

Preserving Local History

Pioneering Texas

John Jay French
and 19th-Century
Beaumont, Texas

A Unit of Study designed for
4th-grade and 7th-grade Social
Studies TEKS

Part of Beaumont Heritage Society's Educational Department



BEAUMONT
Heritage Society



Pioneering Texas

John Jay French and 19th-Century Beaumont, Texas

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the C. Homer and Edith Fuller Chambers Foundation and the Beaumont Heritage Society Board of Directors.



BEAUMONT
Heritage Society

The Beaumont Heritage Society is a non-profit, organized for educational and civic purposes to preserve and interpret the historic collections of the John Jay French House Museum and the Chambers House Museum to foster a connection to Beaumont's history and inspire others to value preservation and heritage for the benefit of the community.

Our organization has been in existence since 1967 when concerned citizens saw the need to curb the rampant destruction of historic structures in the city. At that time, with a matching grant from the Beaumont Junior League, we acquired and restored the John Jay French House, which now operates as a unique museum to demonstrate the life of a prosperous Texas pioneer family from 1845 to 1865. The historic pioneer settlement, built by John Jay French, tanner, and merchant, is replete with antique furnishings, clothing, and pioneer household utensils. Outbuildings on the grounds include a blacksmith shop, tannery, privy, and smokehouse.

In 1990, the Society acquired the David French House, circa 1850, which now serves as offices. Our most recent project is our second historical house museum, the Chambers House. We oversaw the restoration of the Chambers House and it opened for tours in May of 2007.

We have also been responsible for helping develop several preservation programs and saving historic buildings that were slated for demolition. In addition to our general museum services, we also provide Christmas tours at both museums; "Camp Lookinback" summer camp; Heritage Happy Hour; Our annual Pumpkin Walk; Easter Egg Hunt; and other miscellaneous events and services.

The Beaumont Heritage Society will continue to work to be a strong voice for the preservation of the community and a resource for historical education.

Field trips to the museums can be arranged by calling (409) 832-4010 or (409) 898-0348. To plan your visit or learn more about educational opportunities, visit the education section of our website: www.beaumontheritage.org

Pioneering Texas

John Jay French and 19th-century Beaumont, Texas

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Photos: The Texas flag, the John Jay French Museum and an 1839 map of Texas



Pioneering Texas

John Jay French and 19th-Century Beaumont, Texas

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How did John Jay French influence Beaumont, Texas' history?

Welcome to our unit on the John Jay French family and their home in Beaumont, Texas! This unit will take us back in time to explore the life of one of Texas' earliest settlers and how his family contributed to the development of the state. We will learn about their journey to Texas, the challenges they faced, and the skills they used to build a life in a new and growing state.

John Jay French was not only a successful businessman, but he also played a significant role in shaping early Texas through his tannery, trading post, and land ownership. His family's home, built in 1845, is one of the oldest fully restored homes in Beaumont, and it tells us an important story about Texas history and the people who lived here.

Throughout this unit, we will dive into several key areas. We will explore the reasons the French family left their home in New York to seek new opportunities in Texas.

From daily chores to running businesses, we will learn how families like the French family lived, worked, and thrived in early Texas. We will connect the story of the French family to important events in Texas history, like the Texas Revolution and the formation of the Republic of Texas. We will look at how the French family's cultural beliefs, like Spiritualism, and architectural choices influenced their life in Texas.

As we dive into the story of the John Jay French family, think about what life might have been like for settlers in early Texas. What would you have done if you were in their shoes? How would you have built a new life in a completely unfamiliar land?

Let's step back in time and discover the world of the French family and early Texas!

LESSON 1:**Pioneer Life and the Texas Frontier**

Students will understand the reasons for westward expansion and early settlement in Texas, focusing on why pioneers like John Jay French chose Texas. They will also explore the challenges pioneers faced and learn to identify aspects of daily pioneer life, including family roles, essential tasks, and the environment's impact on their lifestyle.

By analyzing maps and discussing Texas geography, students will understand how early settlers had to adapt to the Texas environment. Through a journal entry activity, students will imagine life as a pioneer, connecting personally to the hardships and motivations of Texas settlers.

Students may later present a report on the historical information learned during the visit, highlighting the significance of John Jay French's story in the context of Beaumont's history.

LESSON 2:**Trading, Community, and Building Beaumont**

Students will explore how economic systems like bartering helped Texas communities function before the widespread use of money. They'll also learn about the roles in a pioneer community and how early settlers relied on one another for goods and services. This helps them understand the role of economic interdependence in community building and the foundation of Texas towns.

Students will understand bartering as a foundational economic system used in early Texas communities to fulfill basic needs. By participating in role-play and simulation activities, students will experience how different community roles contributed to town-building. Through the ledger activity, students will practice adding credits and debits, similar to record-keeping used in trading posts.

Students may later create their own trading post and list what items they would sell and the value in credits. Students may also share their ideas with the class, comparing why their trading post would or would not be successful.

LESSON 3:**Texas Statehood and Growth of Beaumont**

Students will explore the significance of Texas statehood in 1845 and how joining the United States impacted communities like Beaumont. They will analyze how statehood contributed to the economic, social, and political development of Texas towns, connecting these changes to the growth of the French family and other pioneer families.

Students will learn how joining the United States contributed to Texas town development, increasing trade opportunities, road building, and community expansion. By comparing "then and now" images of Beaumont, students will see the lasting effects of Texas statehood on the landscape and economy. Through the statehood debate, students will explore different perspectives and develop skills in presenting arguments.

Students may later create their own simplified timeline of events in Texas history, incorporating information they learned during the historic home visit. Through this, they will learn the process of how Texas became a state, and connect this history to the present day.

Preserving Our Heritage

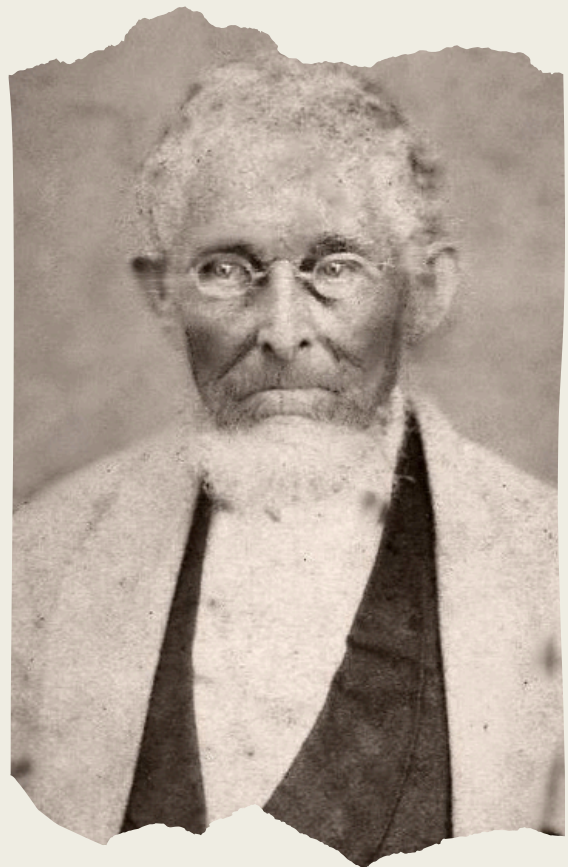
John Jay French's Story

John Jay French was an important figure in Texas history, particularly in the early development of the state. Born in New York in 1799, French moved to Texas in the mid-19th century, a time when Texas was undergoing significant changes. He settled in Beaumont, a small town that would later become a key location in Texas due to its proximity to the Neches River and its potential for trade and industry.

