

Houston: A Mystery to Unfold?

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INTRODUCTION: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Growing up just an hour outside of Houston, I was always curious about this elusive city. The downtown skyscrapers surrounded by a labyrinth of highways, bridges, and bayous seemed mysterious to me. What was going on in this place? What happened to its past? There is so much untold about our beloved Houston.

HOUSTON, born August 30, 1836, just twenty miles from the battleground where General Sam Houston in his final defeat of the Mexican general, Santa Anna, established independence from Mexico. Its official founders were Augustus C. and John K. Allen, brothers from New York who met and became friends of General Houston before the revolution (Powell 5). Naming it after Sam Houston, these ambitious land speculators purchased over 6,500 acres of land, promoting the area to everyone who was interested. They chose this spot due to its navigation point closest to the already established San Felipe de Austin on the Brazos where Stephen F. Austin had established the first Anglo-American community in Texas (5). The Allens envisioned a trading post on Buffalo Bayou that would bring wealth and prosperity. Houston's settlers came on small boats up the bayou, which connected the city with Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico (Nergal, "Boomtown"). In fact, the first steamship sailed up the bayou in 1837 foreshadowing its future as an inland port. From 1837-1839, the small town of Houston even served as capital of the Republic Texas with Sam Houston serving as president until his political opponents took over and moved the capital west (Powell 5).

Since its founding, Houston's major products were cotton, lumber, and cattle. With the expansion of the Port of Houston during the late 1800s, Houston began to grow substantially. The latter part of the nineteenth century brought about more prosperity with the introduction of its first railroad, which developed Houston into a national marketing center (Nergal, "Boomtown"). In years that followed Houston exploded with the discovery of oil near Beaumont in 1901, which became the city's most important economic component. Houston is now the oil capital of America (Nergal, "Boomtown"). Economically, Houston is still a booming town with an exponential amount of potential.

However, with all of its grandeur and glory, Houston has some qualities I am not proud of. Recently, I have discovered more about Houston's hidden past. I was amazed to discover that downtown Houston used to be home to some of the most beautiful houses and apartment hotels I have ever seen. The different styles of architecture—neoclassical, Victorian, and Colonial Revival—were among the finest structures. What I also found was that some of them did not survive very long. For example, The Rossonianan, an exquisite eight-floor luxury apartment hotel, lasted a mere forty-two years. Its fate was mirrored in the destruction of neoclassical Colonial Revival houses being built in the early 1900s (Houghton 166). "The downtown area once contained the mansions of the rich, but they have all gone; some of those baking dusty parking-lots were once their gardens" (Hollingshurst 120). The Benjamin Jesse Covington house, which was located in Houston's Third Ward and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was unfortunately demolished in 1980. The Jonas Shearn Rice house at 2304 Crawford Street

(1902-1933) was another landmark that was once home to Mr. Rice, who was a member of the Baldwin-Allen-Rice family—key players in Houston’s early life. This house was the first large Colonial Revival to be constructed in Houston. This house was so significant in Houston’s history and yet only lived thirty years (Houghton 167).

Houses were not the only structures to be demolished. In William Powell’s *Houston Then and Now*, he illustrates what Houston used to look like as far back as 1877 (20). What I find sad is how much the architecture has changed. When I see a picture of downtown Houston’s Main Street pre-World War I, it reminds me of New York, which has so many old buildings that are clearly over 100 years of age. Now, Main Street looks much too modern for my taste. The Burns Building, built 1883, was 111 years old, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places when it was demolished:

A noncommittal owner and lax ordinances governing historical buildings permitted its razing. Most of its contemporary neighbors had met a similar fate. Onlookers cried as the wrecking ball swung, but the event served to galvanize local historical activism. Several powerful groups now protect Houston’s architectural heritage. (Powell 28)

What I found to be one of the most unbelievable changes to occur was that of the Miller Outdoor Theatre, erected in 1923, and was first of its kind in America (Powell 104). It triggers memories of Greece when I see the picture of the beautiful Doric proscenium. Unfortunately, in 1969, a “new” theatre was constructed. Once again, I ask “Why?” Only forty-six, such a sad death!

