

SOCIAL STUDIES

FOCUS 2020-21



World, U.S., & Texas history

for grades 7 & 8
based on the annual UIL topic



UIL Social Studies Focus Topic

2020-2021

for
7th & 8th Grades

Important Issues & Events of the Early 20th Century

In Focus:

Prominent Texans of the 1930s and 1940s

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~ President Hexco Inc., Linda Tarrant

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SOCIAL STUDIES FOCUS FOR 7TH & 8TH GRADES

TEXAS

(60% of the Test)

I. HISTORICAL ISSUES, EVENTS AND PEOPLE OF THE 20TH CENTURY

A. 1900 to 1910

1. Galveston Hurricane - 1900
 - a. The 20th century opened with a devastating hurricane that slammed into Galveston Island in September.
 - b. Some have called it **Isaac's Storm** after Isaac Cline, the forecaster at the Weather Bureau in Galveston.
 - c. The strength of the storm and its exact destination could not be determined at the time. At this time, there were no satellites or radar systems taking and creating pictures of the clouds and winds over the Gulf. No TV news reported.
 - d. Galveston was the leading port in Texas and for many people in "high society," the city rivaled New York City.
 - e. Entire families were washed away as houses were swept off their foundations and tossed into the sea. Almost 4,000 homes disappeared, and the city was in ruins.
 - f. The rebuilding of Galveston was a huge task. City leaders decided to raise the elevation of the island by bringing in sand from the ocean floor and building a sea wall 16 feet high and 17 feet wide along a 10-mile stretch of coastline in order to protect the city from storm surges.
 - g. As a result of the storm, Galveston lost its place of prominence, and the city of Houston funded the dredging of the Houston Ship Channel. This project enabled Houston to become the major port and strongest commercial center of the southern coast of Texas.
2. Tenant farming - 1900
 - a. By 1900, many farmers were tenant farmers who worked crops on land owned by another and paid the owner between one-fourth and one-third of the profit. This group often had no money and extremely poor living conditions. The percent of farming done by tenant farmers reached over 60% by 1930, and this percentage dropped to about 12% by 1987.
3. Spindletop - 1901
 - a. Patillo Higgins bought land in the 1880s on Spindletop Hill, south of Beaumont Texas, and began to drill for oil. He hired Anthony F. Lucas to help develop the area he thought would be a productive oil field, but the first efforts failed.
 - b. In 1901, with new financing and more developers, Lucas led the way in drilling a new well. Thinking they hit another dry spot, the workers were startled by the rumble, roar, and eventual 100-foot high explosion of oil that erupted from the ground.

- c. Initially, this well produced more oil than all others in the United States (U.S.), but as more wells were drilled, production declined.
- d. Beaumont became a boomtown. Everyone wanted to be part of the oil-rush.
- e. **Wildcatters**, people who developed often risky and expensive oil fields, came. They hired **roughnecks**, the nickname for oil-field workers.
- f. New companies were built, such as the Texas Company (**Texaco**), to drill and process the oil.
- g. A high supply of oil meant the price of gas went down. More people could afford cars, so businesses in other states, such as the automobile industries in Michigan, also received help from the boom.
- h. Profits from the oil industry also increased the amount of taxes the state could collect. Eventually a fund was set up for the state university system called the **Permanent University Fund**.

