

A Day in the Life

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Subject: Social Studies

Grade level: 4

Rationale or Purpose: To explore the roles of a variety of people who lived or worked at a nineteenth-century Texas frontier fort or in a nearby frontier town. To reach a greater understanding of life on the Texas frontier by choosing a character and writing in his/her voice.

Materials:

Notebook paper or student social studies journals and pencils (for taking notes)
Access to “Meet the People of Fort Griffin and The Flat” Kids section on *Texas Beyond History* website,

<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/kids/forts/index.html>.

Bookmaking materials (optional)

Objectives:

- Social studies skills 4.22D, identify different points of view about an issue or a topic
- Social Studies skills 4.22, identify elements of frame of reference that influenced the participants in an event
- Social Studies skills 4.23, create written and visual material such as journal entries and reports

Activity:

Step 1: Students will get to know at least five of the residents of Fort Griffin and the surrounding area by visiting the interactive scene on the web site.

Step 2: Students will take notes on each of the people they “meet”, recording information about their roles in the community and the details of their daily lives.

Step 3: Students will choose one of the people they read about to research further. (For example, additional research on the life of Joe McComb, the buffalo shooter, could include research on the buffalo and the conflict between the Native Americans and the soldiers at the fort.) Online resources include the Fort Griffin webpages at

<http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/griffin/index.html>; and the Handbook of Texas Online at <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/>.

Step 4: Each student will write a story about a day in the life of the person he/she chose. The story should be written in first person and include details from the student's research.

Student Product: Final copy of story

Closure: Allow time for students to share their writing with a small group or the entire class.

Assessment or evaluation: Evaluate student writings for understanding of the person's role and appropriate specific details.

Extension: Bind stories into student-made book covers and illustrate.