French was a tanner by trade, which means he worked with animal hides to produce leather. This skill was highly valuable in the 1800s, as leather was essential for making shoes, saddles, and other goods. In 1845, he built a tannery in Beaumont, which was one of the first industries in the area. This tannery not only provided goods for the local community but also helped to stimulate the economy by creating jobs and encouraging other businesses to develop.

In addition to his tannery, John Jay French was also a farmer and a merchant. He built a large home in Beaumont, which still stands today as a museum. The John Jay French Museum offers a glimpse into life in Texas during the 19th century. The house is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture, a popular style at the time, and it was one of the first two-story homes in the area. The museum includes original furnishings and artifacts from the French family, providing visitors with a sense of how people lived and worked during that period.

French's contributions to Texas were not limited to his business ventures. He was also involved in the community and played a role in the development of Beaumont.



John Jay French

Moreover, John Jay French was a family man. He and his wife, Sally, had several children, and their descendants continued to live in the Beaumont area for many years. The French family was well-respected in the community, and their legacy is still remembered today.

The story of John Jay French is a reflection of the broader history of Texas during the 19th century. This was a time of growth and change, as Texas transitioned from a frontier region to a more settled and economically developed state. Pioneers like French played a crucial role in this transformation by establishing businesses, building homes, and participating in community life.

In conclusion, John Jay French's impact on Texas history is significant. His work as a tanner, farmer, and community leader helped to lay the foundation for the development of Beaumont and the surrounding area. His legacy is preserved through the John Jay French Museum, which serves as a reminder of the challenges and achievements of early Texans. By learning about figures like French, we gain a better understanding of the history and development of Texas, and we can appreciate the contributions of those who helped shape the state into what it is today.

LESSON ONE

Pioneer Life & Life on the Texas Frontier

Grade Level: 4th and 7th Grades

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Objective

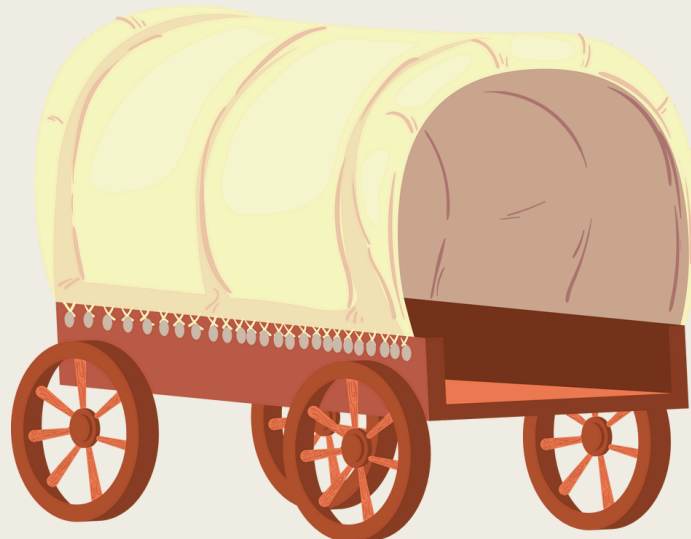
Students will explore the reasons pioneers, like John Jay French, moved to Texas and describe their daily life and challenges. They will identify how pioneers adapted to the environment and learn about the tools and skills needed to survive on the Texas frontier.

TEKS Alignment:

- 4.7(A): Identify ways people adapted to the environment in Texas.
- 7.1(B): Describe motivations for westward settlement and settlement patterns in Texas.

Materials

- Biography worksheet on John Jay French - Page 3
- Printable 1840 Jefferson County, Texas map - Page 6
- Printable 1879 Jefferson County, Texas map - Page 7
- Printable 1918 Jefferson County, Texas map - Page 8
- Map discussion sheet - Page 9
- "Trail to Texas" Canva presentation - Page 10
- Artifact Exploration Activity - Pages 13-14
- Notebook paper or journal templates - Page 16
- Assessment - Page 17



LESSON ONE

Pioneer Life & Life on the Texas Frontier

Experience 1

Map Exploration (10–15 minutes)

Objective:

Students will identify Texas settlement patterns and understand the appeal of Beaumont as a frontier location.

Instructions:

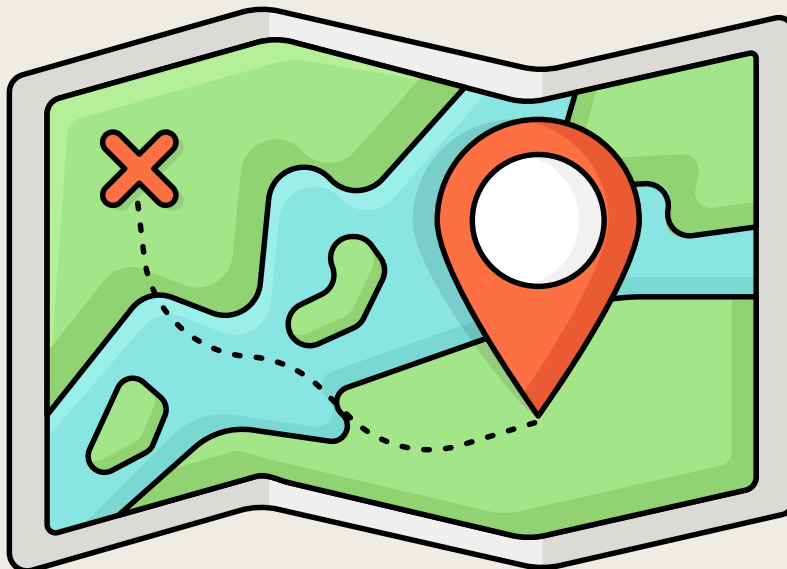
1. Display maps provided of Jefferson County, Texas, highlighting Beaumont.
2. Discuss the opportunities Texas offered settlers, such as land, resources, and freedom to build new lives.
3. Ask students why they think people were willing to leave their homes for an uncertain future.

Student Task:

On a printed map, students label Beaumont and write 2–3 reasons pioneers came to Texas.

Distribute maps, pencils, and blank sheets and ask students to review the documents. Print several copies of page 9 and have them record their findings.

