

A Day in the Life



Subject and Grade Social Studies and English Language Arts and Reading, 4th (adaptable to 7th)

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Time duration Four 45-minute class periods

Objective 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.

TEKS ***Social Studies, Grade 4***

(4D), explain the effects on American Indian life brought about by the Red River War, building of U.S. forts and railroads, and loss of buffalo

(9B), explain the economic activities early settlers to Texas used to meet their needs and wants

(11A), identify how people in different regions of Texas earn their living, past and present

(19A), differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as technology; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about Texas

(19D), identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event

(21D), create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4

(6B), generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information

(6F), make inferences and use evidence to support understanding

(6G), evaluate details read to determine key ideas

(10A), explain the author's purpose and message within a text

(12A), compose literary texts such as personal narratives and poetry using genre characteristics and craft

(13C), identify and gather relevant information from a variety of sources

(13E), demonstrate understanding of information gathered

Materials

1. Notebook paper or student social studies journals and pencils (for taking notes)
2. 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>.
3. Graphic organizer (included)
4. Bookmaking materials (optional)

**Activities
and
procedures**

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

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 using the graphic organizer provided.

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

Step 4: Each student will write a story or journal entry about a day in the life of the person they chose. The story should be written in first person and include details from the student’s research.

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

**Extension
Activities**

1. Allow students to write multiple journal entries that tell a larger, ongoing story about the character they chose.
2. Encourage students to have their chosen character interact with other characters from Fort Griffin/The Flat and include details about their lives and daily routines in their journal.

3. Bind stories into student-made book covers and illustrate it.

Assessment Final copy of story.

What are 3 things you learned about this character?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is their **role** at Fort Griffin or The Flat?

What are 3 things this character might **do** or **experience** on a typical day?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What was the most interesting thing you learned about this character?

Character Name:

Study the **pictures** or **paintings** on this character's page. What are 2 things they tell you about the character?

- 1.
- 2.

Does the information tell you what happened to your character?

How does this character seem to **feel about living** at Fort Griffin or The Flat?