



*Texas' Front Porch*

## TEXAS GOVERNOR'S MANSION RESTORATION FUND



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*This House is Your House  
The Governor's Mansion  
Texas' Front Porch since 1856*

### **Social Studies Curriculum Texas History, American History, Civics, and Government**

Since the building was completed in June of 1856, the Governor's Mansion in Austin has served as the home for forty Texas governors and their families. What many children may not realize, however, is that the mansion is public property and owned by the citizens of Texas. Governor Preston Smith summed it up when he welcomed visitors to the dedication of the mansion's Texas Historical Marker on December 9, 1969 (*The Austin American Statesman*):

“This Governor's Mansion actually belongs to you and all other Texans, and not to the present tenants.”

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**In collaboration with the Texas Governor's Mansion Restoration Fund, the Austin Independent School District, Texas Education Agency and the State Bar of Texas**



# This House is Your House



## *The Governor's Mansion Texas' Front Porch since 1856*

### **I Introduction**

Since the building was completed in June of 1856, the Texas Governor's Mansion in Austin has served as the home for Texas governors and their families. What many children may not realize, however, is that the mansion is public property and owned by the citizens of Texas. Governor Preston Smith summed it up when he welcomed visitors to the dedication of the mansion's Texas Historical Marker on December 9, 1969 (*The Austin American Statesman*):

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The June 8<sup>th</sup> fire brought the Governor's Mansion much media attention – the story even ran on the *BBC News* in the United Kingdom. (“Fire Hits Historic Texas Mansion”, 2008/06/09) Historical renovation experts were brought in to assess the damage and estimate the cost of rebuilding the structure. State-owned buildings don't carry private insurance because the cost would be greater than simply covering any losses. The Texas Legislature will appropriate taxpayer money for rebuilding the mansion, but public awareness and involvement are also important. The tragedy of the mansion fire provides a unique opportunity for all Texans to connect with the past and actively participate in the present.

The public has been welcomed into the Governor's Mansion since Governor Elisha M. Pease's time. On August 23, 1856, the *Austin State Gazette* ran the following announcement:

“Governor's Levee: The executive invites all citizens to the Mansion on Saturday night at 8 o'clock.”

Pease wrote his wife (who was visiting family in Connecticut at the time) that he estimated at least 500 people attended the reception and over 300 stayed to eat supper. The bill for feeding all those people totaled \$121.80. Much of what we know about the early years of the Governor's Mansion comes from letters, receipts, and other artifacts saved by the Pease family.

The mansion continued to be the site of social and political functions throughout the years and to welcome citizens and tourists for guided tours. Even now, students can take a virtual tour of the mansion's interior before the fire by double clicking on room photographs on the Friends of the Governor's Mansion site <http://www.txfgm.org/>. Interested teachers can also find suggested classroom activities and mansion restoration updates on the site.

## **Unit Overview:**

There is a wealth of information and countless teaching opportunities related to the Governor's Mansion. One obvious area of interest is Architecture. There are several resources included on that subject for teachers to explore if they wish. This unit, however, is focused on helping students discover the true value of the Texas Governor's Mansion as a symbol of Texas and to understand the loss felt by so many Texans. Though designed for fourth graders, the lessons can easily be adapted for slightly younger students or those as old as 7<sup>th</sup> grade Texas History students. Teachers of older students would want to bring in the state and national social and political conflicts of the 1850's and 1860's as well as the criminal aspect of the mansion fire.

The unit incorporates a wide variety of primary source materials including quotes, photographs, census records, letters, and excerpts from newspapers. The lessons are divided into three sections which can each last one or two class periods or be expanded based on class interest and time available:

- What Do We Value? – Understanding the historic and symbolic value of the mansion.
- Who Do We Know? – Illustrating the mansion's tangible connection to people of the past
- Who Can We Become? – Developing *hero characteristics* list from mansion residents
- How Can We Help? – Challenging students to contribute to restoration and preservation

## **Standards:**

In addition to objectives given for each lesson, the unit will cover the following student expectations from Fourth Grade's Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies:

(17) Citizenship. The student understands important customs, symbols, and celebrations of Texas. The student is expected to: (A) explain the meaning of selected patriotic symbols and landmarks of Texas, including the six flags over Texas, San José Mission, and the San Jacinto Monument;

(18) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of voluntary individual participation in the democratic process. The student is expected to: (A) explain how individuals can participate voluntarily in civic affairs at state and local levels; (C) identify the importance of historical figures such as Sam Houston, Barbara Jordan, and Lorenzo de Zavala who modeled active participation in the democratic process; and (D) explain how to contact elected and appointed leaders in state and local governments.

