

Moving West with the Forts: Using an Interactive Map



Subject and Grade Texas history, 7th

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Time duration One 45-minute class period

Objective Students will read a map of Texas forts and analyze westward movement from Statehood to the Civil War.

TEKS ***Social Studies, Grade 7***

(6A), identify significant individuals, events, and issues, including the factors leading to the expansion of the Texas frontier, the effects of westward expansion on American Indians, the buffalo soldiers, and Quanah Parker

(6D), explain the political, economic, and social impact of the agricultural industry and the development of West Texas resulting from the close of the frontier

(9A), identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and explain the positive and negative consequences of the modifications

(10B), describe how immigration and migration to Texas have influenced Texas

(20C), organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps

Materials

1. Computer access to:
<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/military.html#map>
2. Student Handouts
3. pencils, pens

Activities and procedures

May be done individually, in pairs, as a whole class activity, or as a learning center activity.

Step 1: See *U.S. Army on the Texas Frontier* at: <http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/military.html>. Scroll down to the interactive map, “U.S. Forts in Texas, 1849-1860.”

Step 2: Click on 1849, 1854, and 1860 to see which forts were active in those years.

Step 3: Students answer the questions on the handout, individually or in pairs.

Extension Activities

1. In some cases, small communities grew around the forts. In other cases, forts were located near towns founded long before 1849 in order to protect them. Find the following cities on a Texas map and identify the fort that helped them grow.
 - Fort Worth
 - Brownsville
 - Fort Stockton

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- Burnet
 - El Paso
 - Uvalde
 - Gatesville
 - San Angelo
 - Brackettville
 - Laredo
 - Mason
 - Eagle Pass
 - Rio Grande
 - City Fort Davis

2. Allow students to further explore and analyze the *U.S. Army on the Texas Frontier* page of Texas Beyond History. Continue to observe how the location of forts changed throughout the years, and study other contributions the forts made to Texas history.

Assessment Completed handout, class discussion.

Moving West with the Forts: Interactive Map Assignment

Directions: Go to <http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/military.html>. Scroll down to the interactive map titled "U.S. Forts in Texas, 1849-1860." Click on the dates 1849, 1854, and 1860 to see the forts located in Texas during those years and how they changed with the passage of time. Answer the following questions:

1. What do almost all of the forts located in Texas in 1849 have in common?
2. Look at the forts that were active in Texas in 1849. What inference can you make about why they are located where they are?
3. Look at the areas of Texas that have no forts. What are 2 likely reasons for this?
 - a.
 - b.
4. Look at the forts that were active in 1849 and 1854. Which forts active in 1849 remained active five years later in 1854?
5. What inference can you make about why the forts changed location from 1849 to 1854 in the way that they did?
6. Now compare the forts that were active in 1849 with the forts active in 1860. Which ones remained in 1860?
7. Except for Ft. Inge, what do the forts that remained active from 1849 to 1860 all have in common? What would be a likely reason for this?
8. In 1861 Texas seceded from the United States. What impact might that have on the frontier forts and the job of protecting Texas from danger?

Moving West with the Forts: Interactive Map Assignment Extension

You will need a Texas highway map for this activity. In many cases, small communities grew around the forts. In other cases, forts were located near towns that were already established before 1849 to protect them. Find the following cities and towns on a Texas map and identify the associated fort on the interactive map:

- Fort Worth
- Brownsville
- Fort Stockton
- Burnet
- El Paso
- Uvalde
- Gatesville
- San Angelo
- Brackettville
- Laredo
- Mason
- Eagle Pass
- Rio Grande City
- Fort Davis

Moving West with the Forts: Answer Key

1. What do almost all of the forts located in Texas in 1849 have in common?

Most forts are located near rivers.

2. Look at the forts that were active in Texas in 1849. What inference can you make about why they are located where they are?

They are located in a line across Texas to protect the settlements in the Eastern part of the state.

3. Look at the areas of Texas that have no forts. What are 2 likely reasons for this?

Possible answers: West Texas has a harsher climate, it was still controlled by various native tribes, there were few Texas settlements located there. The Gulf Coast area was relatively safe and already had plenty of settlements, so forts were not needed.

4. Look at the forts that were active in 1849 and 1854. Which forts active in 1849 remained active five years later in 1854?

Brown, Ringgold Barracks, McIntosh, Duncan, Inge, Bliss

5. What inference can you make about why the forts changed location from 1849 to 1854 in the way that they did?

Possible answers may be that Texas settlement pushed westward, or that native tribes were pushed back and lost territory.

6. Now compare the forts that were active in 1849 with the forts active in 1860. Which ones remained in 1860?

The same ones: Brown, Ringgold Barracks, McIntosh, Duncan, Inge, Bliss

7. Except for Ft. Inge, what do the forts that remained active from 1849 to 1860 all have in common? What would be a likely reason for this?

They are all along the border with Mexico, forts might be needed there to prevent bandit raids and to enforce the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

8. In 1861 Texas seceded from the United States. What impact might that have on the frontier forts and the job of protecting Texas from danger?

The U.S. soldiers would abandon the forts, leaving the frontier unprotected and making it the responsibility of Texas to defend itself.