This, indeed, saddens me. I think Houston would be a much more interesting place if people had preserved these buildings, not to mention, have more character. Apparently, I am not the only one who shares this opinion. Alan Hollinghurst, a transplant who came from London, stated so candidly, “I found myself repeatedly escaping from the shallow architectural culture of Houston (founded 1836, the year of Texan independence) into imaginary rambles through my own city (founded 50BC); and indulging a slightly self-conscious relish for the lanes and livery-halls and melancholy churches of London, alongside a faintly supercilious dismay at the trashiness and sprawl of my temporary home” (119). Houston is ever-changing, but at what cost? I want my students to understand the significance of its heritage and why architectural preservation is so important. Kay Bailey Hutchison, a U.S. Senator and Texan made an excellent statement about preservation. “As Texans we pride ourselves on a rich multicultural heritage and a strong economy. We know that preserving this heritage leads to economic benefits for all of us” (Center for Urban Research 2).

Unfortunately, the city of Houston often gets pulled down into the ranks of negative two on a scale of one to ten in terms of aesthetic beauty. When describing his drive from the George Bush Intercontinental Airport (a name Houstonians are very proud of) into downtown, Hollinghurst proclaimed Houston is part of “the great aesthetic shock of America in all its barbarity and convenience...The famous downtown towers of Houston appear in a distant silhouette across the utterly flat and un-charming landscape. ...Living on one of the steepest roads in London, I find the flatness after a while oppressive” (121). Reading his testimony about Houston’s aesthetic qualities, I sometimes feel the same.

Recently, the erection of Reliant Stadium (estimated at \$450 million) next to the once great Astrodome is a prime example of Houston’s relentless attitude of “In with the new, out with the old.” My question is, “Why would you build a stadium next to another stadium that is not even 50 years of age and was once compared to the stature of the Vatican?” Is the Astrodome’s future bleak? Why not demolish it? It is, after all, “over the hill.” In his article “The Pope and the Judge”, Peter C. Papademetriou compares both Astrodome and the Vatican:

While the emphasis of the culture in which both are seen to be most relevant may not appear to be comparable, a visual analysis indicates that Vatican City may indeed be a reasonable paradigm for Astrodome. Both were begun near, but on a fringe, of their city, at the site of the original cult centre (Old St. Peter's/old Colt 45 Stadium). Both have as their symbol the main building (St. Peter's Cathedral/Astrodome) and a public space of great scale (Piazza St. Peter/Astrodome Parking Lot), which is adjacent to a collection of outbuildings (Vatican Palaces/Astroworld Hotels).

At the time, the Astrodome was seen as a cultural icon representing recreation "Texan style," housing concerts where Elvis once performed and the Astros played. Not to mention, the Livestock Show and Rodeo and numerous Demolition Derbies that have taken place at this "Eighth Wonder of the World" costing forty million to construct. Many cities across America used it as a model to build other indoor stadiums (Powell 126).

The recent demolition of Astroworld (1968-2005), a place I often visited when I was a kid, was a shock to me as well as most people. This was a playground for kids as well as adults. I personally believe more could have been done to protect it. Although this was private property owned by Six Flags, it is still in the public interest to protect it. When the Coney Island Cyclone in New York was in danger, people stood up. "The coaster was condemned in 1969 and scheduled for demolition, but a grass roots movement stepped in and the coaster was saved to re-open in 1975" ("Save Astroworld"). Twenty million was spent to demolish it, but why couldn't that money have been used to renovate it? One argument I heard was that it was not making enough money; but, as far as attendance goes, it ranked seventh out of the rest of Six Flags operations throughout the country ("Save Astroworld"). Once again, we have failed in Houston. If we want Houston to be an attraction for people, we need to show our pride and be better citizens. We must preserve what is beautiful and sacred to us. The students can also benefit from learning about the demolition of Astroworld from an economic standpoint.