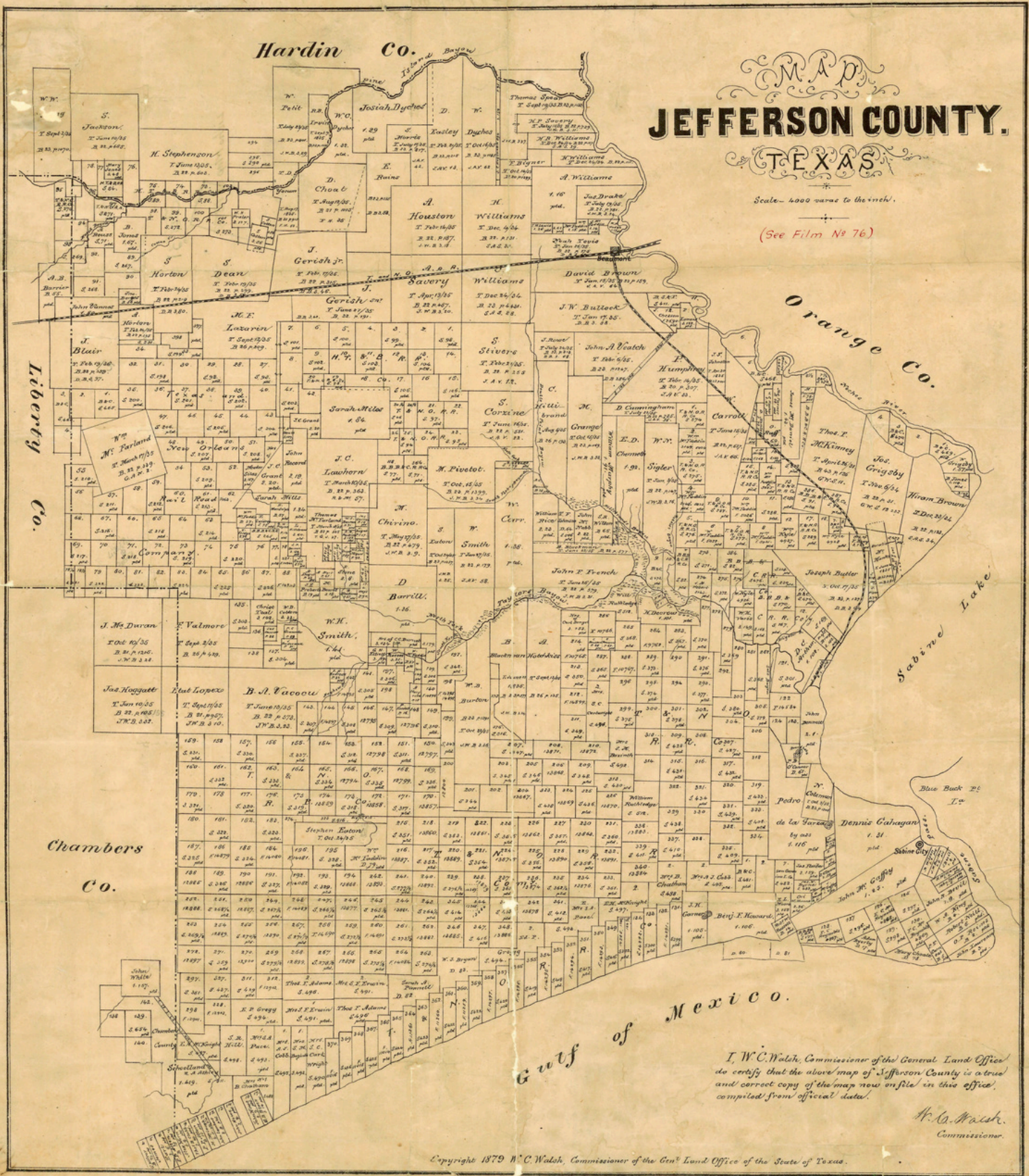
You may also choose to use the QR code on page 10 to access a presentation over the “Trail to Texas,” a history of John Jay French’s journey to Texas.



MAP JEFFERSON COUNTY. TEXAS

Scale—4000 yards to the inch.

(See Film No 76)



I, W. C. Walsh, Commissioner of the General Land Office do certify that the above map of Jefferson County is a true and correct copy of the map now on file in this office, compiled from official data.

W. C. Walsh,
Commissioner.

Copyright 1879 W. C. Walsh, Commissioner of the Gen^l Land Office of the State of Texas.

Jefferson-1879

Lesson One

Experience One

Discussion

How has the landscape of Beaumont changed over the decades? (4-5 complete sentences)

LESSON ONE

Pioneer Life & Life on the Texas Frontier

Experience 2

Pioneer Profile of John Jay French (15 minutes)

Objective:

Students will connect Texas settlement history to the life of John Jay French.

Instructions:

1. Introduce John Jay French as an early settler who moved from Connecticut to Beaumont in the 1840s.
2. Highlight his reasons for moving, his work as a trader, and how he contributed to building a community.

Student Task:

Students complete a short biography worksheet about John Jay French, answering questions like:

- Where was John Jay French born?
- Why did he move to Texas?
- What kind of work did he do?

Distribute the biography of John Jay French for students to review. Print several copies of page 11 and have them answer the questions. You may have them work on the questions together, or individually. Once completed, you may have them turn the paper in to be graded, or review their answers together.

You may also choose to use the QR code on this page to access a presentation over the "Trail to Texas," a history of John Jay French's journey to Texas.



Pioneer Profile of John Jay French

Discussion Activity

Have class participate in group discussions on each topic

Activities:

1. Begin with a discussion activity where students are presented with a statement: "John Jay French was a pioneer who significantly influenced the development of Texas." Students can engage in a roundtable discussion, exploring what it means to be a pioneer and how individuals like French might have impacted Texas history.
2. Organize a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) activity where students are tasked with investigating the challenges faced by settlers like John Jay French in 19th-century Texas. They can work in teams to research historical documents, propose solutions to these challenges, and present their findings to the class.
3. Introduce a hands-on activity where students create a timeline of John Jay French's life and significant events in Texas history during his time. This activity will help students visualize the historical context and understand the broader impact of French's contributions to Texas.
4. Create a short biography on John Jay French's life, answering questions like: Where was John Jay French born? Why did he move to Texas? What kind of work did he do?

LESSON ONE

Pioneer Life & Life on the Texas Frontier

Experience 3

Artifact Exploration (10 minutes)

Objective:

Students will learn how pioneers adapted to their environment through the use of specific tools and skills.

Instructions:

1. Show photos of tools used by pioneers, such as a butter churn, washboard, lantern, and axe.
2. Discuss how these tools made daily chores possible on the frontier.

Student Task:

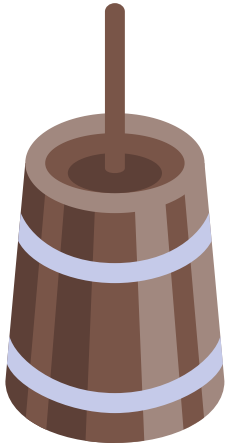
Students research and choose one artifact, draw it, and write a sentence explaining how it was used in pioneer life.

