

## Creating an Identity for Houston

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*"If it was just a matter of who we thought could organize the best-run games, Houston would probably win it easy...But you've got to consider that Paris is coming at you with the Eiffel freaking Tower and London with Big bleeping Ben. What is the symbol of Houston that we sell to the world? Is it a cowboy town? Is it the space city?"*

~ Fran Blinebury, quoting a member of the United States Olympic Committee task force, *Houston Chronicle*, August 28, 2002

### INTRODUCTION

Houston has had many nicknames over the years. "Space City" and "the Bayou City" are heard most frequently, but Houston has also been called "H-Town," "Magnolia City," and even "Mudville" (by Galveston residents before the 1900 hurricane). In spite of this variety of descriptions, or more likely because of it, Houston seems to lack a stable identity. This became obvious when the Olympic committee was choosing the finalists for host city for the 2012 Olympics. Although committee members generally agreed that Houston's sports venues and overall proposal were excellent, their ultimate decision left Houston out in the cold. One reason that they gave for this action was Houston's lack of any recognizable identity, at least in the eyes of the rest of the world. It seems that Houston lacks the attractions and the unique identity of a San Francisco or a New York. As a lifelong Houstonian, I am annoyed by this attitude. At the same time, I can understand the confusion because there are so many aspects to life in Houston. Is Houston a port city or a major center of the oil industry, the home of NASA's mission control or one of the premier medical centers in the world? As any longtime Houstonian knows, Houston is all of these and much more.

### UNIT BACKGROUND

#### Houston's Early Years

Unlike San Antonio, Columbia, Gonzales, Harrisburg and other towns in southeast Texas, Houston was never part Spain's empire in the New World or of Mexico's fledgling republic. Founded by the Allen brothers, "Houston was a city from the hour of its birth" (Johnston 3). From the outset the Allens intended that Houston would be the capital of the new republic. Situating it only a few miles from the site of the Battle of San Jacinto, they named it for the hero of that historic victory. Houston did not start as a settlement that grew haphazardly. Instead, the Allens hired engineers to survey and plan the town in a grid pattern with with "wide streets suitable for a big city" (Johnston 3). The Allens succeeded in making Houston the first capital of the republic and, even with few buildings and muddy streets, a social center.

Houston was also a commercial venture from its inception and the succession of civic leaders who have tried to market the city goes all the way back to the founders. With the instincts of twentieth-century advertising executives, on August 30, 1836 the Allens placed the following advertisement in the *Telegraph and Texas Register*:

#### The Town of Houston

Situated at the head of navigation, on the West bank of Buffalo Bayou, is now for the first time brought to public notice because, until now, the proprietors were not ready to offer it to the public, with the advantages of capital and improvements.

The town of Houston is located at a point on the river which must ever command the trade of the largest and richest portion of Texas. By reference to the map, it will be seen that the trade of San Jacinto, Spring Creek, New Kentucky and the Brazos, above and below Fort Bend, must necessarily come to this place, and will warrant the employment of at least *One Millions Dollars* of capital, and when the rich land of this country shall be settled, a trade will flow to it, making it, beyond all doubt, the great interior commercial emporium of Texas.

...Vessels from New Orleans or New York can sail without obstacle to this place, and steamboats of the largest class can run to Galveston Island in 8 or 10 hours, in all seasons of the year. It is but a few hours sail down the bay, where one may take an excursion of pleasure and enjoy the luxuries of fish, fowl [sic], oysters and sea bathing...

There is no place in Texas more healthy, having an abundance of excellent spring water, and enjoying the sea breeze in all its freshness...

The proprietors offer the lots for sale on moderate terms to those who desire to improve them, and invite the public to examine for themselves. (McComb 9-11)

Setting the pattern for generations of Houston entrepreneurs to come, the Allens thought big, placing similar advertisements in newspapers in the United States and Europe (Johnston 9-10). It appears that they also knew how to exaggerate. Contrary to their claim that a steamboat could travel from Galveston to Houston in 10 hours or less, when their friend Francis Lubbock traveled to Houston in January, 1837 it took him three days to get from Harrisburg to Houston, a distance of six miles by road but twelve miles on the bayou (Johnston 11). As for being healthy, during a visit to Houston in December 1837 Mary Austin Holley noted in her diary that "Houston is not healthy – several bilious cases exist at present" (Holley 37).

