SETTLEMENT OF TEXAS TOWNS

Purpose

- To identify the pattern of settlement using historic census data representing three eras in Texas history: early statehood (1850), railroad era (1890), boom times (1920)
- To visualize the growth of towns on the Giant Traveling Map of Texas

TEKS Standards

Grade 4 Social Studies

(6) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to (A) apply geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to construct and interpret maps; and (B) translate geographic data, population distribution, and natural resources into a variety of formats such as graphs and maps.

(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to (A) identify and explain clusters and patterns of settlement in Texas at different time periods such as prior to the Texas Revolution, after the building of the railroads, and following World War II; (B) describe and explain the location and distribution of various towns and cities in Texas, past and present; and (C) explain the geographic factors such as landforms and climate that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population in Texas, past and present.

Grade 7 Social Studies

(8) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to (A) create and interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases representing various aspects of Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries; and (B) analyze and interpret geographic distributions and patterns in Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

(11) Geography. The student understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of population in Texas in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

Grade Levels: 4th-7th

Suggested Time: 1-2 class periods

Materials: Giant Traveling Map, Resource: *Texas Almanac_ City Population History 1850-2000*; Legos, symbols of three eras, card holders, Student Data Recording Sheet

Instructional Background

Census data is available for some towns in Texas as early as 1850 which helps us establish dates of settlement across the state. This lesson focuses on the geographic concepts and does not include historical data relevant to who settled in these towns or why they moved other places. Please extend the historical content from your curriculum to enrich the lesson provided here. The teacher may also

choose to include a few additional nearby cities that the students will know and link to the local community and other social studies lessons.

Use the resource *Texas Almanac: City Population History 1850-2000* to find how the population of Texas cities has changed in 150 years. The tables are available at the following site. http://texasalmanac.com/sites/default/files/images/CityPopHist%20web.pdf

## Student Learning Activity/Assessment

1. Divide the class into small groups of 2 or 3 students and assign to each group 2-3 cities listed below. Cities for this activity were selected to show historical change in population – the data is based on reported census data (some towns existed but not all towns had a census taken).

2. Students will locate their assigned cities on the Giant Traveling Map of Texas and mark each with a vinyl spot: Abilene (1890), Amarillo (1890), Austin (1850), Beaumont(1850, 1890), Big Spring (1900), College Station (1940), Dallas (1850), El Paso (1880), Galveston (1850), Houston (1850), Laredo (1860), Lubbock (1910), Midland (1910), San Angelo (1910), San Antonio (1850), Tyler (1850), Waco (1850).

3. Next, students will use Legos to show the population in each of the three historical eras for one or two cities. One Lego = 5,000 people. For example, if a town has a population of 3,000, it will not have enough to use even one Lego. However, students can put a Texas flag symbol in a holder at the site to show the town had people there by 1850. If a town has a population of 15,000, three Legos are stacked together to build a population tower. Students will build a separate population tower for the town in each of the three historical eras using data from 1850, 1890, and 1920.

4. Then the students will use symbols to identify which period the tower represents. Place one of the symbols on top of each tower to identify the historical period the population tower represents. Early statehood is represented by the Texas flag; the railroad growth era is represented by railroad crossings signs; and the oil and boom times is represented by the oil derrick (*Spindletop*).

5. Record the population data on the *Student Data Recording Sheet – Texas Cities Change Over Time.*

6. When the towers are built, the teacher may facilitate discussion to draw conclusions about growth of settlements in Texas 1850- 1920. Which were the largest cities in 1850, 1890, and 1920. In what year did the 1850 population double? Triple? Increase 10 times? 100 times? If we do not know, just put an X in your chart.

7. Do you notice how the towers visually create a bar graph on the map? Create a bar graph on paper to show changes over time for at least four different cities. See the bar graph template in *Urban Population Patterns in Texas 2010*.

8. *Challenge Activity - Making a Human Graph of Population Changes:* Extend the idea of the bar graph showing population to include information about population of a particular city for at least three additional historical time periods. Choose six team members to create a human bar graph to represent the population of a particular city 1850-2010 (such as Dallas, Lubbock, or Corpus Christi). Use the menu holders in the trunk and index cards to identify the years of the

population you are representing (such as 1850, 1890, 1910, 1950, 1980, and 2010) and the name of the town. Use the town card like the title of the graph. Place cards with the census dates in chronological order on the floor. To build the human graph, one person on the team represents the population for each of the years selected. Here is one way to do that: one team member can sit on the floor to represent a low population and another a team member may stand tall to represent a high population.