Many people who come to here to work temporarily or live permanently dislike Houston initially; however, over time, they grow to love it and its people. "It is not a tourist city, and it strikes me early on that Houstonians don't expect their environment to be admired, and are wonderfully generous to anyone who shows an interest" (Hollinghurst 120). His statement is true indeed regarding it not being a top tourist destination. However, if we are to attract people to Houston, what will be our big sellers, our top attractions? Most people visit New York City for its historical, cultural and architectural attractions:

Everybody knows and understands the allure that places like New York and Paris, to name a couple, hold. They signify something quite concrete. That something is their known secret, but around it they weave an irresistible tale, a myth, that grows thicker and more tempting as the years go by. Time is an important ingredient. Houston does not yet have a 'something' around which to spin a tale. At least that something hasn't surfaced yet, and if it has it remains to be noticed and acknowledged. (Ayele 27)

I have to agree with the author's quote, but Houston does have a story, a mystery. Why, should a city like Houston be at the bottom of the list for "places to visit" for any tourist? We have so many wonderful things here, but what existed before can never be brought back. Houston prides itself on change, therefore, losing some of its identity.

Houston indeed is a progressive city in its own right; however, when it comes to transportation, I feel that it is still a cow town. Given the fact that Houston is the fourth largest city in the U.S., shouldn't we have a mass transportation system besides the Metro? Other mega cities have them, so what's the problem? Another interesting fact I recently uncovered was that Houston was once home to the largest train station in the Southwest. (Powell 64). The Texas Rocket ran between Dallas and Houston in the late 1930s. The Zephyr was another passenger

shuttle. Now, it is home to Minute Maid Park, where the Houston Astros play. I would love to be able to ride a train instead of have to drive everywhere. I am sure this is true for most people especially due to the swelling of gas prices.

Another center for transportation, the Southern Pacific's Grand Central Station, helped transport cotton in the early 1900s. This beautiful station had black walnut woodwork, intricate murals, and marble flooring. It was razed in 1961 and replaced with the central post office. It now serves as an Amtrak terminal. At least it is still useful (Powell 86). With the introduction of the automobile, passenger trains became obsolete. What you do see a great deal of is freeways. The Gulf Freeway, Houston's first, opened in 1948 and runs over the site of the old Galveston-Houston Interurban Railway right-of-way.

With all its negative qualities, the Bayou City has some wonderful qualities to be admired. If not for the Houston Teacher's Institute, I would not have been exposed to some of Houston's hidden treasures. I recently discovered Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, a wonderful place tucked neatly away in the River Oaks area which once belonged to Ima Hogg, daughter of James S. Hogg (governor of Texas from 1891 to 1895). The Hogg family contributed a great deal to Texas in terms of public service and philanthropy. "Among other qualities, Governor Hogg instilled in his four children a deep concern for the citizens of Texas" (Nergal, "Great Houstonians: Governor Hogg").

James S. Hogg was known as a passionate advocate for the common citizen. He was a popular governor because he supported legislation to increase funds for public schools, helped write the state's antitrust law protecting the public from monopolies, and helped create the Railroad Commission, which still regulates many industries today. In fact, it plays a significant role in the regulation of the oil industry. (Anderson 447). Hogg was indeed a governor "for the people." Two schools named after him, one in Tyler and my school, two state historical parks, and Jim Hogg County in South Texas have been named in his honor.

Ima Hogg was a woman to be admired. Like her father, her contributions alone made her a time-honored figure in Texas History. Due to her family's wealth (created by the development of West Colombia oil field), she was able to contribute a great deal to the public. She was part of the founding of the Houston Child Guidance Center and the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the University of Texas in Austin in honor of her brother Will. A talented pianist, she was one of the founders of the Houston Symphony Society which was formed in 1913. In 1918, after developing their West Colombia Oil Field, south of Houston, the Hogg family's wealth increased substantially. Like her brothers, Will, Tom, and Mike, she used her share of her wealth for philanthropic purposes.

Her greatest contribution was her 14-acre River Oaks estate, Bayou Bend, to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts in 1957. It is bordered on two sides by a bend in Buffalo Bayou; hence the name. Not only was she a great admirer of art, she was a collector of antiques and furniture ranging from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Built in 1928, Bayou Bend holds some of the finest furniture, silver, pottery and porcelain, glass, and more all shown in over 20 unique room settings featuring themed time periods.