Throughout the nineteenth century Houston was a commercial center.

## The Twentieth Century

### *Changing Images*

In 1996 then-Mayor Bob Lanier visited New York media organizations to investigate their views of Houston. His conclusion after these meetings was that Houston had an image problem (Schadewald). As Bill Schadewald pointed out in his 1996 article in *Houston Business Journal*, this should not have been a surprise to anyone:

Houston's been periodically wrestling with this image thing since the city was swampland. The primary problem is not lack of image. If anything, Houston has too many images.

For decades, civic boosters have been trying to offset perceptions – or misperceptions, as the case may be, of Houston as a frontier town of wahoo good 'ol folks and backyard oil derricks where the heat is unbearable, crime is prevalent and traffic is in constant gridlock.

In the past, we addressed our periodic identity crises by conjuring up snappy slogans to dispel these stereotypes.

“Houston Proud” was the mantra born in the bust of the 1980s. During the 1990 Economic Summit, “Houston’s Hot” prevailed as the slogan of the moment. This was followed by the short-lived “Houston: So Much More to Explore” and the current “Houston: The Real Texas.”

The following year Houston came up with yet another slogan – strongly supported by Bob Lanier’s wife, Elyse – “Houston: Expect the Unexpected.” The city spent \$5 million on this marketing ploy. It didn’t last long either. The latest city catchphrase is “Space City: A Space of Infinite Possibilities” (Hart). While I have always had a fondness for the “Space City” moniker, I have my doubts about how long it will last before the city and the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau try something new. As Lianne Hart pointed out in her article, the only nickname that has been heard fairly consistently over the years is “Bayou City,” which could describe many towns along the coast.

The most interesting image-making campaign is more than a little subversive. In 2004 a local marketing firm came up with their own campaign called “*Houston. It’s Worth It.*” Rather than ignoring Houston’s problems, their website lists twenty negatives about Houston, including heat, humidity, cockroaches, mosquitoes, traffic, and potholes. The site then offers Houstonians the opportunity to post their comments about Houston and why they stay here in spite of all the problems. I think my favorite goes as follows: “If Houston were a dog, she’d be a mutt with 3 legs, one bad eye, fleas the size of Corn Nuts and buck teeth. Despite all that, she’d be the best dog you’d ever know” (Thompson and Twaddle).

As a native Houstonian who gripes every August about the heat and complains every December about never having any winter in this town, I can relate to the posters on the *Houston. It’s Worth It* website. I hate the heat and am disgusted by our lack of mass transit, but I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else because there are so many things about Houston that I love. I’m proud of our medical center and all of our cultural venues. I admire the *chutzpah* that enables a city fifty miles from the Gulf to become a major port city. And I love the fact that “Houston” was the first word spoken from the moon.

Sadly, Elyse Lanier and Jordy Tollett, president of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, do not see any merit in this website. Both of them feel that it’s a mistake to point out Houston’s less charming characteristics.

### **The View from the Outside**

While the powers that be play up Houston’s virtues and at least some locals come to grips with its faults, it can be informative to consider the perceptions of two non-natives who have spent time in Houston.

### **TEACHING STRATEGIES**

I am designing this curriculum unit for 7<sup>th</sup> grade Texas History students, for most of whom English is a second language. I have gifted and pre-AP students as well as students who have just recently moved out of ESL classes. In order to accommodate the needs of these different groups, I have designed my lessons for my regular and transitional classes, with a gifted/pre-AP extension for the final lesson. I plan to teach this unit at the beginning of the school year when we traditionally cover geography.

My approach to this unit is directly related to the geographic concept of “place” – which is defined as the features and characteristics that give an area its own identity or personality. Such

abstract concepts can be very difficult for 7<sup>th</sup> graders. By connecting the concept of place to their hometown, I hope to help my students begin to connect geographic concepts to their own lives.

An added bonus is that, in the process of researching Houston's history, the students will be getting a quick overview of Texas history at the start of the school year.

The theme of my curriculum unit is an examination of the various elements that make up the city of Houston. We will examine Houston's history and look at how the city's image has evolved over the years. We will use the large selection of photographs that is available to show Houston at different stages in its development.

