



Dinner Party Discussions TEACHER GUIDE

Lesson Overview

Texas Originals, developed by Humanities Texas and Houston Public Media, is a radio series profiling individuals who have had a profound influence on Texas history and culture. This lesson is designed to use these profiles to help students consider the specific ways an individual contributed to Texas history and compare that contribution with those made by others.

Teachers can frame the assignment to require students to select individuals from the same time period, in the same profession, or sharing some other trait. Whatever the choice, students will identify and evaluate individual contributions to Texas history. Then, students will compare those individual contributions and determine a commonality between selected individuals and defend that choice.

This lesson is designed for seventh-grade students currently studying Texas history in the classroom. It is particularly helpful as a semester or year-end review tool and is designed to be completed in one 45–60-minute class period.



Essential Question

How can you compare the contributions that multiple individuals made to Texas history?

Objective(s)

Students will:

1. Identify and explain how individuals contributed to Texas history.
2. Evaluate the importance of an individual's contributions to Texas history both on their own and in comparison to others.



TEKS

Depending upon the individual or group of individuals selected, knowledge TEKS can be found in the TEKS Correlation Guide.

Skills TEKS met with this lesson (full text of TEKS can be found in TEKS Correlation Guide):

Social Studies:

113.19.24.A, B, E; 113.19.26.A–C

ELA:

110.23.1.A, B, D; 110.23.3; 110.23.5.A, E–I; 110.23.6.A–D, G, H

Procedure

1. Introduce students to *Texas Originals* (5–10 minutes).
 - a. Pull up [the list of Texas Originals](#). Give the students a few minutes to review the list on their own. Provide them with the link to *Texas Originals* on the Humanities Texas website so that they can look up anyone they may not remember or who has not been covered in class.
 - b. Either with a partner or as a whole class, have students discuss what characteristics these individuals have in common and how they might put them into groups. Encourage them to be creative with their links between people.
2. Have students select which *Texas Originals* they would like to work with for their assignment (5–10 minutes).
 - a. If desired, make use of the Subject or Time Period groupings list provided in the TEKS Correlation document. You may wish to assign a particular subject or time period from the list, or let students choose their own.
 - b. After students have had a chance to think about broad commonalities across the Originals, explain that their assignment is to pick three people from the list with whom they would like to have dinner. They should select three people who have something in common and be ready to explain what they have in common and to defend their selection.
3. Students work independently to create a seating chart for their dinner party (25–30 minutes).
 - a. Students will assign each invited guest a seat at the table.
 - b. If they have not already, students should either read the transcript or listen to the *Texas Originals* audio for each of their three guests.
 - c. For each person at the table, students will fill out a place card that:
 - i. Contains the full name of the Original and the years they lived
 - ii. Indicates what time period of Texas history they are from
 - iii. Includes four words that best describe that Original. Challenge your students to select words that are specific and evocative so that they are providing a helpful description of the person if someone doesn't know who they are.
 - d. Finally, students should create 2–3 questions they would like to ask the Original related to their role in Texas history and 2–3 questions the Originals might ask each other. Make sure these are not yes/no questions. They should instead require thoughtful and relevant answers related to each Original's contribution to Texas history.
4. Have students share their work by reading their dinner party questions (5–10 minutes).
 - a. Bring the class back together.
 - b. Go around the room and have each student read a question they wrote for one of their Originals without sharing the name of the person.
 - c. Let the rest of the class try to guess the Original. If one question isn't enough, you may choose to have students read additional questions and/or the four words they chose to describe their Original.