

T is for Texas Activity Guide

Discover some of the sights and symbols of the Lone Star State in this friendly alphabet book. From armadillos to zillions and zillions of bluebonnets, and everything in between, this book celebrates Texas in a big way.

Lesson and Unit Ideas

Objectives: Through the reading of *T is for Texas* students will:

--understand important customs, symbols and celebrations that represent American beliefs and principles, and contribute to our national identity. TEKS Citizenship 1.13

--explain selected national and state patriotic symbols such as the U.S. and Texas flags, the Liberty Bell, and the Alamo. TEKS Citizenship 1 and 2.14A

Before Reading:

Show the children the jacket of the book and read the title. Tell them this is an alphabet book about the state of Texas. Ask a child to find Texas on a map of the United States.

Because Texas is such a large and diverse state, the author considered many choices for each letter.

List some of them for a, b, c, d, e, f and g on the overhead or chalkboard. Ask the students to vote for the word/words they think best describe the state.

Armadillo, Austin, Alamo
Bluebonnets, barbed wire, Boots, b-b-q, black gold
Cowboy hat, cowboy, chili, cattle, C & W music
Dallas, Dimebox, Dinosaur tracks
Enchiladas
Football, friendly, fiddle, farming
Gusher, guacamole, Gulf of Mexico, Grapefruit

Read *T is for Texas* by Anne Bustard

During Reading:

Invite the students to recall their choices for letters a through g. Compare their choices with the book. Invite students to talk about the photographs. Are any images familiar?

After Reading:

Ask the students:

What are you thinking and feeling?

What interested you?

What surprised you?

What was your favorite letter?

What questions do you have?

The author intended to present a contemporary view of the Lone Star State though some of her choices reflect the old Texas as well. Page through the book and invite children to identify whether the concept for each letter represents the old, the new, or both.

Look at the choices for each letter again and note what the author included in the book. Help the children see that the author chose “F is for flag,” but football was represented by “K is for kick-off.” And “friendly” was used in the description of the letter “T.”

Read *Texas Alphabet* by James Rice, or another alphabet book about Texas.

Ask children to compare the two treatments of the state. Invite them to contrast the designs of each book, too.

Tell the children that the author did not take any of the photographs in the book. (See the last page for photo credits.) She did however, select the photos. The author looked at hundreds of photographs before finding the ones that appear in the book. As an example of the process, you might share that the author contacted five sources (Texas Highway Department, Chickadee Magazine, National Audubon Society, a Wyoming photographer and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) before finding the photo of the armadillo that she wanted.

Share an assortment of other alphabet books with the class. Invite children to browse through the collection. What do they notice?

Invite students to make a Texas alphabet quilt for your classroom or library. Talk with them about what might be drawn on each square. Give each child a 12-by-12-inch square of muslin or other plain cotton fabric. Have each child depict a symbol of Texas on the square with a permanent marker and sign his or her name. Ask a parent volunteer to sew the squares together, add pre-quilted fabric to the reverse side and finish the edges with blanket binding.

Students may want to find out more about Texas. For a free Texas Travel Guide, Texas Official Map and Texas Travel information, fill out the form at traveltex.com [here](#).

Turn *T is for Texas* into a readers' theater script. Suggest each student take a letter, and practice reading the words associated with it. Then invite another class in for the final performance.

Invite students to create their own alphabet book about Texas.

Have fun!