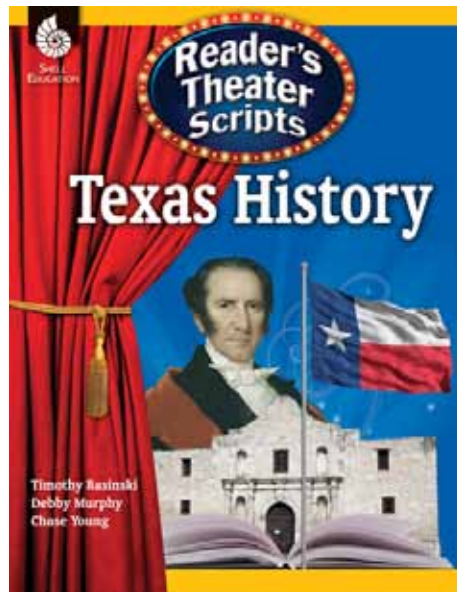




Sample Pages from
Reader's Theater Scripts

Texas History
4-7



The following sample pages are included in this download:

- Table of Contents
- Introduction excerpt
- Sample student and teacher pages

For correlations to Common Core and State Standards, please visit
<http://www.teachercreatedmaterials.com/correlations>



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EDUCATION

Reader's Theater Scripts

Levels

4-7

Texas History



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Chase Young

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Why Use Reader’s Theater?	4
How to Use This Book	6
Correlation to the Standards	8
Lessons	11
Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man	11
Cinco de Mayo	22
Cynthia Ann Parker	27
Henry Cisneros	33
History of the Cherokee	38
Rise of the Johnson Space Center	45
Inside the Johnson Space Center	51
Jim Bowie and William Travis at the Alamo	57
Just the Facts	64
Mirabeau B. Lamar	69
Oveta Culp Hobby	77
Rise of the Texas Rangers	86
Sam Houston: Father of Texas Independence	93
Six Flags	100
Spindletop	107
Texas Landmark Road Trip	114
Texas Longhorn Cattle	120
The Arrest of Stephen F. Austin	128
The Galveston Hurricane	139
The History of the Apache	146
The King of the Wild Frontier	152
The Legend of the Bluebonnet	158
The Many Firsts of Barbara Jordan	164
There’s a Pledge in Texas	170
References Cited	175

Why Use Reader's Theater?

Welcome to *Reader's Theater Scripts: Texas History*. Whether you are a teacher of Texas history, a reading teacher, an intervention teacher, or a reading specialist, you will find this book invaluable in helping students revisit and learn the history of the Lone Star State through the voices and experiences of those who helped make Texas what it is today. Through the collection of scripts in this book, students will not only gain knowledge of Texas history but also achieve fluency in reading—an essential element in becoming a proficient reader—and build comprehension skills.

Fluency and Reader's Theater

Fluency is the critical link between word decoding (or phonics) and reading comprehension. When students learn to recognize words effortlessly, they can use their cognitive resources for making meaning—the ultimate goal of reading. Fluency reflects comprehension when readers read texts orally with a level of expression and phrasing that interprets the intended meaning of the passage. The review of research by the National Reading Panel (2000) and others (e.g., Rasinski and Hoffman 2003) confirms that fluency is absolutely essential to reading success. This book will help students achieve that success.

One of the best ways to develop fluency is through guided repeated readings (National Reading Panel 2000) or rehearsal with the goal to be reading a text with appropriate expression or meaning (Rasinski 2003). We have found that reader's theater scripts are one of the best text forms for rehearsed practice aimed at expression. In order for scripts to be performed expressively, they need to be practiced repeatedly, that is, rehearsed.

The research on reader's theater over the past 10 years has demonstrated consistently that when students engage in repeated readings through reader's theater and eventually perform for an audience, they make substantial progress in reading fluency and overall reading achievement (Griffith and Rasinski 2004; Martinez, Roser, and Strecker 1999; Young and Rasinski 2009). In addition, students involved in reader's theater develop a greater motivation for reading and are more successful in learning the content embedded in the scripts. When the practice is done using authentic and meaningful material (as found in this collection of scripts) and students are given opportunities to perform their selections for an audience, students will learn greater content, appreciate text genres beyond narration (stories) and exposition (informational texts), and develop a sense of confidence in themselves as readers and learners that is essential to their ultimate success in school and life.

History and Reader's Theater

History in school is most commonly taught through informational textbooks that students may find dry and uninteresting. The books are usually filled with facts related to history, but they seldom tell the inside story of the people and events that created history. Knowing how much students like the idea of performing orally for an audience, reader's theater scripts are ideal vehicles for teaching students about history—in this case—Texas history.