One sad reality about Houston is that it has a tendency to be a disposable city. In keeping with the idea that we do things on a grand scale in Texas, here in Houston it is buildings – historic or otherwise – that we dispose of. It seems like there is always construction going on somewhere in Houston, but very little conservation. It can be difficult to create an image for a city when the face of that city is constantly changing. This is a topic that I know will resonate with my students because they have experienced it recently. We had more than one discussion in my classes about why Astroworld was being torn down.

I also plan to point out to my students that Houston has been a city of opportunity for many people under many circumstances – a city of second chances. The most recent examples of this are the many hurricane evacuees who are building a new life for themselves and their families in Houston, but this has been true of Houston since the very beginning. This was obviously a place of enormous opportunity for John, Augustus, and Charlotte Allen. After a personal scandal forced Sam Houston to resign the Tennessee governorship, he bounced back in Texas and served his first term as President of the Republic of Texas in the city that bears his name. Born in Ireland, orphaned during a cholera epidemic in New Orleans, the Confederate hero Richard Dowling made a home for himself in Houston where he was a successful saloonkeeper before and after the Civil War. Jesse Jones, Hugh Roy Cullen, and Glenn McCarthy all found great opportunity and great success in their adopted home (HoustonHistory.com).

William Marsh Rice was so grateful for the second chance that he found in Houston that he endowed Rice Institute (now Rice University) with this explanation for his action, "Texas received me when I was penniless, without friends or even acquaintances, and now in the evening of my life, I recognize my obligation to her and to her children. I wish now to leave to the boys and girls struggling for a place in the sun the fortune I have been able to accumulate" (HoustonHistory.com).

This unit will combine traditional written resources with multimedia lessons. There will be a fairly strong emphasis on the use of technology. I try to use computers whenever possible because computer literacy is an essential skill for twenty-first century students. On a more pragmatic note, students who hate to open a book are usually first in line when they are doing research on the Internet.

In this unit I am restricting my students to one website on Houston's history.

After using written and visual materials, the students in each class will draw on what they have learned to decide how they would describe Houston if they were members of the Chamber of Commerce or of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau. As a part of the lesson they will decide on a nickname for Houston and will design a brochure advertising Houston's many attractions.

The students will also work in pairs or small groups to create a PhotoStory presentation about Houston's history. My gifted and pre-AP students may be given the option of creating a web page about Houston.

## LESSON PLANS

### Lesson 1: The City Nobody Knows

I will introduce this unit by raising the question of how people perceive Houston. This lesson will combine small group activities with a class discussion of specific quotes which I will provide. This lesson will require one ninety-minute class period.

#### *Objectives*

The student will:

- compare places and regions of Texas in terms of physical and human characteristics.
- identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the consequences of the modifications.
- explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas.
- analyze the effects of physical and human factors such as climate, weather, landforms, irrigation, transportation, and communication on major events in Texas.

#### *Materials Needed*

Transparency of Blinebury and Snyder quotations (see Appendix A)

Overhead projector

Computer and LCD projector

Handouts

- Fran Blinebury article about Houston's Olympic bid
- Mike Snyder article about Houston's image problem

#### *Procedure*

At the start of class I will ask my students to make a list of words that they would use to describe Houston. After a minute or two, they will share their list with a partner. I will then project the Blinebury and Snyder quotations on the screen and ask for opinions. Do they think that Houston has a recognizable image? If so, what is that image? If not, why not? Does Houston's climate affect how people think of the city? Does its location influence attitudes? Does its size and overall appearance play a part?

I will read them short excerpts from *Mirage* and from Hollinghurst's article to give them the viewpoints of two non-natives, and will follow this up by looking at some posts on the *Houston's Worth It* website. I will then tell them that they are going to be learning about Houston's history and coming up with a plan for marketing Houston to the rest of the country and to the world. At the end of the unit, they will have an opportunity to post their ideas on the *Houston Strategies* website. They will be expected to review the Blinebury and Snyder handouts for possible ideas to incorporate in their Lesson 5 project.

#### *Assessment*

For homework students will write a letter to a friend or relative who has never been to Houston. In the letter they will describe Houston, mentioning all the things – positive or negative – that they think someone should know about Houston. The letter will be assessed on the following items:

- accuracy of information.
- includes all parts of a letter in correct format and ideas are well-organized.
- written in complete sentences, with correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- neat and with legible handwriting.

