Analyze and examine primary source artifacts Make inferences about the past based on primary source evidence. Summarizing a topic. Using context to determine the meaning of social studies words and phrases.	<b>Extension Lesson</b>  <b>Voices of Texas History</b>
45 – 60	What are some of the significant defining characteristics of one American Indian tribe currently residing in Texas today?	This extension activity gives the students a look at three of the federally recognized American Indian tribes in Texas today. Students choose one tribe to research and record their findings.	<b><i>Students will know the following information and develop the following skills based on TEKS standards:</i></b>  Locating and using appropriate online sources of information. Searching online sources for pertinent information. Writing clear and concise summaries of larger chunks of information. Identifying significant human characteristics of places in Texas today including political and cultural regions. Examining the human characteristics of places in Texas today including language, and political systems and economic systems. Connecting past historical knowledge to the present.	<b>Extension Lesson</b>  <b>American Indians in Texas Today Research Project</b>