(22) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to: (A) differentiate between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States and Texas; (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(23) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to: (A) use social studies terminology correctly; (B) incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication; (C) express ideas orally based on research and experiences; (D) create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies; and (E) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.

(24) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to: (A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and (B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

### **Related Resources:**

Alarion Press. *Greek Art and Architecture*. [www.alarionpress.com](http://www.alarionpress.com)

The Center for American History [www.cah.utexas.edu](http://www.cah.utexas.edu)  
Census records, Online exhibits, Links to related sites.

Daniel, Jean Houston and Price and Dorothy Blodgett. The Texas Governor's Mansion. Austin: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, 1984.

Flanagan, Sue. Sam Houston's Texas. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964.

Friends of the Governor's Mansion [www.txfgm.org](http://www.txfgm.org)  
Historical information and updates on restoration efforts.

Friends of the Governor's Mansion. The Governor's Mansion of Texas - A Historic Tour. ISBN 0-9615894-1-8.

Fritz, Jean. Make Way for Sam Houston. ISBN 0698116461.

Hafertepe, Kenneth. Abner Cook – Master Builder of the Texas Frontier. ISBN 0-87611-101-0.

The Handbook of Texas Online [www.tshaonline.org](http://www.tshaonline.org)

Hart, Katherine. Waterloo Scrapbooks 1968-1970, 1975. Austin: Friends of the Austin Public Library.

Library of Congress – American Memory [www/memory.loc.gov](http://www/memory.loc.gov)  
Historical collections for the National Digital Library.

Lone Star Junction [www.lsjunction.com](http://www.lsjunction.com)

Nixon, Joan Lowery. Search for the Shadowman. New York: Delacorte Press, 1996.

Sam Houston Memorial Museum [www.shsu.edu/~smm](http://www.shsu.edu/~smm) [www](#)

Taylor, Anne. Architecture and Children. Teachers Guide with Interdisciplinary learning activities. School Zone Institute. ISBN 0-913947-06-7.

Texas Historical Commission [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)  
Heritage Travel Guides, Fort St. Louis, Texas Trivia, Great Links to related sites

Texas Historical Commission. *THC's Efforts Vital to Governor's Mansion Restoration*.  
The Medallion. September/October 2008, pages 2 -3.

Texas History, University of North Texas  
<http://www.texashistory.unt.edu/young/educators/lessonplana.shtml>  
Primary Source Adventures and other teaching materials

Texas History Web Guide [www.kclibrary.nhmccd.edu.texashistory.html](http://www.kclibrary.nhmccd.edu.texashistory.html)  
Links to sources for Texas history and culture

Texas State Library and Archives Commission [www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/index.html](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/index.html)  
Online exhibit of historical artifacts and documents.

U. S. Census Bureau <http://www/census.gov/index.html>  
State and County Quick Facts, Maps, "Especially for Kids."

Van Buren, Maurie. House Styles at a Glance. Illustrated Guide. ISBN 0-929264-85-1.



# This House is Your House



## *The Governor's Mansion Texas' Front Porch since 1856*

### II What Do We Value?

**Student Objectives:** In the initial lesson, students will develop a class criteria chart for determining value based on what is most precious or “priceless” to them. In the second lesson, students will apply their criteria to the Governor’s Mansion to document its value as a symbol of Texas and a tangible connection to the past.

**Materials Needed:**

\* Photographs: Oliphant photograph of the Texas Governor’s Mansion, circa 1866 (Austin History Center, PICA 08592); Photograph of fire damage to the front of the mansion (provided by Governor’s Mansion Restoration Fund).

**Time Required:**

Teachers will need to spend some time becoming familiar with background information and the flow of activities. The first lesson should take two class periods of approximately forty-five minutes. The second lesson will take place after students have worked with the primary source materials in **Who Do We Know?** and should take one class period of about one hour.

**Student Background:**

Student perception of value will vary based on age and experience. They are most likely to view an item’s worth based on monetary value or the level of their desire to use said item at a particular time. Most fourth graders will appropriately make the switch in emphasis from “monetary value” to “priceless value”. Older students may prove a tougher audience and require a more direct approach.