## **Lesson 2: Let's Learn About Houston**

The students will use computers to research the history of Houston. This lesson will require three ninety-minute class periods. Students will work in groups of three or four to research a period in Houston's history. Each group will produce a timeline of key events in Houston during their time period. At the end of this lesson we will have a history of Houston from its beginnings to the present day.

### ***Objectives***

The student will:

- apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods.
- identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the consequences of the modifications.
- explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas.
- transfer information from one medium to another.

### ***Materials Needed***

Computers with Internet access

Paper for taking notes

Construction paper, poster board or long sheets of bulletin board paper

Markers

### ***Procedure***

The lesson will start with the class brainstorming ideas about the type of information that should be included in a history of Houston. As a group, each class will create a list of topics that should be included for each time period. This list may vary slightly from one class to another. Teams of three or four students will then research their assigned time period by accessing the Houston History website. The first two class periods will be spent on brainstorming and research. During the third class period each group will use the information they have obtained to create a timeline about their assigned era. The timelines can be completed on construction paper, poster board, or a section of bulletin board paper. The goal is to be able to connect all of the group timelines into one long timeline illustrating the history of Houston.

### ***Assessment***

Each group timeline will be assessed on the following items:

- events on the timeline are chosen carefully, showing awareness of the significance of the event or illustrating a cause and effect relationship.
- scale is consistent and accurate, events are placed in the correct sequence, and time increments are marked correctly.
- spelling and dating are correct.
- timeline is legible, neat and visually appealing; extra credit will be given for appropriate illustrations.

## **Lesson 3: The Disposable City**

This lesson is meant to get students thinking about what gives a city a certain image, and what might keep it from ever developing one specific identity. This lesson will require one ninety-minute class period.

### ***Objectives***

The student will:

- apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods.
- identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the consequences of the modifications.
- explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas.
- transfer information from one medium to another.

### ***Materials Needed***

Photographs of Houston at different periods of time, especially of various landmarks  
Overhead projector or LCD projector to view photographs

### ***Procedure***

I will start this lesson with a quotation from the *Houston Chronicle* article giving Six Flags Over Texas' rationale for tearing down Astroworld in order to sell the land. I will ask the class to consider whether a property owner's rights are always more important than the interest of the broader community. If not, how do we determine when the community has the superior interest?

I will then show them a series of photographs of Houston landmarks which no longer exist and will explain what happened to them. The class will then divide into small groups of three or four students to discuss what impact this tendency to build up and tear down might have on Houston's apparent lack of a recognizable identity.

### ***Assessment***

Each group will complete a Pro and Con chart, listing arguments for the rights of property owners and arguments for the rights of the larger community. The chart will be assessed on the following items:

- persuasiveness of arguments for each side.
- the content is presented succinctly and without spelling errors.
- the organizer is neat and legible.

### **Lesson 4: City of Opportunity, City of Second Chances**

The previous lesson focused on negative aspects of Houston's development. This lesson is meant to focus on positive elements of Houston history, as well as the positive aspects of life in Houston today. This lesson will require one ninety-minute class period.

### ***Objectives***

The student will:

- define the impact of "boom and bust" and trace the boom-and-bust cycle of leading Texas industries throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including farming, oil and gas, cotton, cattle ranching, real estate, and banking.
- explain economic factors that led to the urbanization of Texas.
- trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas.
- explain the changes in the types of jobs and occupations that have resulted from the urbanization of Texas.
- analyze the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on developments in Texas, including citing examples of the resulting interdependence among Texas, the United States, and the world.

- differentiate between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources such a computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas.

***Materials Needed***

Textbook  
 Computer with Internet access  
 Pen and paper to take notes

***Procedure***

I will begin this lesson by asking each student to make a list of opportunities that Houston offers its residents. After a reasonable amount of time (no more than five minutes), I will ask for ideas which I will list on the board. I will then tell the class that Houston has been a place of opportunity and second chances for many people, beginning with the Allens and continuing to the present day. For the remainder of the class period, each student will use a computer or their textbook to research a Houstonian of their choice who came here to take advantage of everything Houston has to offer. Computer research will be limited to the Houston History website.

***Assessment***

For homework students will create a graphic organizer that presents key facts about the Houstonian they researched. The homework will be assessed on the following items:

- the name of the person is in the center and information branches from organizer topic appropriately.
- the content provides important information, is logically arranged, and is presented succinctly and without spelling errors.
- the organizer is neat and legible.