Distribute the Artifact Exploration sheet for students to review. Print several copies of page 14 and have them complete the student task. You may have them work on this together, or individually.

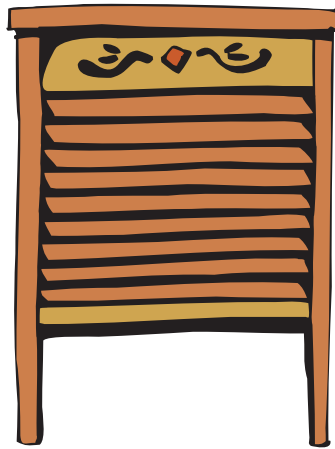


Artifact Exploration Activity

Examples of pioneer artifacts



Butter Churn



Washboard



Axe



Oil Lamp



**Dry Sink and
Chamber Pot**



Coffee Grinder



Lye Soap



Washing Tubs



Bleeding Horn

Artifact Exploration Activity

Choose one artifact and draw it. Write a few sentences explaining how it was used in pioneer life, and how it made daily life/chores possible on the frontier

LESSON ONE

Pioneer Life & Life on the Texas Frontier

Experience 4

Journal Entry as a Pioneer Child (15–20 minutes)

Objective:

Students will reflect on pioneer life by imagining themselves as children living in the 1850s.

Instructions:

1. Have students watch the YouTube video “A Day in the Life of an 1850’s Pioneer Family” (or scan the provided QR code).
2. Explain to students that they will use the video to construct a narrative of a day in the life of a pioneer child.
3. Provide guiding questions to help them visualize their experience:
 - What chores or activities would you do during the day?
 - What challenges might you face?
 - How would you spend your free time?

Student Task:

- Write a short journal entry imagining they are a child living in a pioneer family.
 - Include details about daily life, chores, and emotions.
- Once completed, the journal entry can either be graded or read aloud to the class.

Print and distribute the Journal Entry Activity on page 17 for students to complete. Once finished, you may have them turn it in, or present it to the class.

Teacher Note:

We advise that teachers include a speaking component to the lesson where appropriate, barring any IEPs or other written accommodations that prevent a student from being able to do so. Encouraging students to actively engage in discussions, share their ideas, and participate in oral presentations will foster their ability to express themselves clearly and confidently in real-world situations. This can be achieved through group activities, class discussions, or presentations on the topic at hand.



Journal Entry Activity

Imagine you are a pioneer child moving to Texas with your family. Write a first-person journal entry describing this experience. Answer questions like, "What would you pack for the journey?" "What are you most excited about?" "What are you most worried about?"

Assessment

Teacher Assessment

- Review the biography worksheets for comprehension of John Jay French's role as a pioneer.
- Check map activities for correct identification of Beaumont and understanding of settlement motivations.
- Evaluate journal entries for insight into pioneer challenges and experiences.

You may choose to use the rubric below to grade assignments



Criteria

Excellent (90-100)

Proficient (80-89)

Developing (70-79)

Needs Improvement (0-69)

Map Activity (25%)

- Correctly labels Beaumont and provides 3+ clear reasons settlers came to Texas.
- Correctly labels Beaumont and provides 2 reasons.
- Labels Beaumont with 1 reason.
- Incomplete or incorrect.

Pioneer Profile (25%)

- Fully completes biography worksheet with accurate and detailed responses.
- Completes worksheet with mostly accurate responses.
- Partially completes worksheet with some inaccuracies.
- Incomplete or lacks effort

Artifact Exploration (25%)

- Provides detailed and creative drawing with a clear explanation of the artifact's use.
- Provides a drawing and explanation with some detail.
- Basic drawing or explanation with limited effort.
- Incomplete or lacks clarity

Journal Entry (25%)

- Creative, detailed, and shows understanding of pioneer life.
- Shows some creativity and understanding of the topic.
- Basic entry with limited detail or understanding.
- Incomplete or off-topic.





LESSON TWO

Trading, Community & Building Beaumont

Grade Level: 4th and 7th Grades

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Objective

Students will explore how pioneers used the barter system to trade goods, why money was less common on the Texas frontier, and how early communities, like Beaumont, relied on economic interdependence to grow.

TEKS Alignment:

- 4.10(A): Describe ways in which people organized to meet basic needs, including bartering.
- 7.12(B): Analyze the effects of economic systems like bartering on Texas towns and communities.

Materials

- Community Role Play Activity - Page 20, 21
- Barter and trade game - Page 21
- Small notebooks or paper for "ledgers" - Page 21
- Photographs of John Jay French's ledger - Page 23
- Tokens or "barter items" (paper cutouts of food, fabric, tools, etc.) - Page 26
- Printable trading post price list or item sheet Page 26, 27
- Assessment - Page 28

LESSON TWO

Trading, Community & Building Beaumont

Experience 1

Community Role Play (15–20 minutes)

Objective:

Students will understand how different roles in a pioneer community contributed to its success.

Instructions:

1. Hand out role cards with descriptions of community jobs (e.g., blacksmith, farmer, teacher, storekeeper).
2. Hold a “town meeting” where each student explains their role and how it helps the community.
3. Encourage students to discuss how they rely on others in the community for goods and services.

Following the activity, you may want to hold a discussion. Highlight how economic and social interdependence helped early Texas towns like Beaumont grow and thrive. Ex: “What effects did economic growth have on Beaumont’s community?” “What led to further development of the community?”

Student Task:

- Introduce their role at the “town meeting,” explaining what they do and why it’s important for the community.
- Identify at least two other roles they depend on for goods or services.
- Write a short response: “What would happen if one role (e.g., blacksmith) wasn’t available in the community? How would that affect everyone else?”

Distribute the role play sheet on page 20. Print several copies of page 21 and have them answer the prompt. You may have them work on the questions together, or individually. Once completed, you may have them turn the paper in to be graded, or review their answers together.

Teacher Note:

We advise that teachers include a speaking component to the lesson where appropriate, barring any IEPs or other written accommodations that prevent a student from being able to do so. Encouraging students to actively engage in discussions, share their ideas, and participate in oral presentations will foster their ability to express themselves clearly and confidently in real-world situations. This can be achieved through group activities, class discussions, or presentations on the topic at hand.



Community Role Play Activity

Assign roles to students. Hold a “town meeting,” and have them introduce their character and why their role is important for community success.

Examples of community roles:

1. Blacksmith

Description: The blacksmith is responsible for making tools, horseshoes, and other metal goods essential for the community's survival. They work with iron and steel, creating items that are crucial for farming, building, and transportation.

Dependencies: Relies on the farmer for raw materials like iron ore and relies on the carpenter for wood to make some of the tools.

2. Farmer

Description: The farmer grows crops and raises livestock to provide food for the community. They ensure there is enough produce and meat for the townspeople to survive, and often trade surplus goods with other community members.

Dependencies: Depends on the blacksmith for tools and the storekeeper for seeds, tools, and supplies.