Miss Ima Hogg was once a trustee who began to donate extensive collections of art to the Museum of Fine Arts, which was founded in 1900 by a group of civic leaders who were part of the Houston Public School Art League for the "encouragement of art and culture in the public school system" (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston). She was also a trustee of the Houston Independent School District from 1943-1947.

I am confident my students will benefit a great deal learning about Ima Hogg as well as her father. It will teach them the importance of citizenship and philanthropy, not to mention the

preservation and appreciation of antiquity and art. Upon receiving an award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1966, she stated these words so eloquently:

Texas, an empire in itself geographically and historically, sometimes seems to be regarded as remote or alien to the rest of our nation. I hope in a modest way Bayou Bend and these other memorials may serve as a bridge to bring us closer to the heart of an American heritage that unites us. (Nergal, "Great Houstonians: Miss Ima Hogg")

The fact that their school name is such a great one, they should feel proud to attend James S. Hogg Middle School which was founded in 1926. Students will gain an understanding of what "civic duty" means. Miss Ima Hogg was a benevolent woman who was committed to many causes such as public education, mental health care, music, art, and the restoration of historic sites all throughout Texas.

Hogg Middle School is located in the historic Norhill neighborhood adjacent to the Houston Heights, which houses many historical residences. Since many students live in the area, they should become more aware of their surroundings. Furthermore, they will be more interested in contributing somehow, especially if it affects them personally. They can make a connection to their lives that enrich their learning.

The Heights was founded in 1890 when representatives of the American Loan and Trust Company of Omaha, Nebraska, came to Houston seeking land to develop. Purchasing 1,756 acres of land, they named the area the Heights due to its elevation twenty-three feet above downtown Houston (Texas Historical Commission). The Heights was incorporated in 1896 after more development occurred with streets, sidewalks, homes, businesses, and electric railcars connecting it to downtown. It is still unique in its identity with many historic structures that represent turn-of-the-twentieth-century architectural styles. There are approximately 8,000 structures located within the Houston Heights. Many of those were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. There are many that I have seen that I would nominate. That is why it is so critical for the community to rehabilitate, not allow demolition and destruction to take place. Houston has a history, and we need to preserve it not destroy it! Besides that, it is far too young to erase its history.

Unfortunately, many historic houses are being torn down due to new developments. In fact, in recent years, several of the finest original single family houses have been destroyed and replaced with multi-unit apartment complexes that not aesthetically designed and are poorly constructed (Texas Historical Commission). Another sad death is 1801 Ashland, a house built in 1907 and former home of the Ashland House Tea Room. It was destroyed in January in order to make room for a new restaurant. The new owner stated that the home had structural deficiencies. "But the home's demise represents what some residents are calling another example of the destruction of historic property in a neighborhood that is slowly losing its history" (Manning 1). Although the demolition was warranted due to it being unsafe for the restaurant, there was a possibility it could have been kept alive. Students should know how this effects their environment historically and economically.

After WWII, more commercial and industrial interests began to enter the neighborhood, and without zoning it has been difficult for the Heights to remain intact. "As long as long-term residents die or move away, the land is often developed by interests that are insensitive to the community into which they are moving. Even areas that remain residential decline as many of the houses become rental property" ("Texas Historic Sites Atlas").

The good news is there are groups who support and fight to keep these houses alive. The Houston Heights Association, created in 1973, fights to preserve historic homes by spreading the word via their website and by recruiting volunteers. According to Sharie and David Beale, who are key leaders in the association, an extraordinary number of historic homes have been

demolished or moved out of the area of the Houston Heights Association in the last year—over 126 houses were lost, an astounding average of over two houses demolished or removed per week. Many of these houses were over 80 years of age.

Heights Boulevard is one of the Heights treasures. It was built in 1891 with a hired florist and nurseryman, L.D. Folse, who installed the plants for the esplanade in 1904. The oak trees were placed equal distance along the streets where they still stand erect (Houghton 148). The first house to be built on Heights Boulevard was that of Daniel Denton Cooley. Soon after, many Victorian mansions lined the boulevard.

The city of Houston is one of economic growth and fertility. Visitors are familiar with the obvious things about Houston: NASA, the Astrodome, and Enron (well, what is left of it anyway), oil, amongst other wonders. However, people should know about the Heights with its unique identity and history. How will they know if people tear down its most precious attributes?