**Lesson 5: So How Would *You* Market Houston to the World?**

The students will work in teams to prepare a marketing campaign for Houston. This lesson will require three ninety-minute class periods.

***Objectives***

The student will:

- use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.
- transfer information from one medium to another.
- create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.
- use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.

***Materials Needed***

Computers with Internet access  
 Paper for taking notes and planning final product  
 Construction paper, poster board or paper for printing brochures  
 Markers or colored pencils  
 Magazines with pictures of Houston

***Procedure***

The teams will produce a brochure or poster that could be used to advertise Houston to different groups. This can be done with computers by regular and ESL students, or with more traditional



pen and paper. The gifted and Pre-AP students will be required to use computers to create a brochure, a PhotoStory slideshow presentation or webpage that could be used to advertise Houston.

Each group will get a form with the following questions which they will need to answer before they start to work on the final product:

1. Why are you creating this marketing plan? To play up Houston's most attractive features? To downplay negative ideas people may have about Houston?
2. Who is your target audience? Are you trying to get businesses to move to Houston? To convince individuals to move their residence to Houston? To bring convention business to Houston?
3. Develop a plan. How can you make your message most effective? With brochures? Posters? A PhotoStory presentation? A webpage?

### ***Assessment***

Teams will create a brochure, poster, slideshow presentation or webpage which will be assessed on the following items:

- graphics are related to the topic and clearly labeled; borrowed graphics have source citations.
- the content provides relevant information, is logically arranged, and has correct grammar and spelling.
- the product has a neat and attractive design.

## APPENDIX A

### **Vote another blow to Houston's image**

"If it was just a matter of who we thought could organize the best-run games, Houston would probably win it easy... But you've got to consider that Paris is coming at you with the Eiffel freaking Tower and London with Big bleeping Ben. What is the symbol of Houston that we sell to the world? Is it a cowboy town? Is it the space city?"

~ Fran Blinebury, quoting a member of the United States Olympic Committee task force, *Houston Chronicle*, August 28, 2002

### **A new survey suggests Houston is invisible in the minds of the nation's young professionals**

#### **Image problem is *no* image**

"Houston appears neither among the 20 cities young college-educated workers would most likely consider as a home, nor among the 20 where they'd least like to live. New York and Los Angeles, by contrast, appear high on both lists, indicating people have strong opinions about the nation's two largest cities.

"'Houston is invisible,' said Stephen Klineberg, the Rice University sociology professor who directs the annual Houston Area Survey of local attitudes and demographic traits. 'People don't know about Houston. They don't think of Houston.'"

~ Mike Snyder, on Houston's image problem, *Houston Chronicle*, July 5, 2006

## APPENDIX B

The following is a list of TEKS objectives implemented in this curriculum unit:

- SST.HIS.7.1.b. Apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods.
- SST.HIS.7.7.a. Define the impact of "boom and bust" and trace the boom-and-bust cycle of leading Texas industries throughout the 20th century, including farming, oil and gas, cotton, cattle ranching, real estate, and banking.
- SST. GEO.7.9.b. Compare places and regions of Texas in terms of physical and human characteristics.
- SST.GEO.7.9.c. Analyze the effects of physical and human factors such as climate, weather, landforms, irrigation, transportation, and communication on major events in Texas.
- SST.GEO.7.10.a. Identify ways in which Texans have adapted to and modified the environment and analyze the consequences of the modifications.
- SST.GEO.7.10.b. Explain ways in which geographic factors have affected the political, economic, and social development of Texas.
- SST.ECO.7.12.a. Explain economic factors that led to the urbanization of Texas;
- SST.ECO.7.12.b. Trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas.
- SST.ECO.7.12.c. Explain the changes in the types of jobs and occupations that have resulted from the urbanization of Texas.
- SST.STS.7.20.c. Analyze the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on developments in Texas, including citing examples of the resulting interdependence among Texas, the United States, and the world.
- SST.SSK.7.21.a. Differentiate between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas.
- SST.SSK.7.22.a. Use social studies terminology correctly.
- SST.SSK.7.22.b. Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.
- SST.SSK.7.22.c. Transfer information from one medium to another.
- SST.SSK.7.22.d. Create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.
- SST.SSK.7.23.a. Use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Works Cited