B. 1910 to 1920

- 1. First Military Airplane Flight - 1910
 - a. Lieutenant Benjamin D. Foulois flew the first flight for the U.S. at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio in a Wright Brothers' plane. The flight lasted seven-and-a-half minutes.
 - b. This event marked the shaky start of the U.S. Air Force.
- 2. Mexican Revolution - 1910-1919
 - a. The revolution south of the border raged during this decade.
 - b. President William Howard Taft stationed 20,000 troops along the Texas-Mexico border to combat the raids on Texas settlements by participants in the revolution, including **Pancho Villa** and his followers.
- 3. World War I - 1914-1918
 - a. In 1914, war erupted in Europe. The U.S. was determined to remain neutral.
 - b. In 1915, a German submarine sunk the **RMS Lusitania**, a British passenger ship. Many were outraged and some Texans wanted the governor to cut ties with Germany. The U.S. remained neutral.
 - c. In 1917, Germany was searching for more allies and tried to make a deal with Mexico. In the **Zimmermann Note**, an intercepted communication, the Germans proposed giving Mexico all of the territory they had lost to the U.S. if they would join them in war.
 - d. The U.S. joined the Allies and many American soldiers trained at Texas bases. Over 5,000 Texans lost their lives defending their country.
 - e. The **Paris Peace Conference** was the meeting of the Allied victors at the end of WWI to determine terms for the defeated Axis Powers.
- 4. Prohibition in Texas - 1919
 - a. Texas approved the 18th Amendment which instituted **Prohibition**.
 - b. Prohibition became unpopular by the mid-1920s, and it was ended in 1933.
- 5. Adoption of the 19th Amendment in Texas - 1919
 - a. Some 98 suffrage organizations thrived in Texas during this period.

- b. This Amendment granting women the right to vote was passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by Governor William P. Hobby into law in 1918, making Texas the first state to approve the 19th Amendment.
- c. **Annie Webb Blanton** became the first woman elected to a statewide office when she became State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

C. 1920 to 1930 (aka the Roaring Twenties)

- 1. Roaring Twenties
 - a. This was the period of great economic success for the U.S.
 - b. In Texas, this period saw expansion of agriculture, particularly on the Great Plains, and expansion of oil interests.
 - c. The Texas Legislature passed a law in 1923 that allowed political parties to make their own rules for their primaries. This barred some minorities from voting. The Supreme Court later ruled this violated the 14th Amendment.
 - d. In the early 1920s, the price of cotton dropped drastically and caused demands to cut production, but cotton acreage continued to increase. A disastrous price drop occurred in 1931 during the Great Depression.
- 2. First woman governor of Texas - 1924
 - a. **Miriam "Ma" Ferguson** was elected as governor. Her husband, **James E. "Pa" Ferguson**, had been elected in 1915 and served until his 1917 impeachment.
 - b. She ran on a platform that opposed the Ku Klux Klan and Prohibition, and said that voters would get "two for one" as her husband would be advising her.
 - c. Ma Ferguson served two terms, from 1924 to 1926 and from 1932 to 1934.
 - d. During Ferguson's governorship, **Texas Tech University** began classes in Lubbock as Texas Technological College.
- 3. Democratic National Convention - 1928
 - a. The Democratic National Convention was held in Houston.
 - b. This was the first time a nominating convention was held in a southern state.
- 4. League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) - 1929
 - a. Begun primarily by Hispanic veterans of WWI in Corpus Christi, this organization looked to end discrimination against minorities.
 - b. In 1930, LULAC sued the Del Rio ISD for segregating Mexican Americans based on race. The ruling was not completely favorable, but opened roads toward desegregation.

D. 1930 to 1940

- 1. Great Depression - 1929-1939
 - a. The U.S. economy grew in the early 1920s, but there were many signs that it was not as healthy as it seemed. Wealth was unevenly distributed, some businesses were borrowing money to keep their operations going, and foreign trade was slowing down toward the end of the decade.
 - b. The Texas economy was based in cotton, lumber and livestock, and wildcatters seeking more oil. The East Texas oil boom, beginning with the

Daisy Bradford #3 well, was in progress until mid-1931. Texans were less affected by the Depression than the East Coast and the rest of the U.S.

