

**Created by:** Michelle Crane, 2014

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**Grade Level: 7**

**Time Frame:** Two 45 minute periods

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Locate places of importance in Texas, and
2. Explain the characteristics of places which were used in naming the places.

**Connection to the Curriculum:**

This lesson is intended to be used as an introduction to Texas geography. No prior knowledge of Texas place names or locations of significant places is required.

**TEKS Strand(s) Objective(s):**

9. understands the location and characteristics of places and regions of Texas [GS 4,5]  
 9a. locate the Mountains and Basins, Great Plains, North Central Plains, and Coastal Plains regions and places of importance in Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries such as major cities, rivers, natural and historic landmarks, political and cultural regions, and local points of interest [GS5-1,2]

**Materials:**

<b>For Student Use:</b>	
Blank outline map of Texas	One per pair of students - See References for a source
Computer lab with internet access	One computer per pair of students
Texas Places Handout	One per pair of students
Colored pencils	They will need several different colors.
<b>For Teacher Use:</b>	
Computer with projection device	
Chart of Texas Places	
List of Texas Places	Select 10 different places for each pair of students to research from this list, or select your own place.
Large map of Texas	Use your pull down map or if one is unavailable, display a map on your projector and post the "Chart of Texas Places" on the board

**References:**

Curtis, J. C. (2005). On the Move: The Importance of Naming. In E. Zachary Moore and Brian Cooper, *Time and Space Convergence: Joint US History/Geography Lesson Plans* (pp. 30-35). San Marcos: Texas Alliance for Geographic Education.

National Geographic. (n.d.). *MapMaker 1 Page Maps*. Retrieved July 26, 2014, from National Geographic Education: [http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/mapping/outline-map/?map=Texas&ar\\_a=1](http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/mapping/outline-map/?map=Texas&ar_a=1)

Texas State Historical Association. (n.d.). *The Handbook of Texas*. Retrieved July 26, 2014, from Texas

State Historical Association: A Digital Gateway to Texas History:  
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook>

**Strategies:** Students will use the inquiry method to investigate the components of the Middle East region using a variety of sources and determine where the regional boundaries should be drawn. The inquiry method is based upon the Geographic Skills as outlined by the National Geography Standards. It is a student-centered lesson strategy designed to assist students with problem-solving. The steps are:

1. Asking Geographic Questions,
2. Acquiring Geographic Information,
3. Organizing Geographic Information
4. Analyzing Geographic Information
5. Answer Geographic Questions

For a more complete description of the Geographic Skills and the inquiry method, visit National Geographic Education's webpage [Geographic Skills Index](#).

**Questions:** Below are some examples of higher order thinking questions which can be used with this lesson. They can be used per teacher discretion at various times in the lesson – as pre and post checks or as formative assessment during the lesson.

Explain how Texas places got their names.

*Many Texas place names derived their names from the people who lived in the area. Some places have retained their original American Indian names. Others have retained the names the Spanish, Mexican, or French colonizers left behind. Still others have been named by the Anglo settlers. Place names can be descriptive of the physical features. They can also be names of founders or important land owners, heroes or historical events. They can reflect places which were left behind or which idealize the type of place the people want to live.*

Describe how place names reveal layers of previous inhabitants.

*As stated above, the language of a place or who or what it is named for can reflect on the group which left behind the name.*

Justify whether or not new groups of people moving in to an area have the right to change place names.

*Answers will vary. This question requires students to make a judgment which can be based upon a variety of personal factors. Many people who are original settlers feel like renaming their settlements and landforms is a form of discrimination or oppression. Many new settlers feel they have the right to name the areas they use and that the name should reflect the current residents.*

### **Procedures to conduct the lesson:**

Starting the Lesson:

**Asking Geographic Questions:** 10 minutes

Post the following for students to see as they enter the class. Tell them to write their answer on their own paper:

*“How did our town get its name? Describe as much as you know about how our town got its name. Does the name reflect a physical feature in this area? If so, explain. Or,*

*does it reflect a human characteristic, such as being named after a person or a place where the settlers who named our town came from? What does the language used to name our town reveal about the people who named it? If you are unfamiliar with how our town got its name, make your best educated guess.”*

Once the students have completed their writing, discuss their answers. Explain that place names reveal a great deal about the culture groups who settled in an area. Over time, as new groups move in, place names can change – removing evidence of the previous group and establishing their dominance over the area. Also discuss how place names are chosen. Sometimes, the place names are physical characteristics of an area. Other times, places are named after people or places back home. The language of the place name often reveals a culture group which may have moved on, disappeared, been replaced, or still is influential in the area today.

**The Lesson:**

**Acquiring & Organizing Geographic Information:** For the remainder of the period divide the class into pairs and give each pair a blank map of Texas, a Texas Places handout and a list of 10 places to research. As a class, look up your town’s name on [The Handbook of Texas](#). (NOTE: You will want to make sure your town is listed in The Handbook before beginning this lesson if you do not have another source of information explaining how your town got its name.) If desired, read the directions to the class and complete the first row together as practice. Then, have the students look up their places in the Handbook and complete their chart. Then, have students locate their places on their map. They will need to draw a dot on their map to indicate the location of the town they are researching. If the town is a capital (Austin), have them draw a star.

