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Native Texan Cultures [7th grade]

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Education Department

Understanding by Design Curriculum Units

Trinity University

Year 2005

Native Texan Cultures

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: Native Texan Cultures	Grade Level: 7th
Subject/Topic Area(s): Texas History	Time Frame: 2 weeks

Designed by: Beth McPhail	
School District: Houston ISD	School: Patrick Henry Middle School

Brief Summary of Unit

In this unit, students will explore the basic understanding that geography influences history within the context of Native American cultures. They will begin by finding ways in which geography has influenced their own culture and presenting these connections in a brochure for newcomers to the area. Students will then apply the same concept to the study of native cultures. They will learn about the major tribes and cultural groups that existed in Texas prior to European exploration, and how these cultures reflected the environments in which they lived.

The culminating performance assessment will require students to develop a fictional native culture based on a given environment. They will compare their new cultures to those that existed in Texas.

Stage 1: Desired Results	
Understandings	
<p>Students will understand that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Cultures of Native Texans were determined largely by the region’s geography, climate, and natural resources. ◆ Differences among cultures reflect different environments. ◆ Many aspects of our culture today are defined by the environment in which we live. 	
Essential Questions	Knowledge & Skill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Why is “where” important? ◆ How does where we live influence how we live? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment (7.10A) ◆ Explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas (7.10B) ◆ Compare the cultures of Native Americans in Texas prior to European colonization (7.2A) ◆ Analyze information by categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions (7.21B) ◆ Use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution (7.21C)
Stage 2: Assessment Evidence	
Performance Task Summary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Welcome to Houston – Students create a brochure to explain Houston’s culture to a newcomer from another place (with a different environment). The focus in the brochure will be on how the newcomer’s life will be different now that he or she has moved to a different environment. <i>Key criteria: Brochure is neat and complete, includes at least 4 ways in which Houston’s culture is unique and relates these to aspects of the environment.</i> ◆ Who Are We? – In groups, students create a native culture based on a given environment. They will determine the diet, shelter, values, family structure, religious beliefs, and government of the culture. They will cite aspects of the environment as reasons for their decisions in these categories. They will create a visual representation of their culture in the environment. Once the culture is created, they will be asked to compare it to one of the Native Texan cultures using a Venn diagram. <i>Key criteria: Culture chart is complete; aspects of culture reflect creativity and feasibility; reasons for the cultural decisions specifically refer to elements of environment; Visual representation is neat and free of anachronisms; Venn diagram includes at least 5 differences and 5 similarities; information on Texan tribe in Venn diagram is accurate</i> 	
Self-Assessments	Other Evidence, Summarized
<p>Self-assess brochure</p> <p>Exit ticket – Describe three specific ways that your environment has affected your life. How might environment/geography help you decide where you want to live in the future?</p>	<p>Matching quiz – description of culture matched with description of environment and name of tribe</p> <p>Academic prompt – why are some tribes nomadic while others stay in place?</p> <p>Journal – Native Texan visitor to culture created by student – how/why is this new culture different?</p>

Stage 3: Learning Activities

Block Scheduling – 100 min. periods

DAY 1

- ◆ Begin telling students a story about a fictional character. Give some details about the character (name, family, pets, interests, etc.) but nothing that would indicate where the character lives. Then ask students to help fill in the details – what clothes will the character put on in the morning, what will he/she eat for breakfast, how will he/she get to school, etc. Help students understand that they may not be able to fill in these details if they don't know where the student lives. Introduce the essential question – **“Why is ‘where’ important?”**
- ◆ In pairs, give students a card sort containing two sets of cards – one with environmental characteristics (i.e., an area has frequent rainstorms) and one with cultural responses (i.e., people usually carry umbrellas). Ask students to match the cards appropriately. Introduce the essential question – **“How does where we live influence how we live?”**
- ◆ Review definitions of geography and culture. Think-Pair-Share – list elements of Houston's geography (climate, landforms, resources, relative location) and Houston's culture (clothing, food, etc.) and look for links between the two lists. Introduce understanding #3 – **“Many aspects of our culture today are defined by the environment in which we live.”**
- ◆ Ask students to **create a brochure welcoming a newcomer to the city of Houston**. Tell them to focus on informing their audience about certain aspects of the city's culture that are related to its geography. They should have at least 4 specific examples, and only two of them may come from the earlier brainstorm. Give students the rest of the period to finish their brochures (individually).

DAY 2

- ◆ Review expectations and rubric for brochure. Give students approx. 30 minutes to finish.
- ◆ Ask students to **assess their own brochure based on the rubric given. Then have students exchange papers and evaluate a peer's brochure as well.**
- ◆ Revisit the connection between geography and culture. Explain to students that this connection exists throughout history, not just today. Introduce understanding #1 – **“Cultures of Native Texans were determined largely by the region's geography, climate, and natural resources.”**
- ◆ Give students a timeline and a map of North America. As a class, quickly discuss the movement of native peoples across the land bridge into North America. Fill in the timeline and map.
- ◆ Discuss the fact that as the Paleo-Americans spread out across the continent, they began to form different tribes. Ask students for the reasons for this differentiation. Introduce understanding #2 – **“Differences among cultures reflect different environments.”**
- ◆ **Arrange students in groups and give each group a description of a region in Texas (Great Plains, Coastal Plains, North Central Plains, Mountains and Basins). Have them fill out a short questionnaire:** What would a native tribe living in this area eat? How would they build their houses? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of living in this area?

DAY 3

- ◆ Review activity from the day before and have a few students share their answers about each region.
- ◆ Hand out map of Texas showing the location of various tribes. Briefly review Texas regions and their characteristics; use this knowledge to orally predict some of the characteristics of the tribes living in those regions.
- ◆ Present 5 major native cultural groups in Texas, referencing specific tribes that exemplify the characteristics of each group. Students take notes inside the map in the appropriate areas.
- ◆ In pairs, have students complete a **Venn diagram comparing the Comanche and Caddo tribes**. They may use their notes and textbooks for this activity.
- ◆ **Exit ticket: Why are some tribes nomadic while others stay in place?**

DAY 4

- ◆ Review cultural groups, regions, and tribes by playing Numbered Heads. Give students a **quiz in which they match the description of a tribe with a description of the appropriate region and name of the tribe**.
- ◆ Review answers from previous day's exit tickets – return to understanding #1 – “Cultures of Native Texans were determined largely by the region's geography, climate, and natural resources.”
- ◆ Discuss the fact that so far, we've talked about ways in which the environment affects people. Do people affect the environment? How? How do we affect/control our environment today? Did Native Americans affect their environment? Were they able to control it as much as we are? Working in pairs, **ask students to come up with three ways in which modern people affect the environment, and three ways in which Native Texans affected their environment**.
- ◆ Introduce “Who Are We?” project. **Assign groups and environment descriptions, and ask students to create a culture that would live in that environment**. As a group, they will fill out a chart detailing certain aspects of their culture (food, shelter, government, family structure, values, religion, values, etc.). For each characteristic they determine, they must also write a reason *why* their culture will include that element, and the reason must be linked to geographical factors. Give students the rest of the period to work on their culture.

DAY 5

- ◆ Review assignment and expectations for “Who Are We?” Give students approx. 30 minutes to finish creating their culture and visual representation.
- ◆ Assign each group a tribe from Texas, and ask them to **create a Venn diagram comparing their new culture with the Texan culture**.
- ◆ Individually, students take on the role of an adolescent member of the Texan tribe who is visiting the tribe they created. They will write a **¾ page journal entry describing their experience with this new tribe**. They need to describe the things they find unfamiliar and strange as well as the things they have in common with that tribe. They must comment on the differences/similarities between the environments.
- ◆ Students complete an **exit ticket: “What are three ways in which where I live has affected how I live?” “How might geography influence where I choose to live in the future?”**