

# El Paso and the Oldest Mission in Texas



**Subject and Grade** Social Studies, 7<sup>th</sup>

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**Time duration** One 90-minute block or two 45-minute class periods

**Objective** The purpose of this lesson is to have students understand the reasons for Spanish settlement of the El Paso valley in Texas, events that transpired there, and what life was like for Indians and Spanish settlers.

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

(1A), identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, and explain the purpose of dividing the past into eras, including Natural Texas and its People; Age of Contact; Spanish Colonial

(2A), compare the cultures of American Indians in Texas prior to European colonization such as Gulf, Plains, Puebloan, and Southeastern

(2C) identify important individuals, events, and issues related to European colonization of Texas, including the establishment of Catholic missions, towns, and ranches, and the contributions of individuals such as Fray Damián Massanet, Antonio Margil de Jesús, and Francisco Hidalgo

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(8A), locate and compare the Mountains and Basins, Great Plains, North Central Plains, and Coastal Plains regions

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

(20B), analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions

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

**Materials**

1. El Paso Missions Study Questions and corresponding Answer Key (included)
2. Spanish Texas Map (included)

**Activities and procedures**

**Step 1:** Show students the map of Spanish Texas with missions, settlements, and presidios. Ask students to point out the El Paso area, home of the oldest mission in Texas. Advise students that they will use a website to discover the facts of the settlement of this area and what life was like for the Indians and Spanish settlers. Point out the Rio Grande flowing from New Mexico and dividing Texas from Mexico.

**Step 2:** Distribute the El Paso Mission Questions. Have students answer the questions using information from the Texas Beyond History website section entitled “Indians, Missionaries, Soldiers and Settlers: History of

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the El Paso Valley”:

<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/paso/history.html>

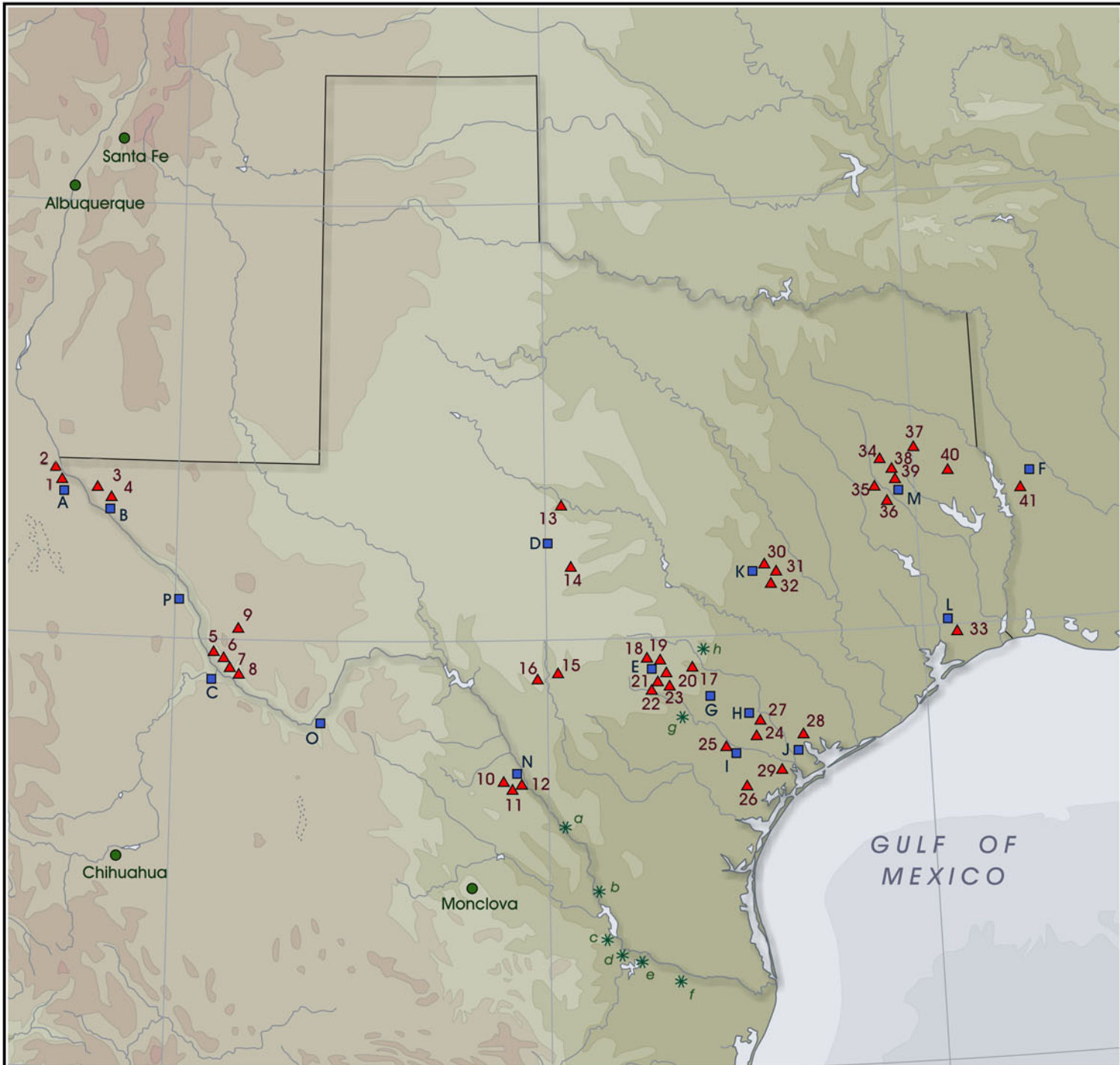
**Closure:** Ask students if they know why some of the El Paso missions are different from others in Texas? The answer is that only two of the missions there were established for Indians living in the area. The other El Paso missions were established for Indians who had traveled to the El Paso area with the Spanish and had already lived in missions in New Mexico. These were the Tigua, Piro, Tano, Tompiro, and Jemez.