#### Books

- Ayele, Wolde. *Mirage*. Houston: Hothouse Press, 1986.  
A non-native's view of Houston.
- Holley, Mary Austin. *The Texas Diary, 1835-1838*. Edited with an introduction by J. P. Bryan. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965.  
An account of Texas during its revolution and the early years of the republic, written by Stephen F. Austin's cousin.
- Johnston, Marguerite. *Houston: The Unknown City, 1836-1946*. Texas A & M University Press, 1991.  
A fascinating history of Houston and of the movers and shakers who shaped its growth.
- McComb, David G. *Houston, a History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981. Previous edition published in 1969 as *Houston, the Bayou City*.  
A comprehensive and entertaining story of Houston's first century and a half.

#### Articles

- Blinebury, Fran. "Vote Another Blow to Houston's Image." *Houston Chronicle*. 28 Aug. 2002: Sports 1.  
<<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/sports/blinebury/1551427.html>>.  
A succinct explanation of why Houston lost its chance to host the 2012 Olympics.
- Hart, Lianne. "The Mosquitoes, the Humidity..." *Los Angeles Times*. 11 Sept. 2004.  
<<http://www.houstonitsworthit.com/newsflash/newsflash.asp?Mode=View@articleid=1556andCategory=All>>.  
This article describes the "Houston. It's Worth It." ad campaign started by a Houston marketing firm.
- Schadewald, Bill. "A Smorgasbord of Slogans to Ease Image Angst." *Houston Business Journal*. 5 Aug. 1996.  
<<http://houston.bizjournals.com/houston/stories/1996/08/05/editorial3.html>>.  
After presenting the facts quoted above, Schadewald goes on to suggest some hilarious minislogans for Houston. Unfortunately after July 24 this article will only be available online for Houston Business Journal subscribers.
- Snyder, Mike. "A New Survey Suggests Houston is Invisible in the Minds of the Nations' Young Professionals." *Houston Chronicle*. 5 July 2006: Metro 1. <<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/headline/metro/4027174.html>>.  
This article contains an interesting take on Houston's image problems and some suggestions on how to attract people to Houston.

#### Web Sites

- Thompson, David and Randy Twaddle. *Houston. It's Worth It*. 2004, 2006. <<http://www.houstonitsworthit.com>>.  
A web site that acknowledges Houston defects and asks Houston to post comments about why they live here in spite of those defects.
- Welcome to Houston: 170 Years of History*. 2006. HoustonHistory.com. <<http://www.houstonhistory.com>>.  
This is an excellent website, covering Houston's history from the beginning to the present. It is broken down by decades, by Houston's legacy, by famous citizens, by landmarks and by the various ethnic cultures to be found in Houston. It is so comprehensive that I am limiting my students to this site for their Internet research in this unit.

#### Supplemental Resources

#### Books

- Doherty, Craig A. and Katherine M. *The Houston Astrodome*. Chicago: Blackbirch Press, 1996.  
Part of the *Building America* series, this is a history of the Astrodome (including its construction), written at a level appropriate for grades 3-7 and containing both black and white and color photographs.
- Flanagan, Sue. *Sam Houston's Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964.  
Although this book is about Sam Houston, it provides some information about the city of Houston during its early days.
- Powell, William Dylan. *Houston Then and Now*. Thunder Bay Press, 2003.  
Fabulous photographs of Houston locations, some showing buildings that have survived over the years and others showing what has replaced them.
- Slotboom, Erik. *Houston Freeways: A Historical and Visual Journey*. Cincinnati: O. F. Slotboom, 2003.  
This is a good overview of one of Houston's defining features and one of its greatest sources of aggravation to residents and visitors alike.

### ***Web Sites***

Gattis, Tory. *Houston Strategies: Another Option for Houston's Branding Identity*. 2006.

<<http://houstonstrategies.blogspot.com/2006/03/another-option-for-houstons-branding.html>>.

Gattis is a Houstonian who has created a webpage about possible nicknames or slogans for Houston. What makes his site special is his request for comments from visitors to his site. I plan to let my students forward their ideas for slogans to this site as a wrap-up to this unit.

Lake, Laura. *Six Steps to Developing Your Public Relations and Media Plan*. 2006. About, Inc., A part of The New York Time Company. <<http://marketing.about.com/cs/publicrelations/a/prplan6steps.htm>>.

I used this site as a guide for the marketing questions in Lesson 5.