**Teacher Background:**

Abner Cook submitted the low bid of \$14,490 to build the Governor’s Mansion. His bid included paying his foreman, Richard Payne, the \$100 the state owed Payne for making five architectural drawings of the future mansion. The legislature had already approved \$3,500 to purchase City Block #125 as the mansion site and \$2,500 for mansion furnishings. Two examples of common products may help give some point of reference for the cost. In January of 1856, both coffee and Upland cotton cost 10 cents per pound. In January of 2008, coffee cost \$1.22 per pound and Upland cotton cost 63 cents per pound. (*New York Times*) Total damages to the mansion from the fire and estimated cost for restoration have not yet been determined, but teachers may want to share these dollar amounts with students as this information becomes available. Through these lessons, however, students should realize that the costs involved are secondary because the Governor’s Mansion itself is priceless.

The first four elected governors had no official residence and even Governor Elisha M. Pease and his family lived in a boarding house until the mansion was completed. On February 11, 1854, the Texas Legislature appropriated money for the mansion and named the governor, comptroller, and treasurer to serve as commissioners to plan and supervise construction. Cook was a respected Master Builder who relied on a guidebook, “The Practice of Architecture”, as he built many significant structures in Central Texas. He chose the Greek Revival style for the mansion with Ionic columns which were considered symbolic of authority and government. Though Texas was a young state, Governor Pease and the Legislature wanted the structure to establish an imposing image for Texas and her chief executive. They realized that the new Governor’s Mansion would serve as the stage for state political and social events for many years. Remember that our imposing and impressive state Capitol was not completed until 1888.

Over these past 150 years, the Governor’s Mansion has certainly lived up to the Commissioner’s high expectations. The fire was a tremendous blow to all Texans who understand the mansion’s role in connecting us to our past and the future of our state. Human life is obviously more valuable than anything else and, fortunately, no lives were lost in the Governor’s Mansion fire. Irreplaceable furnishings, artifacts, and even architectural elements were also spared because they had been removed for scheduled maintenance. The structure itself, however, is also of great value.

### **Lesson Procedures**

**Lesson One:** Share the first definition of the word **Value** – *a fair return in goods, services, or money for something exchanged; the amount of money something is worth.* (Merriam Webster Online – Student Dictionary) Have students work as a class to generate a list of items they consider valuable according to this definition and post their list. Typical items will include fancy cars, airplanes, jewelry, big houses, exotic trips, personal electronics, etc.

Explain to students that they will now write a private list of the most valuable items in their own homes. This list will be different, however, because these are the living or non-living items they would make sure were removed from their home before it was destroyed by fire. Typical items on these lists will be family members, pets, photos, scrapbooks, trophies, family mementos, and maybe a few items of actual monetary value. After the lists are finished, ask volunteers to share and produce a second class list of these valuable items.

Guide a discussion of why the two lists don’t necessarily match and whether or not they agree with the previous definition of **value**. After hearing any ideas or suggestions, remind students of the “Mastercard Priceless” television ads or choose one to show off the website: <http://www.priceless.com/us/personal/en/pricelesstv/index.html>. Come up with a class definition of “priceless” and then share another definition listed for **Value** – *having desirable or esteemed characteristics or qualities; of great use or service.*

Lead students in developing a class criteria chart for determining what is truly priceless. Elements might include life (family and pets), reminders of the past (think yearbooks, invitations, photos), symbols of accomplishments (think trophies or certificates), items that are irreplaceable, and connections to people who are important to us, especially those who are no longer with us (think old photos or a Family Bible).