Another hidden treasure of Houston is its first professionally designed cemetery, Glenwood. It was completed in 1871 at 2525 Washington Avenue. “Virtually all of the city’s prominent citizens, bearing the familiar surnames of Cullinan, Herman, Hobby, Johnston, Jones, McCarthy, Sterling, and Rice, were laid to rest in Glenwood” (Powell 124). The most famous grave to be visited is that of aviator and movie producer, Howard Hughes who died in his airplane while flying to Houston (125). I intend to bring my kids on a field trip to Glenwood. I believe it is one of the most beautiful cemeteries I have ever seen.

CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES

As a Texas History and Social Studies teacher for 7th grade at Hogg Middle School, I feel that it is important for me to share with my students what I have discovered about Houston creating a unit that teaches them to discover more about their surroundings and the history of those surroundings. I will prepare lessons that will involve them to inquire about Houston on their own so they can gain an understanding of how much their environment affects their lives. In wanting them to explore their home surroundings I’d like them to take ownership of knowing the history involved with what made Houston a city, its past life as well as become aware of what is going on now and what may happen in the future economically, culturally, and historically.

Because I have many ESL (English as a Second Language), Special Ed, and Gifted students, I feel my curriculum will benefit all learners. I will cover objectives that are required for 7th grade social studies teachers including:

- SS.16.b Identify civic responsibilities of Texas citizens.
- SS.7.22.a Use social studies terminology correctly.
- SS.7.22.c Transfer information from one medium to another.
- SS.7.22.d Create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.
- SS.7.12.b Trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas.
- SS.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.
- SS.7.1.b Apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods.

[I will also implement objectives that are specifically related to Houston that I have developed.]

Houston is a thriving city, and from what I have observed, students love to talk about “H-Town.” They often like to write those words on my blackboard as if they were marking their

territory. This unit is especially being dedicated to Houston. Many teachers can find my unit flexible and varied. It covers a lot of information that one can utilize for their own classes.

I will ask students to become “historians” and “investigators”. I want them to take ownership of their work during the curriculum. In my experience, I’ve found that all students react positively and tend to appreciate this format of working on their own, and become fully engaged when asked to do projects. I will use strategies that tap into the students’ knowledge at a deeper level. These include “Cues and Questions.” In Robert J. Marzano’s book *Classroom Instruction that Works*, he describes how using explicit cues is a good way to activate prior knowledge. “Using cues, teachers can provide students with a preview of what they are about to experience” (114). This is an excellent way to introduce vocabulary as well as other concepts from the unit.

As a teacher, I have also acknowledged the fact that students respond well to higher level questioning. “A fair amount of research indicates that questions that require students to analyze information—frequently called higher level questions—produce more learning than questions that simply require students to recall or recognize information” (Marzano 113). It allows them to state their answers while sharing their own thoughts with others; hence, it enhances their cognitive skills. He also shows how questions can evoke inferences.

This is especially true with gifted students. When working with gifted students, it is necessary to measure a student’s ability to study the issue at a deeper level. I will implement the depth and complexity model for students to follow during this unit for my Pre-AP/GT students. Some of the aspects involved in this model, according to Dr. Sandra Kaplan, a professor at the University of Southern California’s Rossier School of Education are:

- Understanding the specific language used by specialists in a particular discipline,
- Learning as many details as possible, including traits, factors, variables, nuances, and elements that distinguish the topic being studied from other topics,
- Being aware of trends and their influences,
- Making connections and understanding interactions over time,
- Looking at elements from several perspectives that include viewpoints from technicians, historians, futurists, critics, philosophers, and oneself,
- Making interdisciplinary connections, and
- Knowing the big ideas, including theories, generalizations, and principles, that govern the study of the discipline. (Winebrenner 129)

Furthermore, this model helps students to delve into their creativity. Under Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, “synthesis requires students to create a novel or original thought, idea, or product.” Creative thinking involves synthesis. “Creativity is important to individuals, who must solve challenging problems on the job and in daily life, as well to society, when it underlies new inventions, new scientific discoveries, and innovations in social programs or the humanities that enrich our lives” (Shaffer 346). In my opinion, too much emphasis is placed on the current TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills). Indeed, students should be assessed; however, not all students perform well on standardized exams. Standardized exams do not engage divergent thinking. “Divergent thinking requires one to generate a variety of solutions to problems for which there is no one right answer” (Shaffer 346). This in-turn fosters creativity.

