The First Texans

Introduction: In this lesson, students will learn that they are not the first people to Walk Across Texas. Long before the Europeans arrived to colonize Texas, there were numerous Native American groups who traveled across the landscape in search of food and some who settled in various places. During this lesson, students will research the ways of life of four of these groups and produce an informative and creative booklet.

Grade Level and Subject: Fourth Grade Social Studies and Language Arts

TEKS: Social Studies: 1a, 1b, 10a, 15a, 22a, 22b, 22c, 23a, 23b, 23c, 23d, 23e
Language Arts: 7b, 7f, 8b, 8c, 10b, 10g, 10k, 12c, 13b, 13c, 13d, 13f, 13g, 14b, 15c, 17d, 18b, 18c, 21c, 25a

Materials:
folder, binder, or materials to create a booklet (construction paper, glue, yarn, etc…)
pen or pencil
markers, stickers, drawings, pictures, etc… for decorating pages and cover
outline map of Texas (see the last website listed below)
computers with internet access

Resources: Social Studies textbook, encyclopedias, Texas Handbook, Texas Almanac

Websites:
http://www.tshaonline.org (This may be too advanced for fourth grade readers, but teachers may find it an excellent reference tool.)
http://www.texancultures.utsa.edu/publications/texansoneandall/nativeamerican.htm
http://library.thinkquest.org/2832/indians/thecoah.htm
http://www.texasindians.com
http://www.texasindians.com/maps.htm
http://www.tsjunction.com/places/indians.htm
http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/texas/outline (outline map of Texas)

Activity: The teacher may divide the class into groups of two or assign this as an individual project. To meet the Language Arts TEKS requirement, students working in pairs must each be responsible for a portion of the research and writing.

Students will use the internet and printed materials to research the Coahuiltecans, Karankawas, Caddos, and Jumanos of Texas, using the questions listed below to guide them. The booklet should be organized with a section for each group and a Table of Contents. They must include a map showing where each group lived and pictures and/or drawings that correspond to each section.
When the projects are completed, divide the class into small groups and have them share and discuss their booklets.

Research Questions

- Where in Texas did they live?
- How did they dress?
- What did they eat?
- Did they travel in search of food or grow their own?
- What kind of shelters did they build?
- How were they organized? Did they live in large tribes or family units?
- Who was in charge? How did they determine this?
- What were the roles of the men, women, and children?
- What were some of their customs or rituals?
- Did they have any special talents like weaving, making pottery, etc.?
- What tools or weapons did they use? How did they make these?
- Did they practice a religion? If so, explain.
- Two of these tribes were nomadic while the other two were not. Compare and contrast their cultures, and explain how a nomadic way of life determined some of these differences. Consider the type of clothing, food, shelter, and how they governed themselves.

Evaluation: Evaluate projects for inclusion of required information, accuracy, organization, sentence structure, punctuation, usage, and summarization skills.