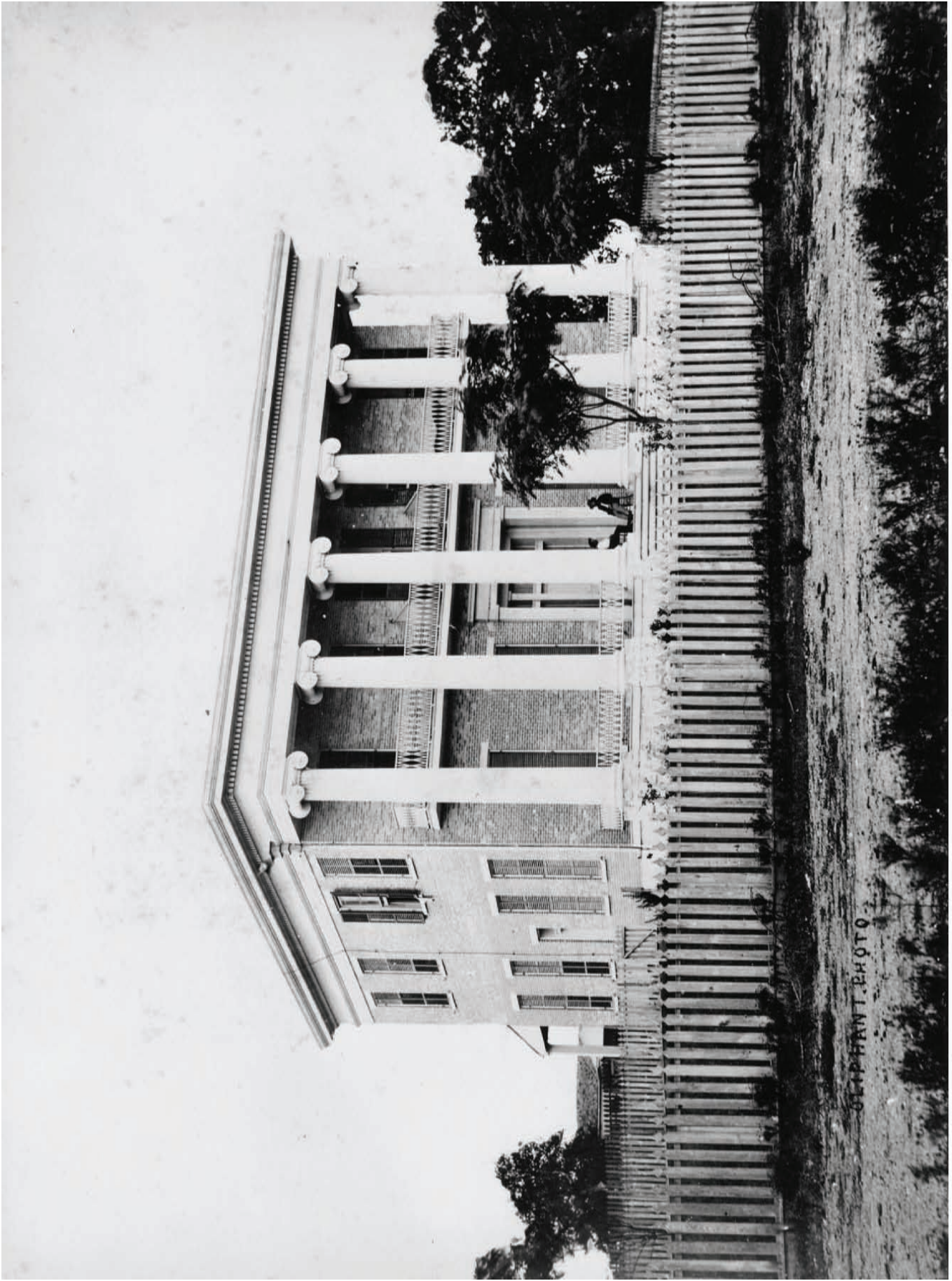
**Lesson Two:** Display the 1866 photo of the Governor’s Mansion and one showing the mansion after the fire. Using these and the latest information available on the Friends of the Governor’s Mansion site [www.txfgm.org](http://www.txfgm.org) and the Office of the Governor site [www.governor.state.tx.us](http://www.governor.state.tx.us), help students understand the damage and current restoration plans. Guide a discussion of why restoration efforts are important and how they could help the public understand the need to save as much of the mansion as possible. Students should quickly realize that their priceless value criterion chart is perfect for the task. Guide them in working as a class or in small groups to evaluate the value of the Governor’s Mansion.

### **Evaluation:**

The class or small groups of students will present their decision and evidence of the priceless value of the Governor’s Mansion.

### **Extension:**

The “priceless” definition for value also works well when describing positive character traits and behavior in responsible citizens. Teachers may want to use these lessons as the introduction to classroom and campus Character Education programs.



PICA 08592 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library







# This House is Your House



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### III Who Do We Know?

**Student Objectives:** Students will construct their own understanding of primary source materials and recognize that these materials and the Governor's Mansion itself provide visible means to connect modern-day Texans to those who lived 150 years ago.

**Materials Needed:**

- \* Transparencies of an original copy and typed copy of an 1860 Travis County census page listing Sam Houston and the Walton family. Additional 1860 Travis County census page listing Abner Cook
- \* Copy of one original page and typed copies of two letters written by Mrs. William Martin Walton (Lettie) in 1859 – 1860.
- \* Photographs: Oliphant photograph of the Texas Governor's Mansion, circa 1866 (Austin History Center, PICA 08592); Abner Cook, circa 1870 (Austin History Center, PICB 01890); Sam Houston (Austin History Center, C00516); and Stage Stop at Bastrop (Sam Houston's Texas, p.173).
- \* There are wonderful additional photographs of Sam and Margaret Lea Houston and their children at various ages on the Sam Houston Memorial Museum site at [http://www.shsu.edu/~smm\\_www/FunStuff/Album/A16T.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~smm_www/FunStuff/Album/A16T.html) .