Through the scripts and accompanying activities in this book, students learn and share with others the stories of Sam Houston, Henry Cisneros, Barbara Jordan, the Alamo, Spindletop, the Galveston Hurricane, the Johnson Space Center, and many other people, places, and events that have shaped the history of Texas. **Note:** In some instances, the words and thoughts of real people have been fictionalized to illustrate true events. Students are sure to love learning about the history of Texas through the lively and engaging reader's theater scripts.

Getting the Most Out of Reader's Theater

To get the most out of this resource, it is suggested that you devote about one week per script. Below is a suggested outline for implementing reader's theater in each lesson.



Day 1—Assign a script to each small group of students in your class. (Either assign different scripts or have all students perform the same script.) Students rehearse their scripts in groups or engage in guided repeated reading directed by the teacher.



Day 2—With each group, read the script orally with meaning. Discuss the tone and expression of the characters.



Days 3 and 4—Students rehearse the script(s) independently. Their focus should be on fluency, expression, and meaning.



Day 5—Students perform the script(s) for classmates, parents, and others. You may wish to have students dress for their parts and use props.

By giving students multiple experiences with the scripts, you will not only help deepen their understanding of the content but you will also develop their reading and fluency skills. We wish you and your students all the best as you explore the wonderful history of the Lone Star State!

How to Use This Book

Lesson Overview

Each lesson focuses on one script that portrays a particular part of Texas history. The following information will help you implement the lessons.

The **Background** provides a brief overview of what the script is about.

The **Standards** state the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills that students will focus on during the lesson.

The **Materials** indicate items that are necessary to have available to implement the lesson.

Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man

Background
What happens when a man lives to be 800? Well, he gets to see how the Texas State Fair became what it is today. This is the story of three students who meet a Texan who lived 800 years. The Texan's hero is Big Tex, a 52-foot-tall cowboy and icon of the fair. This script explains the history of Big Tex and the Texas State Fair.

Standards

- The student understands important customs, symbols, and celebrations of Texas.
- The student understands traditional historical points of reference in Texas history.

Materials

- *Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man* script (pages 13–15)
- *Big Tex Word Cards* (pages 16–21)
- chart paper
- writing paper

Vocabulary Words

You may wish to introduce the following vocabulary words prior to the lesson:

- encampment
- grandstands
- loyalty
- potential
- promoted
- tradition
- upheld

Script Study

1. Distribute the *Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man* script (pages 13–15) to students. Have students scan the script and circle any words that are unfamiliar. Then, discuss the selected words as a class.
2. Assign the character roles to students, and read the script together as a class. As students are reading the script, stop at the appropriate places of the text to provide a definition of each of the vocabulary words listed above. Encourage students to use context clues within the script to create a kid-friendly definition for each word.
3. After the class is done reading the script, ask the following questions to engage students to think about the text:
 - What are some of the problems during the history of the fairgrounds of Texas? Why do you think these problems began?
 - How has the fair changed through the years?
 - What do you think Big Tex symbolizes to fair goers?
4. Reread the script as a class without stopping.

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The **Vocabulary Words** are words from the script that you may wish to discuss with students prior to beginning the lesson.

The **Script Study** offers step-by-step procedures for using the script with students. For a suggested weekly breakdown for using the scripts, see page 5.

How to Use This Book (cont.)

Lesson Overview (cont.)

The **Word Study** section focuses on practicing word-study skills, such as prefixes, suffixes, homophones, and inflectional endings.

The **Extension Activity** provides ways to enhance the lessons. These optional activities help extend students' knowledge about the history covered in each lesson.

The **Recommended Resources** section includes resources you may wish to have available while implementing the lesson. Students may use these resources to do research or simply to peruse throughout the week.

Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man (cont.)

Word Study

4. Explain to students that *homophones* are two or more words that have the same pronunciation but have different meanings, origins, or spelling. Tell students that they will play a game with homophone word pairs from the script.
5. Divide students into pairs, and distribute a set of the *Big Tex Word Cards* (pages 16–21) to each student pair.
6. Tell students to turn all the cards facedown and take turns drawing two cards. When students turn up a pair of matching cards, they may keep the cards if they can use each one of the words correctly in a sentence that reflects that word's meaning. If the student makes a correct match and presents the two sentences that show the words' meanings, the student may draw again. For incorrect matches, the cards are turned back over and returned to play. The student with the most matches at the end of the game wins.

Extension Activity

1. Divide the class into five groups. Distribute a sheet of chart paper to each group. Assign one of the five senses to each group—*sight, hear, taste, touch, and smell*.
2. Explain to students that they will have 10 minutes to list everything found at the Texas State Fair that they would encounter with their particular assigned sense (e.g., *smell*—buttery popcorn popping, sweet corn roasting, spicy sausage grilling).
3. When the time is up, distribute writing paper to students, and have each student write a descriptive paragraph explaining what they may encounter with their particular sense.
4. After the students are through writing their paragraphs, recombine students into groups of five with each group having one student representing each of the five senses. Then, have them share their sensory paragraphs with their new groups.
5. As a class, discuss how sensory details can help readers make a picture in their minds. Post each group's senses chart for students to use as a word bank for any writing done during the time spent with the reader's theater script.