**Analyzing Geographic Information:** Day Two: 35 minutes

Ask students to review their map and chart from the day before. Each pair will present their findings to the class, indicating on the projected map where their places can be found and completing the Chart of Texas Places on the board by placing a mark under each category they found. The remaining students will fill in their own chart and maps on their handouts. Once the chart is complete, discuss the following questions as a class:

Based upon our maps, which culture group most influenced Texas place names? *Based upon the places selected, this will probably be either Spanish or English*

Based upon our chart, are most place names describing physical or human characteristics? *Answers will vary depending upon places chosen*

What evidence can be found of previous culture groups or small culture groups that may have disappeared, moved on, been replaced, or been absorbed? *Some place names may reflect American Indian names as well as German, Czech or other groups which have migrated to Texas.*

Is there a pattern in the place names which might indicate where certain culture groups settled? *Spanish names tend to be towards the southern and western region, English names tend to be east and north, German/Czech names tend to be found in Central Texas.* How would you feel if a new group of people moved in and changed the name of our town? *Answers will vary*

**End the Lesson:**

**Answering Geographic Questions:** 10 minutes

Have students write a short paragraph answering the following questions:

How did Texas places get their names? Describe how Texas place names show layers of different culture groups and/or physical geography. Justify whether or not new groups moving in have the right to change place names.

**E valuation/Assessment:** Include your assessment product or idea with the lesson plan.

Note, you want your assessment to measure your students understanding of the objectives (listed above).

	<b>Not There Yet</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Clearly Outstanding</b>
<b>Content</b>	<p><b>1 Point</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maps are not completed</li> <li>▪ Warm up question is missing or incomplete.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph does not answer the questions or is incomplete.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph does not use appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answers are difficult to read due to spelling and/or grammar errors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map is mostly complete and labels are mostly accurate.</li> <li>▪ Warm up question is complete.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph attempts to answer the questions and is largely accurate.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph correctly uses appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answers are generally free from spelling or grammar errors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3 Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map is complete and free from errors.</li> <li>▪ Warm up question is complete and accurate.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph thoroughly and accurately answers the questions.</li> <li>▪ Paragraph demonstrates mastery of appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answers are largely free from spelling or grammar errors.</li> </ul>
<b>Appearance</b>	<p><b>0.75 Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are not clear and are difficult to read.</li> <li>▪ Map shows minimal effort.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1.25 Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are clear and legible.</li> <li>▪ Map shows effort and attention to detail.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are clear, legible and attractively drawn.</li> <li>▪ Map shows great effort and attention to detail.</li> </ul>

## List of Texas Place Names

Amarillo	Plainview	Wichita Falls	Paris	Texarkana
Lubbock	Abilene	Fort Worth	Dallas	Tyler
Longview	Nacogdoches	Waco	San Angelo	Odessa
El Paso	Arlington	Austin	San Antonio	Houston
Huntsville	Beaumont	Corpus Christi	Laredo	Brownsville
Galveston	Bryan	Fredericksburg	New Braunfels	San Marcos
Del Rio	McAllen	Marshall	Sherman	Victoria
Refugio	Cotulla	Eagle Pass	Kingsville	Edinburg
Sonora	Alpine	Pecos	Monahans	Port Lavaca
Falfurrias	Uvalde	Seguin	El Campo	Lockhart
Plano	Denton	Gainesville	Mineral Wells	Sweetwater
Big Lake	Goliad	Gonzales	Athens	Palestine
Brazos River	Red River	Sabine River	Pecos River	Colorado River
Canadian River	Trinity River	Frio River	Neches River	Rio Grande
Matagorda Bay	Aransas Bay	Laguna Madre	Padre Island	Mustang Island
St Charles Bay	Nueces Bay	Caddo Lake	Davis Mountains	Guadalupe Mountains
Santiago Mountains	Llano Estacado	Balcones Fault	Edwards Plateau	Aquarena Springs
Chisos Mountains	Ogallala Aquifer	Cross Timbers		

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Galveston	Bryan	Fredericksburg	New Braunfels	San Marcos
Del Rio	McAllen	Marshall	Sherman	Victoria
Refugio	Cotulla	Eagle Pass	Kingsville	Edinburg
Sonora	Alpine	Pecos	Monahans	Port Lavaca
Falfurrias	Uvalde	Seguin	El Campo	Lockhart
Plano	Denton	Gainesville	Mineral Wells	Sweetwater
Big Lake	Goliad	Gonzales	Athens	Palestine
Brazos River	Red River	Sabine River	Pecos River	Colorado River
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Matagorda Bay	Aransas Bay	Laguna Madre	Padre Island	Mustang Island
St Charles Bay	Nueces Bay	Caddo Lake	Davis Mountains	Edwards Plateau
Ogallala Aquifer	Llano Estacado	Balcones Fault	Cross Timbers	Guadalupe Mountains
Chisos	Santiago	Aquarena		
Mountains	Mountains	Springs		



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Texas Places Student Handout

Look up the list of places your teacher assigns you in [The Handbook of Texas Online](#). In the first column, write the names of the 10 places you were assigned. Determine the category that best reflects the category the place name represents. Make an X for each place under the appropriate category. Then, draw it in on your map. Next, you will assign a color to each cultural category. Physical features must be labeled in black. Label each place on your map using specific colors to represent the category represented. If the name reflects a cultural feature, write the name in the color you assign each culture group (for example, Red for Spanish). Make sure to make a key! If a physical feature's name is in another language (besides English), underline the name with the color you assigned that culture group.

Place Name	Physical Characteristic	Cultural – Person's name	Cultural – Another place	Culture group/Language
Your hometown				

**Chart of Texas Places: Student Handout**

As your classmates record their findings on the displayed class chart, fill in the chart below. Make sure to add the features they describe to your map using the same key you used before.

Physical	Cultural
	<p>American Indians:</p> <p>French:</p> <p>Spanish:</p> <p>English/American:</p> <p>German/Czech:</p>