Their knowledge will be greater and well-rounded with this curriculum unit. They will have hands-on experience which will benefit them greatly and prepare them for high school, college, and the job market when they are older. For instance, instead of just lecturing to them about the history of the Hogg family, they can learn to research on their own via the Internet, library, newspapers, primary and secondary sources, audio-visual and other materials, which is a vital skill needed for life. Furthermore, their social studies skills will improve greatly. In addition,

this will be an excellent way to cater to students' preferred learning styles. For example, when introducing a key concept such as Citizenship, I might use a Curriculum Differentiation Chart in order to allow all students to learn. In her book, *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*, Susan Winebrenner states:

Auditory learners prefer tasks that allow them to work logically, analytically, and sequentially. Visual learners like learning from things they can see and study visually. Tactile-kinesthetic learners learn best from touching and feeling, and from moving as they learn.

When introducing new vocabulary terms, I will use methods described by Marzano. For example he claims that one of the best ways for students to learn a new word is to have them associate an image with it. "Numerous studies support the powerful effects of associating mental images or symbolic representations with words being learned" (126). This will definitely benefit students that are more visual. Another powerful method according to Marzano is to use a process that involves specific steps in a sequential manner that allows students to learn new terms and phrases in multiple ways. These steps include using "nonlinguistic representation" of the new term (128). In other words, drawing a sketch of the term. He uses the example of the word "censorship," and how a teacher drew a sketch of her dramatization of the word by depicting a "flame engulfing a book, a person speaking, a symbol of religion, and a newspaper" (129). I discovered that presenting material to students primarily through discussion and reading is not very effective. "It has even been shown that explicitly engaging students in the creation of non-linguistic representations stimulates and increases activity in the brain" (73). I am a visual learner, and I believe that most children these days need visual stimulation to learn.

I am also a firm believer in using graphic organizers. Marzano also shows how using different types of graphic organizers which are another form of nonlinguistic representation can produce better results in the classroom. "Actually, graphic organizers combine the linguistic mode in that they use words and phrases, and the nonlinguistic mode in that they use symbols and arrows to represent relationships" (75). There are many types of organizers students can adopt in which they learn information as a pattern. I intend to use this not only for this unit, but also throughout the year. Some examples are: descriptive patterns, time-sequence patterns, and generalization/principle patterns (75-76).

In today's classroom, some students often find it hard to sit still. Activities that engage their learning while catering to their specific learning style will help them achieve in the classroom. "By definition, physical movement associated with specific knowledge generates a mental image of the knowledge in the mind of the learner. . . . Most children find this both a natural and enjoyable way to express their knowledge" (Marzano 82). I have experienced this phenomenon in my classroom. I plan to use this strategy during this unit by taking the students on field trips to Bayou Bend and Glendale Cemetery, which will give them a hands-on experience of what happened in Houston both historically and culturally throughout time.

Because I have many ESL students, I will use a great deal of visual material acquired from the Houston Teacher's Institute as well as photographs and other primary resources in order to help them gain a better understanding of the unit. *Houston Then and Now* has become a favorite of mine and is an excellent resource for showing students Houston's architectural heritage.

The lesson plans will incorporate strategies previously mentioned. I believe the best time to begin this unit is at the end of the second semester, specifically, after the TAKS test. It has been my observation that students tend to "shut down" immediately after. I am confident my unit will be something they enjoy while they learn vital skills. Materials will include resources such as computers, library sources, interviews, guest speakers, and primary and secondary source documents.