3. Teacher

Description: The teacher is responsible for educating the children of the community, ensuring they learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and basic survival skills. Teachers often play a key role in maintaining literacy and passing down important knowledge.

Dependencies: Relies on the town storekeeper for books and materials, and may depend on the blacksmith or carpenter for the construction of school furniture.

4. Storekeeper

Description: The storekeeper runs the general store, selling essential goods like food, clothing, tools, and other supplies. They are a hub for the exchange of goods and often act as the community's economic center.

Dependencies: Relies on the farmer for fresh produce and other items to sell, and on the blacksmith for tools and hardware.

5. Carpenter

Description: The carpenter is responsible for building houses, furniture, and structures like barns, bridges, and fences. Their work is essential for creating homes and ensuring the safety and comfort of the community.

Dependencies: Depends on the sawmill (if available) for wood, on the blacksmith for metal nails and tools, and on the farmer for food in exchange for labor.

6. Doctor

Description: The doctor is in charge of the health and well-being of the community. They treat illnesses, injuries, and provide general care to ensure the population remains healthy.

Dependencies: Depends on the farmer for herbs and plants used in medicine and the storekeeper for medical supplies.

7. Town Mayor (or Leader)

Description: The mayor organizes town meetings, resolves disputes, and ensures that all members of the community have what they need to succeed. They play a role in maintaining peace and order, as well as making important decisions for the town's future.

Community Role Play Activity

Write a short response: "What would happen if one role (e.g., blacksmith) wasn't available in the community? How would that affect everyone else?"

LESSON TWO

Trading, Community & Building Beaumont

Experience 2

Ledger Keeping Practice (10 minutes)

Objective:

Students will practice basic record-keeping skills, similar to how John Jay French managed his trading post.

Instructions:

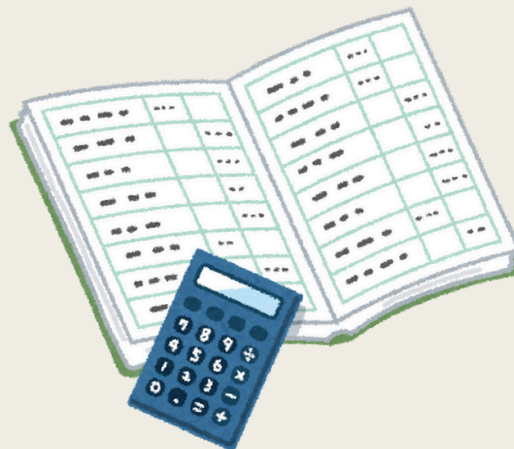
1. Show students how to record trades in their “ledgers,” using columns for credits (things earned) and debits (things owed).
2. As students barter during the simulation, they update their ledgers to reflect their transactions.

Student Task:

- Maintain a detailed and accurate ledger of all transactions during the trading post activity.
- Check their final balance to ensure the credits and debits match.
- Write a sentence or two explaining why keeping an accurate ledger was important for a successful trading post.

Distribute page 23 containing images of John Jay French’s ledgers. Print several copies of page 24 and have them balance the ledgers using the scale provided on page 23. You may have them work on the questions together, or individually. Once completed, you may have them turn the paper in to be graded, or review their answers together.

You may also choose to use the QR code on page 25 to access an educational game over barter and trade. This game will teach students the logistics of barter and trade to get the things they need that are essential for survival: food, water, and shelter.



John Jay French's Trading Post Ledgers

Below are images of excerpts from John Jay French's ledgers. Pass these out to students to have them balance the books using the scale below.

New York, June 2nd 1831

Mr. French

Bot of M. Binney		
30 lb. Blk Thread	40.	12.00
11 Razors	15	1.65
10½ yds Brown Cloth	4.00	42.00
Rec'd payment		
M. Binney		
* * *		
Mr. J. J. French		
Bot of R. Rutherford		
82 Pin Street		
64 ps galoons Binding 1/		8.00
New York May 31 1831		
Mr. J. J. French		
Bought of Valnetine & Mead		
72 B. Ital Cravats 58		41.76
New York June 6 1831		
Mr. French		
Bought of Co. S. Barton		
24 9 doz Back combs 13/		14.63
23 15 doz " " 12/		22.30
22 10 " " 10/		12.50
21 7 " " 8/		7.00
12 2 " " fluted 15/6		3.88
97 " side " 14		13.58
26 " neck & side " 28		7.28
Rec'd payment		
S. Barton		
81.37		
New York June 1, 1831		
Mr. French		
Bought of Rowland R. Minturn(?) & Co.		
25 drums figs		
10 pr 48 = 430 650		22.81
Rec'd payment		
R.R. Minturn & Co.		
* * *		
New York June 4th 1831		
Mr. J. J. French		
Bought of Birnham & Palmer		
1 ps Olive Coth 9 - 3.50		31.50
6 Blk		33.00
12 doz hooks & eyes 65.		7.80
Red'd payment by note 6 Mo.		
for Birnham & Palmer		
per N. Ealson		
72.30		

Page 3

1849
p.2 (cont)

Jan 9	Hutchins, Seely, & Simpson	Dr.	
	Amount due me on Settlement		11.03
	Cr. cash \$5		5.00
	Leather to sell on commission		Dr.
	4 sides Harness		16.05
	7 deerskins		6.87
	Wm. Lewis Cr. Mending John's shoe		
	Joshua Ashworth	Cr.	
	Hide Wt. 50		1.50
	Thomas H. Lewis 2 pr shoes	Cr.	
	Barrel corn		
<u>page 3</u>			
1849	Moses Allen Dr. Side Sâbe 24/		3.00
Jan 13	Marion Williams this day settled & balanced books	Cr.	
	Dr. at this date		1.25
Jan 16	2 deerskins \$138.88		2.26
	John Mallett this day settled & found due sd. Mallett \$2.34		2.34
	Dr. Buckskin not charged on Bill		1.00
	James W. Baldrige this day settled and balanced book by note.		
	Washington Tevis Dr. pr shoes 12/		1.50
	Warren Goodin Cr. pr shoes		1.50
	To Tevis (up stairs)		
20	Edward C. Thompson this day		
Jan 20	Bal acts by Corn		
	Jonah Blackman Dr. Calkskin		3.00
27	Joseph Haiso this day settled & found due me \$2.01		2.01
Jan 27	Bill Rôndered		
	Danl Spillow this day settled & found due me \$7.70		7.70
	Bill Rôndered		

Price designations: French sometimes used pounds, shillings, pence; sometimes dollar and cents. Generally a number followed by / is shillings, pence, as in 2/6 = 2shilli 6 pence. Pounds: 1.7.6 would be 1 pound, 7 shillings, 6 pence. Other numbers with or without decimal are usually dollars & cents (or designate amount of yardage, etc.)

Exchange: 1 pound = \$2.50
 1 shilling = 25¢
 6 pence = 12½¢
 1 penny = about 2¢

Sometimes French's figures are not too exact.

Ledger Keeping Activity

Using the price designation scale created by Mr. French, balance the accounts on the pages from his ledger.

LESSON TWO

Trading, Community & Building Beaumont

Experience 3

Trading Post Simulation (15–20 minutes)

Objective:

Students will experience how a barter system works and why it was essential for pioneers.

Instructions:

1. Set up a “trading post” in the classroom with items available for trade (represented by paper cutouts or tokens).
2. Assign students different roles, such as farmers, traders, or blacksmiths, each with specific items they need or can offer.
3. Students barter to acquire the goods they need while keeping track of their trades in a small notebook, simulating John Jay French’s ledger system.
4. Debrief: Discuss what was easy or difficult about bartering and why money might have simplified the process.

Student Task:

- Trade with at least 3 classmates to acquire the items on a “shopping list” provided by the teacher.
- Record each trade in a ledger, noting what they traded, what they received, and their remaining “credits.”
- Reflect on whether they successfully obtained all the items they needed and what challenges they faced.

Distribute the rules for the trading post simulation on page 26. Print several copies of page 27 and have them answer the questions. You may have them work on the questions together, or individually. Once completed, you may have them turn the paper in to be graded, or review their answers together.

You may also choose to use the QR code on this page to access an educational game over barter and trade. This game will teach students the logistics of barter and trade to get the things they need that are essential for survival: food, water, and shelter.



Trading Post Simulation

Materials Needed:

- Paper cutouts or tokens to represent trade goods (e.g., food, tools, clothing, livestock, etc.)
- Notebooks or ledger sheets for each student (to record trades)
- "Shopping lists" (items students need to collect)
- Trading Post Rules (handout)
- QR code for educational game (optional)

Roles for Students:

- Farmers (who produce crops and livestock)
- Blacksmiths (who provide tools and metal goods)
- Carpenters (who make furniture or build structures)
- Traders (who exchange goods on behalf of others)
- Storekeepers (who sell supplies and trading materials)
- Doctors (who offer medical supplies or services)

Set-Up:

1. Create the Trading Post:

- Set up various "stations" around the classroom where different goods are available for trade (e.g., a "farmer's station" with paper fruits, vegetables, and livestock tokens; a "blacksmith's station" with tools; etc.).
- Assign each student to a specific role (farmer, blacksmith, storekeeper, etc.) and give them a set of goods they can trade or need to acquire.
- Each student will receive a ledger to track their trades and a "shopping list" with the items they need to collect.

1. Barter Rules:

- *Bartering:* Students will exchange goods with each other using the items they have to offer. For example, a farmer might exchange crops with a blacksmith for tools.
- *Record Keeping:* Each student will record their trades in their ledger, noting what they gave, what they received, and how many "credits" or tokens they have left.
- *Challenges:* Some students might face difficulties because they don't have the goods the other students want. This encourages negotiation and planning to figure out which items are most needed.

Trading Post Simulation

Answer the questions below in 1-2 sentences.

Reflect on Your Trades:

- *Did you get all the items you needed? If not, why?*
- *What challenges did you face during the bartering process?*
- *What was the most difficult part of trading?*

Understanding Barter:

- *How did relying on bartering differ from using money?*
- *Do you think the bartering system helped the community? Why or why not?*
- *How did everyone in the trading post rely on each other to meet their needs?*

Assessment

Teacher Assessment

- Review ledgers for accurate recording of trades and balances.
- Observe role play discussions to assess understanding of community roles and interdependence.
- Have students write a short reflection: “What would happen if someone in the community didn’t do their job? How would that affect everyone else?”

You may choose to use the rubric below to grade assignments



Criteria

Excellent (90-100)

Proficient (80-89)

Developing (70-79)

Needs Improvement (0-69)

Trading Post Simulation (25%)

- Engages fully, completes trades, and uses the ledger accurately.
- Completes trades and mostly accurate ledger.
- Trades with limited effort or some ledger inaccuracies.
- Minimal to no participation or incorrect ledger.

Ledger Keeping Practice (25%)

- Creates a ledger with accurate credits, debits, and balance.
- Creates a ledger with minor inaccuracies.
- Partially completes the ledger with notable inaccuracies.
- Incomplete or poorly done.

Community Role Play (25%)

- Clearly explains role and how it contributes to the community.
- Explains role with some understanding.
- Basic explanation of role with limited clarity.
- Incomplete or unclear explanation.

Reflection Activity (25%)

- Insightful and detailed response connecting roles to community success.
- Reasonable response showing some connection to roles.
- Limited response with minimal understanding.
- Lacks effort or incomplete.



LESSON THREE

Texas Statehood and the Growth of Beaumont

Grade Level: 4th and 7th Grades

Duration: 45-60 minutes



Objective

Students will explore major events in Texas history during the 1800s, including the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas, and the state's development. They will connect these events to the growth of towns like Beaumont and understand how Texas' history shaped its communities.

TEKS Alignment:

- 4.3(A): Identify and describe major events in Texas history, such as the Texas Revolution and the Republic of Texas.
- 7.1(A): Explain the significance of historical events in shaping Texas' identity and development.

Materials

- Timeline template (key dates: Texas Revolution, Republic of Texas, and growth periods) - Page 31
- Historical maps of Beaumont - Page 6, 7, 8
- Modern map of Beaumont - Found on Google
- Role cards or discussion prompts about historical figures/events (e.g., Sam Houston, Texas independence, land grants) - Page 33, 34
- French Museum tour notes - Page 38
- Texas history quiz - Page 39
- Texas history discussion questions - Page 40
- Comparison charts for John Jay French's life and Texas history - Page 41, 42
- Assessment - Page 43

LESSON THREE

Texas Statehood and the Growth of Beaumont

Experience 1

Building a Texas History Timeline (15 minutes)

Objective:

Students will sequence major events in Texas history and connect them to the development of Texas towns.

Instructions:

Watch the following videos on YouTube to introduce or reiterate Texas history. Print several copies of page 8 and have students answer the questions as they watch.

- [*"Texas: Did US buy Texas from Mexico?"*](#)
- [*"The Texas Revolution in 3 minutes"*](#)
- [*"Bet You Didn't Know. Texas"*](#)

Following the videos:

1. Provide students with a timeline template featuring key events in Texas history (e.g., the Texas Revolution, formation of the Republic of Texas, early settlement patterns).
2. Discuss how these events influenced the growth of Texas communities, like Beaumont.
3. Highlight how Beaumont, founded during this period, became part of Texas' early development story.

Student Task:

Complete the timeline and write a short reflection about how one event might have impacted settlers in Beaumont.

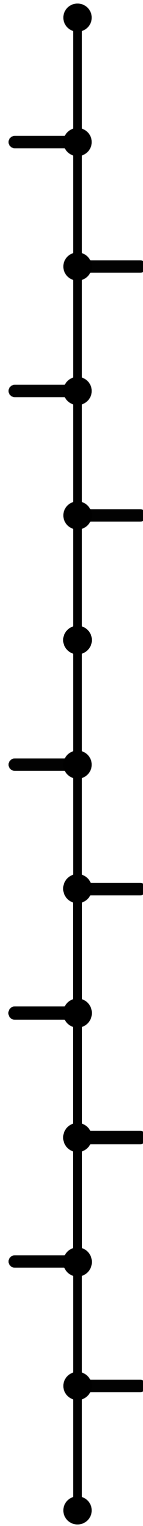
Review the answers written on page 31 together before having the students turn them in. You may decide to grade according to completion or correct answers. Return to the students for future notes/resources for reference.



Building a Texas History Timeline

NAME: _____

PERIOD: _____



LESSON THREE

Texas Statehood and the Growth of Beaumont

Experience 2



STATUE OF SAM HOUSTON

Texas History Role Play (15–20 minutes)

Objective:

Students will explore different perspectives on historical events in Texas, fostering deeper engagement with Texas history.

Instructions:

1. Assign students roles as historical figures or settlers during major events (e.g., Sam Houston, a Texas settler, a Mexican official, or a Republic of Texas leader).
2. Facilitate a role-play activity where students discuss or debate the significance of events like the Texas Revolution, early settlement, or independence.
3. Discuss how these events impacted not only the state as a whole but also small towns like Beaumont.

Student Task:

Write a paragraph from their character's perspective, describing how they view the changes happening in Texas during the 1800s.

Review the answers written on page 34 together before having the students turn them in. You may decide to grade according to completion or correct answers. Return to the students for future notes/resources for reference.

Texas History Roleplay Activity

Examples of key historical figures in Texas history

Sam Houston:

- *Sam Houston was a pivotal figure in the Texas Revolution and the first president of the Republic of Texas. Known for his leadership in the Battle of San Jacinto, which secured Texas' independence from Mexico, Houston also played a major role in the state's early political landscape, serving as both governor of Texas and a U.S. senator.*

Stephen F. Austin:

- *Often called the "Father of Texas," Stephen F. Austin was instrumental in the colonization of Texas. He successfully led the first significant group of American settlers to Texas and worked tirelessly to secure land grants for colonists, paving the way for Texas to become a part of the United States.*

Davy Crockett:

- *Davy Crockett was a legendary frontiersman, soldier, and politician who became a symbol of bravery during the Texas Revolution. He is most famous for his role in the Battle of the Alamo, where he fought and died defending the mission against Mexican forces.*

Juan Seguín:

- *Juan Seguín was a Tejano leader and military officer who played a crucial role in the Texas Revolution. He led a group of Texan soldiers in the Battle of San Jacinto and was one of the few survivors of the Alamo, continuing to fight for Texas independence.*

William B. Travis:

- *William B. Travis was a prominent commander at the Alamo and is remembered for his leadership and bravery during the siege. He famously wrote the "Victory or Death" letter, pleading for reinforcements as Mexican forces closed in on the mission. Travis died defending the Alamo, and his courage became a symbol of Texas' fight for independence.*

Texas History Roleplay Activity

NAME: _____

PERIOD: _____

You will receive the role of a historical figure from Texas history. Write a paragraph from your character's perspective, describing how you view the changes happening in Texas during the 1800s.

LESSON THREE

Texas Statehood and the Growth of Beaumont

Experience 3

Exploring Beaumont's Role in Texas History (15 minutes)

Objective:

Students will examine how Texas history influenced Beaumont's growth as a frontier town.

Instructions:

1. Using the maps of Jefferson County, Texas provided on pages 8-10, show images of early Beaumont, focusing on its role as a hub for trade, settlers, and development.
2. Display a modern-day map of Beaumont, Texas, and have students note the changes.
3. Discuss how historical events like land grants or trade routes helped establish Beaumont.

Student Task:

Students will create a simple "growth map" of Beaumont, showing key factors (e.g., location, trade, settlers) that contributed to its development, located on page 36.



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Growth of Beaumont Map Activity

NAME: _____

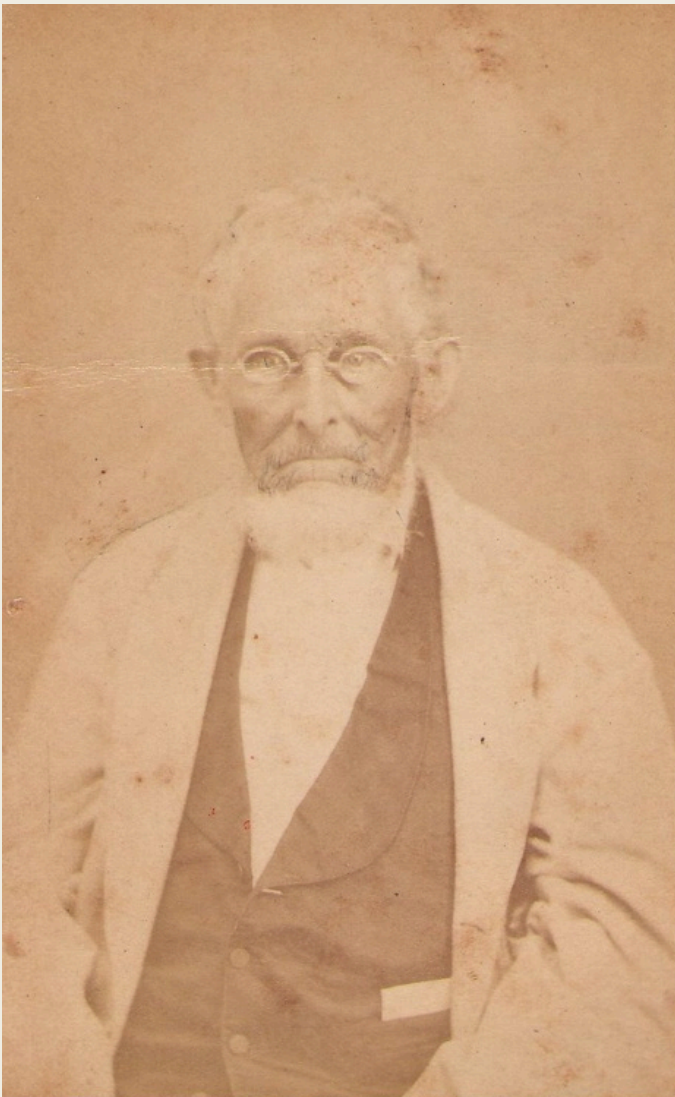
PERIOD: _____

Create a "growth map" of Beaumont, showing key factors (location, trade, settlers, etc.) that contributed to its development.

LESSON THREE

Texas Statehood and the Growth of Beaumont

Experience 4



John Jay French, Sr.

Comparing John Jay French's Life to Texas History (15 minutes)

Objective:

Students will explore key events in John Jay French's life during their tour and connect those events to major developments in Texas history.

Instructions:

1. During the tour of the John Jay French Museum, guide students to identify significant life events (e.g., his move to Beaumont in the 1840s, opening the trading post, and his role in the community) and significant events in Texas history.
2. Provide students with a comparison chart to take notes on during the tour. Clipboards will be provided.
3. After the tour, students complete the worksheets provided by connecting John Jay French's personal milestones to these broader historical events.

Student Task:

Using the comparison chart on page 42, students will write a short paragraph summarizing how John Jay French's life reflected the larger changes happening in Texas during the 1800s (using page 41).

Have students complete the quiz on page 39. Review the answers together before having the students turn them in. You may decide to grade according to completion or correct answers. Return to the students for future notes/resources for reference.

John Jay French Museum Tour Notes

Texas History

John Jay French's Story

Pioneer Life

Texas History Questions

NAME: _____

PERIOD: _____

1. What is the significance of the year 1836 in Texas history?
2. Describe the role of the Alamo in Texas history.
3. How did the annexation of Texas into the United States impact its development?
4. Analyze the economic changes in Texas during the oil boom of the early 20th century.
5. Evaluate the influence of Texas history on its current cultural identity.

Texas History

Discussion Questions

Have students write a few sentences on each question.

Discuss the impact of the Texas Revolution on the state's identity

- How did the Texas Revolution shape the cultural and political identity of Texas?
- In what ways did the outcome of the Texas Revolution influence the relationship between Texas and the United States?
- What are some lasting symbols or traditions from the Texas Revolution that are still present in Texas today?

Explore the role of natural resources in the development of Texas

- How have natural resources like oil and cattle influenced the economic growth of Texas?
- What environmental challenges has Texas faced due to the exploitation of its natural resources?
- How do the natural resources of Texas compare to those of other states in terms of economic impact?

Analyze the influence of diverse cultures on Texas history

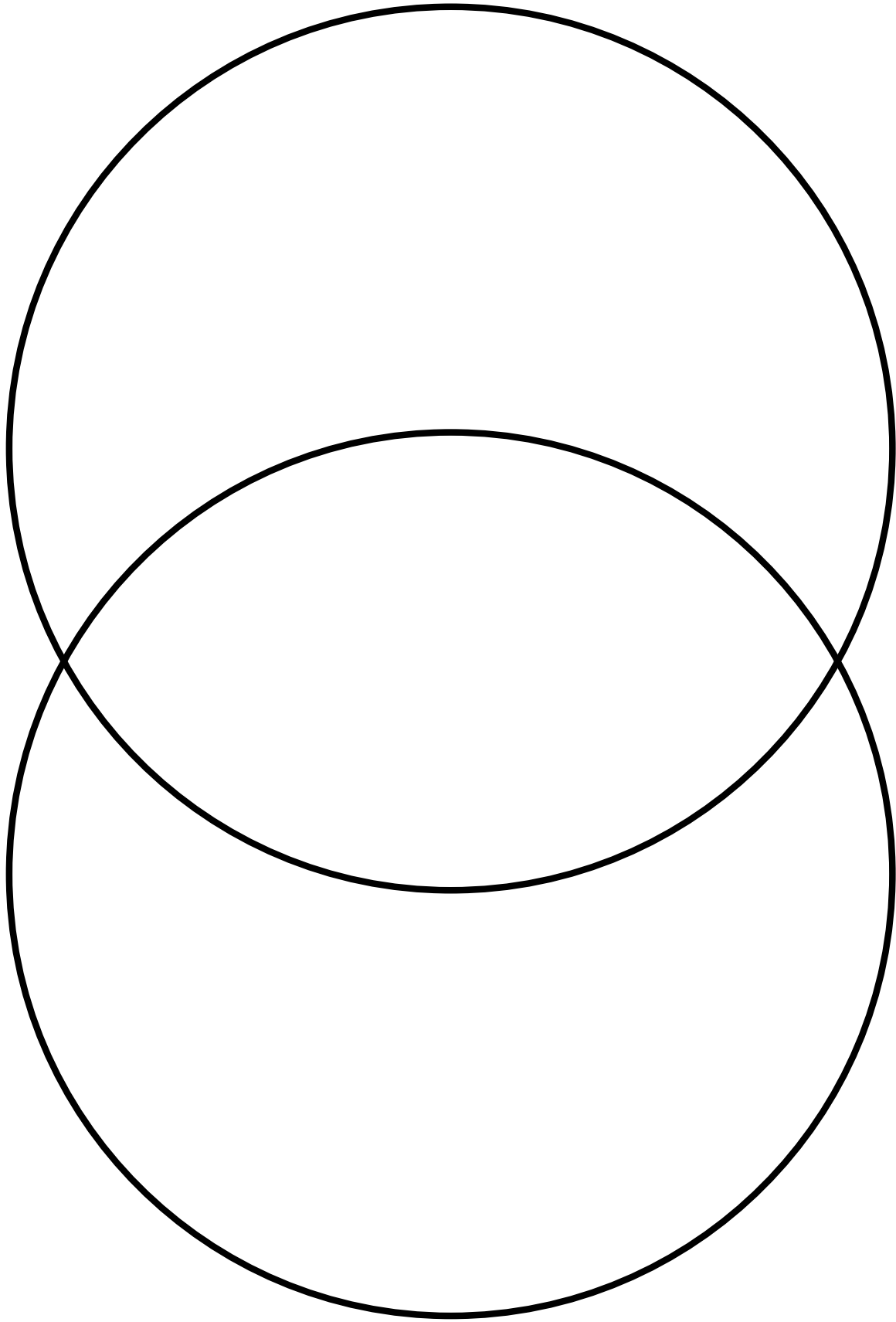
- How have different cultural groups contributed to the development of Texas society?
- In what ways have cultural interactions in Texas led to both conflict and cooperation?
- How is the cultural diversity of Texas reflected in its traditions, food, and festivals today?

John Jay French's Life

Texas History

John Jay French and Texas History

Compare and Contrast



Assessment

Teacher Assessment

- Review completed timelines for accuracy and understanding of key events.
- Check growth maps for logical connections between historical events and Beaumont's development.
- Evaluate role-play participation and written paragraphs for historical insight and engagement.

You may choose to use the rubric below to grade assignments



Criteria

Excellent (90-100)

Proficient (80-89)

Developing (70-79)

Needs Improvement (0-69)

Timeline Completion(25%)

- Accurate and detailed timeline with all key events included.
- Mostly accurate timeline with most key events included.
- Basic timeline with missing or incorrect event.
- Incomplete or incorrect timeline.

Comparison Chart (25%)

- Thoughtful analysis with 3+ clear differences and similarities.
- Includes 2 clear differences and similarities.
- Basic chart with 1 clear difference or similarity.
- Incomplete or lacks detail.

Debate Participation (25%)

- Engages actively with strong arguments and responds thoughtfully.
- Participates with clear arguments and some response to others.
- Limited participation with unclear arguments.
- Minimal effort or off-topic contributions.

Opinion Paragraph (25%)

- Clear, well-reasoned opinion with strong supporting evidence.
- Reasonable opinion with some evidence.
- Basic opinion with little evidence.
- Lacks clarity, effort, or evidence.

