



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Alice Dickerson Montemayor. Then, answer questions about it.

Alice Dickerson Montemayor 1902–1989

Alice Dickerson Montemayor was a feminist, activist, wife, mother, and artist—and she was always busy.

Born in Laredo in 1902, Montemayor's plan to become a lawyer changed after her father's early death. She attended business school, married, and had two sons, then took a job as a social worker. She faced racism and sexism in her profession, at one point working outdoors under a tree when she was denied an office.

Such experiences spurred Montemayor's activism. In 1936, she joined the League of United Latin American Citizens, eventually serving as second national vice president. Writing in the organization's newsletter, she condemned sexism, even within LULAC, and encouraged women to vote and work outside the home. She herself held a series of demanding jobs, including dress shop owner, department store manager, and school registrar.

After retiring, Montemayor discovered yet another career. One Mother's Day, her son gave her a paint set—but nothing to paint on. "I found an old bit of tin," she said, "put a background color on it, and began." Her lively, colorful scenes of family life and nature were admired by critics. In her art as in her life, Montemayor simply refused to acknowledge limits: figures in her paintings often ignored formal boundaries and extended onto the frames of her work. When she died in 1989, she was a nationally celebrated folk artist.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Alice Dickerson Montemayor. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Alice Dickerson Montemayor belonged to what civil rights organization?
2. After retirement, what did Montemayor begin doing?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Taking a Position.** Montemayor held many different jobs during her lifetime. Which of them would you choose and why?