I am confident that it will enrich students' education and increase their desire to learn more about Houston with all of its characteristics. Furthermore, it may inspire some students to pursue careers in education, government, and other social sciences.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson One: An Introduction to Houston

Objectives

Students will transfer information from one place to another (SS.7.22.c)

Students will apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods. (SS7.1.b)

Students will trace the development of major industries that contributed to the urbanization of Texas. (SS.7.12.b)

Activity

Warm-up: Students will be asked to make a list of as many facts about Houston they already know without looking at their books or any other resources. This will take approximately 5-10 minutes. It is critical for the teacher to give feedback after a warm-up.

Next, students will collaborate in groups of 3 or 4 to create a *Time Sequence Pattern Organizer* showing Houston's progression as a city economically, socially, and politically. Students will also sketch a picture or pictures depicting a major event or events that took place during that time period. Each group will have an assigned time period to research. They will use the website www.houstonhistory.com to conduct their research.

Evaluation

Students will present their organizer during class.

Materials

Note paper
Pencils or pens
Chart paper
Markers

Lesson Two: Highlighting Houston's Treasures

Objectives

Students will learn about Houston's historic sites.

Students will learn about Houston's modern attractions.

Students will 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. (SS. 7.21.a)

Activity One

Students will start off with a scavenger hunt worksheet following the directions and questions below. They will use various websites and other resources guiding them through the questions. This will take one to two class periods to research their information. Students will also use the school library in order to find additional information.

1. Go to www.visithoustontexas.com. Find the link under attractions. Write down three attractions and tell why you would like to visit them.
2. Go to www.mfah.org, and find out when the museum was established?
3. Where is it located?
4. Find the link to Bayou Bend, and answer the following:
5. What is Bayou Bend?
6. When was it established?
7. How would you describe it?
8. What does it remind you of?
9. Under the “Lifestyle & Entertainment” section of the *Houston Chronicle*, make a list of local attractions and events that you would like to see.
10. Go to www.historichouston.com. Find the names of historic buildings in Houston. Look under the links “architecture,” “banks,” and “hotels.” You should find at least one of each.
11. Now, using the names you picked, find out which buildings still exist using other resources.

Activity Two and Evaluation

In groups, students will produce a power point, brochure, or poster (tri-fold) showcasing Houston’s attraction sites for tourists and residents. Students will need to use a great deal of visuals. Students will need to be creative with their titles, and make them catchy. Students need to feature two historical attractions and two modern attractions. *Pre-AP/GT students may choose to create a webpage or a photo story. Further assistance from the Web Design Instructor on campus may be necessary.

Students would use the following questions as a guide to help them prepare their projects:

1. If you were asked to create a link to the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau’s website, what would you add to it?
2. What do you think is missing on the website?
3. What is your favorite modern attraction?
4. What is your favorite historic site?

Materials

Note paper, pens, pencils
A hard copy of the *Houston Chronicle*
Tri-Fold Poster Board
Markers
Scanner

Lesson Three: Preserving Houston’s Architectural Heritage

Objectives

- Students will use social studies terminology correctly. (SS7.22.a)
- Students will identify civic responsibilities of Texas citizens. (SS.16.b)
- Students will understand the importance of preservation economically and culturally.
- Students will create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information. (SS.7.22.d)

*This lesson is intended for students to gain an appreciation of Houston’s heritage by showing them how the demolition of numerous buildings and homes that were once part of Houston’s history has destroyed a part of Houston’s heritage and may threaten Houston’s identity.

Introduction and Activity One

I will begin the lesson by having students write down the terms *preservation* and *civic duty* in their notebooks. Then, I will introduce pictures from various resources including the book *Houston Then and Now* showing them significant architectural sites they may be familiar with as well as sites Houston had in its past including Glenwood Cemetery, the Astrodome, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Allen’s Landing, and the Sam Houston Statue, amongst others. While viewing the pictures, students will write down questions and/or comments about them. Some cues to help them take notes are:

1. I think it is/is not important to preserve the Astrodome because...
2. What would Houston be like if they had preserved most of the buildings that were demolished?
3. Historical buildings and sites are important to Houston because...
4. If I were able to go back in time and save a building/site from being demolished it would be...
5. I think some of these buildings/sites were destroyed because...