- (1) Most Texans did not own stocks in the stock market.
 - (2) Many Texans lived in rural areas that were already poor.
 - (3) Texas had fewer factories than the East, so job losses were not as great.
 - c. However, by 1932, the drought had hit the farming and ranching communities hard, and oil prices dropped. Finally, the effects of the Depression expanded into Texas.
 - d. Almost 400,000 Texans were out of work by 1932.
 - e. Several Texas governors tried and failed to bring Texas out of the depression, including **Ross Sterling**, **Miriam "Ma" Ferguson**, **James Allred** and **Wilbert Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel**.
 - f. Tent cities, called Hoovervilles, cropped up all over the U.S., and Texans debunked President Herbert Hoover by calling armadillos "Hoover hogs." All became disenchanted with Hoover as economic conditions remained depressed. Old newspapers were used as blankets and food was scarce.
2. 1932 Presidential Election
 - a. In 1933, **Franklin D. Roosevelt** was nominated for the presidency, and Texans got behind him when **John Nance (Cactus Jack) Garner** of Uvalde, Texas, was nominated for vice president on the ticket.
 - b. Roosevelt replaced **J. Edgar Hoover**. He put together several programs that he called the "**New Deal**." These programs were created to help people hurt by the Depression by helping the poor through the Social Security program and creating jobs through the development of government building programs, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority.
 - c. The **Civilian Conservation Corps** was instituted to build 31 state parks 31 state parks, including those at Fort Davis and Balmorhea. This gave people much-needed jobs. This entity no longer exists.
 3. Dust Bowl - 1934-1940
 - a. During the 1930s, in addition to problems in the financial sectors of the economy, a severe drought hit the Plains states.
 - b. Several factors contributed to the Dust Bowl: severe drought and high winds, overgrazing by cattle that made the grass too short to hang onto the soil, over-plowing of land which left it exposed to the wind, and the erosion of good soil.
 - c. Farms were ruined as wind blew topsoil off the land, and the air was filled with dust. The dust made people and cattle sick. Many farms and ranches were destroyed in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, and were hit the hardest. Foreclosures in rural areas became common, as farmers and ranchers were unable to repay their loans to banks.
 4. Texas Centennial - 1936
 - a. Texas celebrated 100 years of Texas independence.

- b. The Centennial Exposition was held at the State Fair in Dallas with over six million attendees.
- 5. London Consolidated School explosion - 1937
 - a. A natural gas leak beneath this East Texas school in Rusk County caused a massive explosion, killing some 300 students and teachers.
 - b. As a result, the legislature passed a requirement that a malodorant be added to odorless gas so that leaks could be detected.

E. 1940 to 1950

- 1. World War II - 1941-1945
 - a. Germany was governed by **Adolph Hitler**. Hitler was a **dictator** and the leader of the German **Nazi** Party.
 - b. Germany was allied with Italy and Japan, and this group was known as the **Axis Powers**. Italy was led by **Benito Mussolini**, who was also a dictator, and Japan was led by **Emperor Hirohito**.
 - c. The **Allies** included Poland, Britain and France, and, later, the Soviet Union, members of the British Commonwealth, and other countries.
 - d. World War II began in 1939 in Europe, when Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France had agreed to protect Poland.
 - e. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in 1941. As a result of this attack, the U.S. became involved in the war and became a member of the Allies.
 - f. Toward the end of the war in Europe in 1944, the Allies landed in **Normandy**, France under the command of General **Dwight D. Eisenhower**.
 - (1) The invasion cost thousands of lives but was successful and led to the defeat of the Germans. Germany surrendered in May 1945.
 - (2) Eisenhower was born in Denison, Texas and later became president.
 - g. In the summer of 1945, President Truman made the decision to drop **atomic bombs** on Japan. He decided that this would end the war quickly and save American lives. In August, the bombs were dropped on the cities of **Hiroshima** and **Nagasaki** and killed nearly 140,000 Japanese citizens almost instantly. Japan surrendered in August 1945, just weeks after the bombings.
 - h. The most decorated combat soldier of WWII was **Audie Leon Murphy**, who was born near Kingston, Texas. He received every medal that the U.S. gave for valor, and he received two of some of these. He was credited with killing about 50 Germans and stopping an attack by enemy tanks during one 1945 engagement in France. He fought in eight campaigns in Sicily, Italy, France and Germany. After the war, he made western movies in Hollywood.
 - i. The most decorated man in the U.S. Navy was **Samuel David Dealey** of Dallas, Texas. Dealey graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, and was ultimately commander of the submarine, USS *Harder*. He was cited for sinking 15,000 tons of warships and damaging over 27,000 tons of enemy shipping goods.
 - j. More prisoners of war, 50,000 prisoners, were housed in Texas during WWII than in any other state. Most were Germans, but 3,000 were Italians, and