Recommended Resources


The following resources are available about fairs and fairgrounds:

Enderle, Doti. 2004. *The Cotton Candy Catastrophe at the Texas State Fair*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company.

—. 2008. *The Fat Stock Stampede at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company.

Greenlaw, M. Jean. 1997. *Welcome to the Stock Show*. London, UK: Lodestar Books.

Nelson, Derek. 2004. *The American State Fair*. Minneapolis, MN: Motorbooks International.



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Each lesson includes **activity cards and/or activity sheets**. Students will work with the cards and activity sheets on their own, with partners, or in groups. Be sure to read the directions on these pages to ensure that you make the appropriate copies.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cinco de Mayo Word Study

Directions: In the first column, write a verb. In the second column, use that verb in a sentence that reflects the meaning of the word. In the third column, change the verb into a noun using the suffix *-sion*. In the last column, write a sentence that reflects the newly formed noun.

Verb			
Sentence with Verb			
Change the Verb Using <i>-sion</i>			
Sentence with Noun			

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Word Cards (cont.)

of cards below.

wed	bear
d	board
	capital
	sealing

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Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man



Background

What happens when a man lives to be 800? Well, he gets to see how the Texas State Fair became what it is today. This is the story of three students who meet a Texan who lived for 800 years. The man's hero is Big Tex, a 52-foot-tall cowboy and icon of the fair. This script explains the history of Big Tex and the Texas State Fair.

Standards

- The student understands important customs, symbols, and celebrations of Texas.
- The student understands traditional historical points of reference in Texas history.

Materials

- *Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man* script (pages 13–15)
- *Big Tex Word Cards* (pages 16–21)
- scissors
- chart paper
- writing paper

Vocabulary Words

You may wish to introduce the following vocabulary words prior to the lesson:

- encampment
- grandstands
- loyalty
- promoted
- tradition
- upheld

Script Study

1. Distribute the *Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man* script (pages 13–15) to students. Have students scan the script and circle any words that are unfamiliar. Then, discuss the selected words as a class.
2. Assign the character roles to students, and read the script together as a class. As students are reading the script, stop at the appropriate places in the text to provide a definition for each of the vocabulary words listed above. Encourage students to use context clues within the script to create a kid-friendly definition for each word.
3. After the class is done reading the script, ask the following questions to engage students in thinking about the text:
 - What are some of the problems during the history of the fairgrounds of Texas? Why do you think these problems began?
 - How has the fair changed through the years?
 - What do you think Big Tex symbolizes to fair goers?
4. Reread the script as a class, without stopping.

Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man *(cont.)*

Word Study

5. Explain to students that *homophones* are two or more words that have the same pronunciation but have different meanings, origins, or spelling. Tell students that they will play a game with homophone word pairs from the script.
6. Divide students into pairs, and distribute a set of the *Big Tex Word Cards* (pages 16–21) to each student pair.
7. Tell students to turn all the cards facedown and take turns drawing two cards. When students turn up a pair of homophones, they may keep the cards if they can use each one of the words correctly in a sentence that reflects that word's meaning. If the student makes a correct match and presents the two sentences that show the words' meanings, the student may draw again. For incorrect matches, the cards are turned back over and returned to play. The student with the most matches at the end of the game wins.

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3. When the time is up, distribute writing paper to students and have each student write a descriptive paragraph explaining what they may encounter with their particular sense.
4. After the students are through writing their paragraphs, recombine students into groups of five, with each group having one student representing each of the five senses. Then, have them share their sensory paragraphs with their new groups.
5. As a class, discuss how sensory details can help readers make a picture in their minds. Post each group's senses chart for students to use as a word bank for any writing done during the time spent with the reader's theater script.

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Greenlaw, M. Jean. 1997. *Welcome to the Stock Show*. London, UK: Lodestar Books.

Nelson, Derek. 2004. *The American State Fair*. Minneapolis, MN: Motorbooks International.



Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man

Characters

Texan, the 800-Year-Old Man Student 2
Student 1 Student 3

- Student 1:** Are you really 800 years old?
- Texan:** Darn tootin'. But don't go calling me old, because I feel like I was born yesterday. (*Do a little dance.*)
- Student 2:** Wow, were you born in Texas?
- Texan:** That doesn't matter because I am here now. We don't care how you get here folks, just get here! I can't remember where I heard that, but it's true about Texas. It's the best state in the world.
- Student 3:** You liked it more than living around knights who upheld faith, loyalty, courage, and honor?
- Texan:** I'll tell you who my knight in shining armor is
- Student 1:** Who?
- Texan:** Big Tex.
- Student 1:** (*looking confused*) Again, who?
- Texan:** You can trust a man who weighs 25,000 pounds.
- Student 2:** I second that!
- Student 3:** Was he a heavyweight wrestling champion?
- Texan:** No.
- Student 1:** Why? Was he fired from being a wrestler?
- Texan:** No, he was never a wrestler; he is an icon.
- Student 2:** Oh, so he was promoted from being a wrestler to Big Tex. That makes sense. Why do they call him Big Tex?
- Texan:** Well, he is 55-feet tall.
- Student 3:** That makes a lot of sense. He has a good name, but those are some really big shoes!
- Texan:** A size 90, as a matter of fact! And like a true Texan, Big Tex wears denim jeans and a 95-gallon hat.
- Student 1:** That's a lot of water.
- Texan:** [*angry*] You wouldn't be poking fun at old Big Tex, would you?

Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man *(cont.)*

Student 1: [*scared*] Um . . . no sir. I just like water.

Texan: Anyway, you can visit Big Tex at the State Fair of Texas. He's my knight in shining plaid.

Student 2: I love fairs—rides, games, concerts, food, fun, family, and a shortage of parking spots!

Student 3: Yes, the State Fair has it all. Has Big Tex been there since the beginning?

Texan: No, but I have—all the way back to 1886 when the first 80 acres of fairgrounds were purchased.

Student 1: You sound like you really love the State Fair.

Texan: Only our State Fair of Texas. The first event on the grounds was a Fourth of July celebration. About 25,000 of us attended. There was all sorts of entertainment, races, and free barbecue, and we danced all night.

Student 2: Yes, we saw your dancing.

Student 3: I bet that you were really popular.

Texan: Don't make me bust a move.

Student 1: Actually, could you just continue the story?

Texan: You best be respecting your elders. The first State Fair was not until October 26, 1886. By then, there was a fine racetrack, some grandstands, and plenty of shopping. This time over 100,000 people attended. There was even a Comanche War dance.

Student 2: That sounds awesome, but I prefer rides and games.

Texan: Well, it did take some time to turn into what it is today. There were many troubles. The grandstands broke in 1900, and a couple of years later, the main exhibit building burned down.

Student 3: Did the people rebuild it?

Student 1: Of course they did. I went to the State Fair last year.

Texan: They sure did, but during World War I, the fair was not exactly filled with fun and games.

Student 2: Great, still no games? What did kids do for fun?

Texan: Trust me, it was not a whole lot of fun because during that time, the fairground was converted into an army encampment.

Big Tex and the 800-Year-Old Man *(cont.)*

- Student 3:** Wow! The fairground was once an army base. Did the army use it again during World War II?
- Student 1:** Was Big Tex part of the army?
- Texan:** No, Big Tex did not arrive at the fairground until 1952. Plus, nothing happened on the fairground during the war.
- Student 2:** I bet people were very unhappy.
- Texan:** About nine million people showed up in 1949. I think they missed the State Fair just a little.
- Student 3:** The Cotton Bowl is on the fairground. When did people create the tradition of the Texas-Oklahoma University football game?
- Student 1:** Hook 'em Horns!
- Student 2:** Boomer Sooners!
- Student 3:** Red Raiders!
- Student 1:** [*look at Student 3*] What?
- Texan:** Ahem! They added the Cotton Bowl in 1930. One year after that, the first annual Texas-Oklahoma football game was held at the Fair.
- Student 3:** So how long is the State Fair?
- Texan:** It lasts 24 days here in Dallas. The fair has rides, concerts, races, rodeos, extreme sports, food, games, shows...
- [*All students walk away.*]
- Texan:** Where y'all goin'?
- All Students:** To the State Fair!
- Texan:** But I'm not done telling you about Big Tex!
- Student 1:** Big deal, everything's big in Texas.



Big Tex Word Cards

Teacher Directions: Copy and cut apart the set of cards.

aloud

allowed

bear

bare

bored

board

break

brake

capital

capitol

ceiling

sealing

Big Tex Word Cards *(cont.)*

cent

scent

die

dye

dual

duel

feat

feet

flea

flee

forth

fourth

Big Tex Word Cards *(cont.)*

great

grate

heal

heel

hole

whole

knead

need

lesson

lessen

loan

lone

Big Tex Word Cards *(cont.)*

mind

mined

overdo

overdue

pause

paws

praise

prays

principal

principle

shone

shown

Big Tex Word Cards *(cont.)*

sight

cite

stake

steak

tail

tale

their

they're

threw

through

too

two

Big Tex Word Cards *(cont.)*

vain

vein

wade

weighed

weak

week

who's

whose