**Extension  
Activities**

Have students explore the other sections about the El Paso valley missions on the Texas Beyond History website and learn about archeological excavations at Mission Socorro.

**Assessment**

Answers to El Paso Mission Study Questions



▲ Missions

1. San Antonio de Senecú, 1682-1828
2. San Lorenzo, 1680-1830
3. Corpus Christi de la Ysleta, 1682-1828
4. Concepción del Socorro, 1682-1828
5. La Navidad en las Cruces 1683-88
6. El Apóstol Santiago, 1683-88
7. San Antonio de los Puliques, 1715-ca. 1726
8. San Cristóbal, 1715-ca. 1775
9. Santa María de la Redonda, 1715-ca. 1726
10. San Juan Bautista, 1700-1829
11. San Francisco Solano, 1700-16  
(removed to San Antonio)
12. San Bernardo, 1702-1829
13. San Clemente, 1684
14. Santa Cruz de San Sabá, 1757-58
15. San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz, 1762-ca. 1769
16. Candelaria del Cañon, 1762-ca. 1769
17. San Francisco Xavier on the Guadalupe,  
1756-58
18. San Antonio de Valero (Alamo), 1718-93
19. San Francisci Xavier de Nájera, 1722-26
20. Purisma Concepción de Acuña, 1731-1824
21. San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, 1720-1824
22. San Juan Capistrano, 1731-1824
23. San Francisco de la Espada, 1731-1824
24. Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga, 1749-1830
25. Rosario, 1754-1831

26. Refugio, 1795-1830
27. Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga, 1726-49  
(removed to San Antonio River)
28. Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga, 1722-26  
(removed to Guadalupe River)
29. Refugio, 1793-95  
(removed to Mission River)
30. San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas, 1746-55  
(removed to Guadalupe River)
31. San Ildefonso, 1748-52
32. Candelaria, 1749-56
33. La Luz de Orcoquisac, 1756-71
34. Nuestro Padre San Francisco de los Tejas,  
renamed San Francisco de los Neches, 1716-  
30 (removed to San Antonio)
35. Santísimo Nombre de María, 1690-92
36. San Francisco de los Tejas, 1690-93
37. San José de los Nazonis, 1716-30
38. Purísima Concepción de los Hasinai, 1716-30  
(removed to San Antonio)
39. Guadalupe de Nacogdoches, 1716-73
40. Dolores de los Ais, 1716-73
41. San Miguel, 1717-73  
(in Robeline, Louisiana)

■ Presidios

- A Presidio del Paso del Norte, 1682-1773

- B San Elizario, 1789-1814  
 C Presidio del Norte, 1760-1820  
 D San Luis de las Amarillas, 1757-70  
 E San Antonio de Béxar, 1718-1821  
 F Presidio de los Adaes, 1721-73  
 G Santa Cruz del Cibolo, 1771-ca.1781  
 H Loreto de la Bahía, 1726-49  
(removed to San Antonio River)  
 I Loreto de la Bahía, 1749-1821  
 J Loreto de la Bahía, 1721-26  
(removed to Guadalupe River)  
 K San Francisco Xavier de Gigedo, 1751-56  
 L San Agustín de Ahumada, 1756-71  
 M Dolores de los Tejas, 1717-29  
 N San Juan Bautista de Río Grande, 1701-1827  
 O San Vicente, 1773  
 P El Príncipe, 1774

\* Settlements

- a. Palafox (1810)  
 b. Nuestra Señora de los Dolores (1751)  
 c. Villa San Ignacio de Revilla (1750)  
 d. Villa de Concepción de Mier (1753)  
 e. Villa Santa Ana de Camargo (1749)  
 f. Villa N. S. de Guadalupe de Reyonosar (1749)  
 g. Las Cabras (1731)  
 h. San Marcos de Neve (1808)



## El Paso Missions: Student Questions

### Directions:

- A. Log onto the internet.
- B. Go to [www.texasbeyondhistory.net/paso/index.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/paso/index.html).
- C. Click on the “History of El Paso Valley” section.
- D. Read the text and study the pictures and their captions in this section to find the answers to the following questions.
- E. Record your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

