

CELEBRATING SAN JACINTO DAY

Learning Objective(s): The students will:

1. Increase their knowledge concerning the significance of San Jacinto Day and the San Jacinto Monument.
2. Understand the contributions of Sam Houston in securing Texas independence from Mexico in 1836.
3. Analyze and synthesize information about the Battle of San Jacinto.

TEKS: SS K.2A, 15B, 1.1A, 14A, 18B, 2.1A, 14 C&D, 19B

Materials: A copy of "The Journey to Independence" attachment, copies of the "April 2005" calendar for each student, crayons/markers

Vocabulary: artillery, declaration, honor, independence, monument, republic

Teaching Strategy:

1. Begin the lesson by reminding students that Texans celebrate Texas Independence Day on March 2nd of every year. Help them recall that this holiday marks the day the Texas Declaration of Independence was signed. Explain to students that everyone seems to remember the Battle of the Alamo, when all the men that fought in the battle were killed, but fewer people remember the victory at the Battle of San Jacinto, which made it possible for Texas to become a free, independent republic.
2. Tell students that April 21st is an official state holiday called San Jacinto Day. Since the purpose of this holiday is to honor the heroes that fought in the Battle of San Jacinto and secured Texas independence, explain that students are going to create a calendar to honor this state holiday.
3. Explain to students that you are going to share some information that will help them with the development of their calendar. Read "The Journey to Independence" attachment to students.
4. Debrief students by having them respond, in written or verbal form, to the following questions:
 - If you had been a member of the Texas Army, how would you have felt about fighting an army that was twice as large as your army? Why?

- Why do you think the men in the Texas Army were willing to follow Sam Houston into battle even though their army was outnumbered?
 - If the Texas Army had been defeated, what do you think Texas would be like today? In what way would things be different?
5. Give each student a copy of the “April 2005” calendar attachment. Explain to students that they are going to design their own calendar for the month of April. (It is recommended that students do a “rough draft” of the calendar or sections of the calendar before drawing and coloring on their final copy.)
 6. Students should:
 - Create a symbol to represent San Jacinto Day. This symbol should be drawn in the box for April 21st and then be colored. Students should be prepared to explain the meaning of their symbol.
 - Design an appropriate picture/illustration for the banner above the top of the calendar. The picture/illustration should represent information about the Battle of San Jacinto. (Students may use stick figures, if desired.)
 - Compose a caption or slogan that represents their picture/illustration. The caption/slogan may be written at the bottom of the page under the calendar. Other options include putting the caption/slogan above the picture/illustration or on the left or right one-third of the banner with the picture/illustration on the other two-thirds.
 7. After calendars are completed, have students share their calendars with the class and explain the specific elements they designed.
 8. Alternative Activity: Using construction paper, students should create “Happy San Jacinto Day” cards to exchange with each other or give to their parents.

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| Extension for Gifted/Talented: Using recyclables and/or junk items, have students create their own monuments to the Battle of San Jacinto. Students should be able to explain the symbolism used on their monuments. |
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The Journey to Independence

After the fall of the Alamo and Goliad in the spring of 1836, General Sam Houston and the men in the Texas Army retreated to an area southeast of where Houston is today. On April 19th Mexican General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and his men were marching across the prairie, when Texas artillery fired at them. Santa Anna and his army were charged by the Texas Cavalry but the Texans accomplished very little.

On April 21st General Houston sent a well-known Texas spy, Deaf Smith, and several other men to destroy the bridge on Santa Anna's only escape route. In the afternoon General Sam Houston gave the signal for the Texas Army, totaling around 750-800 men, to attack Santa Anna's Army. The Texans shouted "Remember the Alamo" and "Remember Goliad" as they rushed Santa Anna's army of approximately 1500 men. The battle was short and only lasted for about 18 minutes. The smaller Texas Army killed 600-700 Mexican soldiers and took another 730 as prisoners. Only nine Texans were killed.

During the battle Sam Houston's horse was shot beneath him, and General Houston was seriously wounded above his ankle. When Santa Anna was captured the next day, the victory for Texas independence was complete. Sam Houston became very popular and was elected the first president of the Republic of Texas in the fall of the same year.

In 1939 the San Jacinto Monument was dedicated to the "Heroes of the Battle of San Jacinto and all others who contributed to the independence of Texas." The monument is 15 feet taller than the Washington Monument in Washington D.C. The structure, which took 3 years to build, features a 570 feet tall column topped with a 34-foot star. The star symbolizes the Lone Star Republic. Visitors can ride up an elevator to an observation floor and view the historic battlefield and reflection pool below.

April 2005

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |