

Welcome to EMS Elementary Social Studies!

Throughout the school year, students will explore the rich history, geography, government, and culture of Texas. Through reading, discussion, inquiry, and the analysis of maps, primary sources, and historical events, students will develop a deeper understanding of the people, places, and experiences that have shaped the Lone Star State and continue to influence Texas today.

General Ways to Reinforce Learning outside the Classroom		
What Will My Child Learn?	Conversation Starters	Learning Support Ideas
• Develop skills for reading and analyzing maps, graphs, photographs, and primary sources. • Explore how geography, history, economics, government, and culture shape communities and societies. • Practice critical thinking by asking questions, gathering evidence, and drawing conclusions. • Make connections between historical events and the world today. • Build civic responsibility by examining the roles and responsibilities of citizens.	• What did you investigate in social studies today? • What new map, source, or historical artifact did you examine? • How does what you learned connect to the world today? • What surprised you most about today's lesson? • What questions do you still have about the topic?	• Discuss local, state, national, and world events. • Encourage your child to explain what they learned using evidence from class. • Explore maps, atlases, and geography tools together. • Visit museums, historic sites, parks, or cultural events when possible. • Read informational articles and books related to topics studied in class.

The Grade 4 social studies curriculum is organized around major eras and themes in Texas history. Students will examine the contributions of Native Peoples, the impact of exploration and settlement, the fight for independence, and the growth of modern Texas. The information below provides an overview of the topics students will study throughout the year, along with questions and activities families can use to support learning at home.

Unit 1: Native Texans and Early Exploration		
What Will My Child Learn?	Conversation Starters	Learning Support Ideas
Students will: • Explore the geographic regions of Texas and their characteristics. • Learn about the Native Peoples who lived throughout Texas. • Examine how geography influenced settlement and daily life. • Investigate the motives and achievements of early explorers.	• How did geography affect where Native Peoples lived in Texas? • What resources were important to the Native groups you studied? • Why did explorers come to Texas? • How did early explorers change Texas? • What surprised you most about life in early Texas?	• Explore a map of Texas and identify its geographic regions. • Discuss how people adapt to different environments. • Visit Texas state parks, museums, or historical sites when possible. • Read books about Native Peoples and early explorers. • Encourage your child to compare life in Texas long ago to life today.

Unit 2: Spanish Colonial Texas and Mexican Texas		
What Will My Child Learn?	Conversation Starters	Learning Support Ideas
Students will: • Examine Spanish influence on Texas culture and development. • Explore the role of missions, presidios, and settlements. • Learn about changes that occurred during the Mexican Texas period. • Analyze the challenges faced by settlers in Texas.	• What was the purpose of Spanish missions? • How did Spanish culture influence Texas? • Why did settlers move to Texas? • What challenges did people face while living in Texas? • How did Texas change during Mexican rule?	• Locate Spanish missions on a Texas map. • Discuss examples of Spanish influence that can still be seen in Texas today. • Explore family stories about moving to new places and adapting to change. • Read informational texts about Texas settlements. • Encourage your child to explain how life was different in colonial Texas.
Unit 3: Texas Revolution and the Republic of Texas		
What Will My Child Learn?	Conversation Starters	Learning Support Ideas
Students will: • Investigate the causes and major events of the Texas Revolution. • Learn about influential individuals who shaped Texas history. • Examine the creation and challenges of the Republic of Texas. • Analyze how historical events influenced the future of Texas.	• What events led to the Texas Revolution? • Why did some Texans want independence? • Who were the important leaders of the Texas Revolution? • What challenges did the Republic of Texas face? • Which event from this unit do you think was most significant and why?	• Explore important Texas Revolution locations on a map. • Discuss the qualities of leadership and perseverance. • Read biographies of influential Texans. • Visit Texas history websites or museums. • Encourage your child to create a timeline of major events.
Unit 4: Statehood, Government, and Modern Texas		
What Will My Child Learn?	Conversation Starters	Learning Support Ideas
Students Will: • Investigate how people earn, spend, and save money. • Identify examples of goods, services, and producers. • Explore the purpose of government and public services. • Analyze how economic choices affect individuals and communities.	• How does the Texas government serve its citizens? • What industries are important to Texas today? • How has Texas changed over time? • What contributions has Texas made to the United States? • What makes Texas unique?	• Follow current events occurring in Texas. • Identify products and industries that contribute to the Texas economy. • Discuss how state government affects daily life. • Explore famous Texas landmarks and destinations. • Encourage your child to make connections between Texas history and the state today.