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1. Read the **introductory section** and study the picture of the Native Americans of the Rio Grande. Describe who these Native Americans were, what they ate, what they looked like, and what their houses were like.
2. What river (río) flows through the El Paso area?
3. What were two main purposes of Don Juan de Oñate’s entrada, or expedition?
4. What was “La Toma?”
5. What important feature of the landscape did Oñate find in the El Paso area?
6. Many people believe the first Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1598 near El Paso, 23 years before the Pilgrims held their feast with the Native Americans at the Plymouth colony. List five things that you see in the picture of that first Thanksgiving.
7. Why did Alonso de Benavides recommend that a mission and presidio be built among the Mansos in El Paso?

8. Use the timeline of the El Paso Valley to find out which mission was the first to be established in the area.
9. What year was it established?
10. Who came to El Paso after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 in northern New Mexico?
11. What happened to most of the Indians who participated in the revolt of 1684?

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Study the picture of the mud-plastered jacal structures from the early 1900s and read the **“Life in the Missions”** section to answer the following questions:

12. Describe what the lives of the Indians of El Paso were like when they lived in the missions.
13. When the Indians lived in the missions they ate many of the same foods that they ate before they lived in the missions. List three of them.
14. List three new foods that the Indians ate when they lived in the missions.

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Use the chart titled **“1750s Demographics: El Paso Area”** to answer the following questions:

15. What was the total population of the El Paso area in the 1750s?
16. Which community had the highest total population?
17. How many of the people who lived in Senecú were Indians?
18. How many of the people who lived in Ysleta were **NOT** Indians?
19. Why was a presidio moved to San Elizario?
20. Who came to El Paso after it became part of the United States in 1848?
21. Compare the 1740s map by Fray Juan Miguel Menchero and the boundary map between the United States and Mexico drawn by William Emory in 1855. What is different about the locations of the missions and settlements in the 1855 map?
22. What is the oldest mission and pueblo in Texas?

23. What did the coming of the railroad mean for the Anglos of El Paso?

24. What did it mean for the Native Americans of El Paso?

25. What is the only surviving native group in El Paso?

## El Paso Missions History: Answer Key

1. An acceptable description should include the following information:
  - a. They were called the Mansos and the Sumas
  - b. They ate rabbits, rats, fish, mesquite beans, mescal, prickly pear, agave, yucca, and various unspecified roots and seeds
  - c. They wore body paint and little clothing, and carried bows, arrows, and clubs
  - d. They lived in small communities, or *rancherías*, of primitive structures consisting of straw, brush, or poles
2. The Rio Grande
3. To find riches for Spain and convert the native population to Christianity
4. Any of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. A ceremony to formally take possession of all the land surrounding the Rio Grande
  - b. A sermon given by Oñate thanking God for delivering them across the harsh desert
  - c. A ceremony marking the beginning of 300 years of Spanish rule in Texas
5. Any of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. A break in the mountains
  - b. El Paso del Río del Norte, or the pass of the north
  - c. The Spanish gateway to the West
6. Any five of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. Oñate, soldiers, a priest, Mansos (Indians), women, a child, horses
  - b. Fish, a duck, a deer, cheese, wine
  - c. A barrel, a basket, a jug, a fire, a saddle, cups, a spoon, a bowl, a plate, trays, lances, swords, a flag, trees
  - d. Eating, drinking, praying, giving thanks
7. To convert and settle the Mansos, to guard the highway to New Mexico, and to develop mines and farms in the area
8. Guadalupe de los Mansos
9. 1659
10. Spanish, Piros, Tiguas, Tompiros, Tanos, and Jemez
11. Either of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. They never returned to the missions of El Paso
  - b. They developed a common identity as “Apache”
12. An acceptable description should include the following information:
  - a. They lived in clusters of jacal structures loosely arranged around central plazas
  - b. They served the friars of the missions in various ways and served as wage laborers and forced laborers
  - c. They adopted European cultigens and livestock
  - d. They made tools of chipped stone and brownware utility vessels (ceramics)
  - e. They still depended on wild resources



13. Any three of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. Corn
  - b. Rabbits
  - c. Fish
  - d. Mesquite
  - e. Prickly Pear
14. Any three of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. Wheat
  - b. Grapes
  - c. Peaches
  - d. Other fruits
  - e. Cows
  - f. Goats
  - g. Sheep
  - h. Pigs
  - i. Chickens
15. 3,130
16. El Paso del Norte
17. 384
18. 54
19. For protection from Apache raids
20. Either of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. U.S. military troops, officials, adventurers, settlers
  - b. Anglos
21. Either of the following are acceptable answers:
  - a. The missions and settlements are on the north bank of the river
  - b. The river is flowing in a channel south of, or below, the missions and settlements
22. Ysleta
23. It brought them prosperity
24. It caused conditions to worsen for them
25. The Tiguas