Extension

Which cities show the greatest growth over the shortest amount of time? Which cities show slow growth over time? What cities were established in more recent times? Which are the oldest cities? Which cities are east of IH-35 today? West of IH-35? Describe the pattern of the way the cities are spatially spread across the state. What is the oldest population information for the city in the Texas Almanac? How many people were counted?

Symbols for 3 historical eras in Texas history: Texas flag, railroad crossing signs, oil derrick
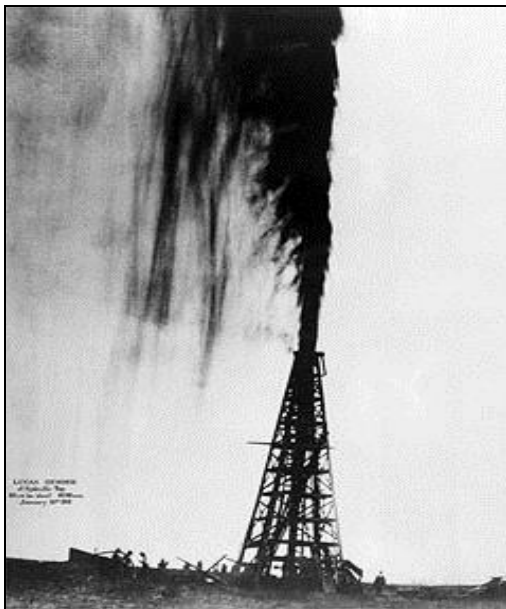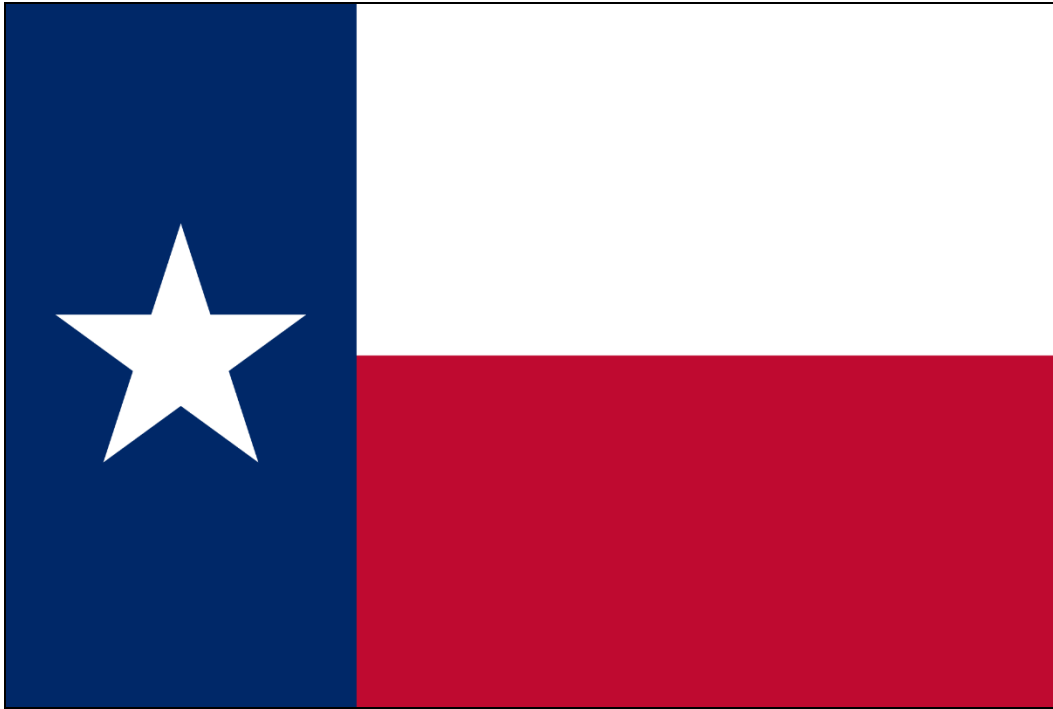
Name_____

Student Data Recording Sheet – Texas Cities Change over Time (short version for student use)

City	1850	1870	1890	1910	1920	1940	1950	1980	2000
Abilene									
Amarillo									
Austin									
Beaumont									
Big Spring									
College Station									
Dallas									
El Paso									
Galveston									
Houston									
Laredo									
Lubbock									
Midland									
San Angelo									
San Antonio									
Tyler									
Waco									