Activity Two

After viewing the photographs students will write down what they think the terms *preservation* and *civic duty* means to them. They may draw sketches to help them get a better understanding. After a brief discussion, I will give the formal definition of the terms and explain how we will be focusing on these throughout the lesson. Students will then visit the website www.houstonheights.org and do the following activity:

1. Find the link to the **newsletter** and read the article titled “Historic District Volunteers Needed...” (Answer the following questions)
2. How many houses were demolished or moved out of the area in the last year?
3. How old were most of these houses?
4. Who will provide some protection?
5. What are the three ways people can help save other homes?
6. How do you feel when you read about the destruction of these homes?
7. How would you feel if Hogg Middle School was in danger of being torn down 20 years from now?
8. How would you react? What would you do to help **preserve** and protect it?
9. What are some ways you can help protect buildings from being torn down now?
10. Do you think volunteering for this cause is a good example of *civic duty*?

Activity Three

After logging onto the website www.ghpa.org (Greater Houston Preservation Organization), students will click on “Links and Resources.” In groups of three to four, students will be assigned a neighborhood to adopt from the list of “Historic Neighborhood Associations.” They will do extensive research about their neighborhood and take notes on any endangered buildings and what is being done to protect them. Since some students live in these areas, they will need to take pictures or write a small description for homework about historic buildings or sites they discover. Students will journalize their thoughts about the neighborhood and why it is important in their opinion to protect it.

Activity Three and Evaluation

I will pass out the article titled “Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy.” We will read the article together in class. Students will then work in groups of three or four and create an ESP chart using the article to fill out each section. The students will evaluate the article and

categorize the economic, social, and political effects of Historic Preservation. Students will then share their work in class.

Materials

Journal notebooks
Colored paper
Markers
Pens or pencils
Chart paper

Lesson Four: History behind the Hogg Name

Objectives

Students will create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.
(SS.7.22.d)

Students will learn about the philanthropic contributions the Hogg family made to the citizens of Texas and why they are important.

Students will learn background information about Ima Hogg and James S. Hogg.

Students will be introduced to the **Concept** (categories used to cluster information) **of Heroes** and determine how Ima and James S. Hogg were heroes.

Students will create their own **Generalization** (statements about relationships between and among concepts) regarding citizenship and philanthropy.

Students will take a field trip to Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens.

Activity One

Students will begin the lesson drawing a K-W-L chart (K=what they know already, W=what they want to learn, and L=what they learned) on note paper. Students will fill the K and W portion of the chart about James S. Hogg. This should take only about 10 minutes to brainstorm ideas. After, students will read about

James S. Hogg on page 447 in their textbook (*Texas and Texans*) and fill out the L section of their chart. *Students will need to list important contributions Governor Hogg made to the state of Texas in their chart.*

Activity Two

I will introduce the word “philanthropy” to students and have them write the definition in their notebooks. Students will then write down names of people they know who have contributed to society. Next, students will read an article about Miss Ima Hogg. They will use highlighters emphasizing examples of her contributions.

Activity Three and Evaluation

The activity will begin with a warm-up question: Who is a hero in your life and how has that person made a difference in your life? Students will have about 10 minutes to complete the warm-up. I will ask students to share their responses.

Using the information gained from the readings and chart, students will answer questions 1-4 in essay format:

1. How were James S. Hogg and Ima Hogg heroes of the state of Texas?
2. Give specific examples of what they did that made a difference for the citizens of Texas?
3. How do their contributions affect people today?

4. What do you think is their most important contribution?
5. Why do think your school was named after James S. Hogg?
6. *Create a Generalization statement about the concept of heroes. They will need to list facts that support this generalization. *Students will need examples of Generalizations such as “People in communities are dependent upon each other.” The concepts in this generalization are people and communities. A fact to support this generalization is “In Texas many small communities must buy landfill space from nearby cities.”

*This question may only be used for Pre-AP/GT students.

Activity Four

Students will take a field trip to Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens which will take up to half a school day. When we meet for class the next day, students will complete a few activities chosen from the *Children’s Activity Guide* provided by the Houston Junior Woman’s Club.

Students will then e-mail their comments or write a “Thank You Letter” to the Museum of Fine Arts telling what they enjoyed the most. They may recommend ideas to the museum. *Students comments will need to be thoroughly monitored.

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