**Time Required:**

Though there is a great deal of background information included, the materials are all provided and the lesson is easy to assemble and conduct. The time needed for teacher introduction, group investigation, and class discussion will depend on student interest and teacher discretion. Extension activities would require additional time.

**Student Background Information:**

Unless it has been called to their attention, elementary students will not have heard about the census. In the first place, since the federal population census comes around only on the decade, most children in elementary school have been alive for only one census. Secondly, like most Americans, they have no idea of the real reason for the census. These activities will make students familiar with the census and they will enjoy "meeting" both well-known and ordinary people in an entirely new way. They need to realize that each of them is listed as part of their family's household on the most recent census record.

Sam Houston is just one of the many historical figures represented by the Governor's Mansion. The array of related primary source materials provides documented evidence that this figure from classroom textbooks truly existed and interacted with ordinary Texans. Students will also recognize that Austin was a relatively small town in 1860 with a total population of 3,494 people. The lives of active citizens such as the Houstons, Cooks, and Waltons were often interconnected as shown in these materials.

### **Teacher Background Information:**

Article 1, section 2, number 3 of the U.S. Constitution reads in part, “Representatives...shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers. The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct.” These words gave birth to the United States federal census.

The first federal census was conducted in 1790 for the purpose of counting the population of each state to ascertain the number of representatives the state could send to Congress. A federal census has been taken every ten years since then and records from 1790 – 1930 are available for viewing on microfilm at many libraries throughout the country. Except for a very few names, however, the 1890 census was destroyed by fire and therefore not available. Census records are kept confidential for seventy-two years to protect citizens’ privacy. It might be interesting for students to discuss why “72”.

Although every census was taken primarily to count the population, there were many differences in the kinds of information the local census taker was required to record in different years. Questions were quite simple in the 1790 census: What is the name of the head of the household?; How many free white males over 16 live in the household?; Under 16?; How many free white females lives in the household including the head of the household if female?; How many other free persons? (This would have included free African-Americans.); and How many slaves? Notice that only one name, the head of the household, was recorded.

In subsequent census years, the enumeration by sex and age became more and more specific, but the name of the head of the household continued to be the only one listed. Beginning in 1850, however, the name and sex of every free person was listed along with his place of birth, age, and color. It also listed if he/she had attended school or was married within that year; was over 20 and unable to read and write; or was considered deaf, dumb, blind, idiotic, a pauper, or a convict. This census included the value of real estate owned and the profession, occupation, or trade of each male over 15 years of age.

The 1860 census added one question – What is the value of the personal property owned by the individual? The 1870 census reflected the changes following the Civil War. For the first time, all African-Americans were listed by name and an item was added listing males 21 years and over whose right to vote had been denied or abridged on other grounds than rebellion or crime. Other new items asked if father or mother were of foreign birth. The 1880 census was much more detailed and listed white, black, mulatto, Chinese, and Indian under color. It also asked each person’s relationship to the head of the household; the number of months employed during the year; and whether he/she was single, married, divorced, or widowed. Census forms continued to become more detailed with each passing decade.

Not every item was always filled out by the census taker and there were many mistakes. Many times, the census taker would move from household to household relying on whomever he found at home, and that person may or may not have known the correct answers. Some people were simply missed by the census takers and so are not listed. In general, however, the federal census reports are a wonderful resource and elementary students are just as fascinated with them as any genealogist.

In addition to determining the number of representatives allowed for each state, the federal census was designed as a basis for determining taxation. In the early days of Rome, a census was taken for the same reason. The word “census” comes from a Latin word which means “to tax.” Throughout history, a census has been taken in many countries for taxation purposes. The Bureau of the Census, part of the United States Department of Commerce, is the governmental agency that takes the census.

Just a few years before his death, Sam Houston was serving as governor of Texas when the census taker listed him with his family on page 298 of the census for Travis County. The 1860 census is a fairly simple one and the census taker had legible handwriting, so part of the actual page is copied and included with this lesson along with a typed copy of the entire page. Have the children notice that only the initials of most individuals were included and that they now know the name of the Houstons’ governess, Miss J.J. Thompson from Vermont.

Houston had been elected to the office of governor in 1859 on an anti-secession platform, and when Texas voted to secede in 1861, he wouldn’t go along with the vote and was removed from office. He moved to Huntsville where he died in 1863. The census record places him squarely in the present Governor’s Mansion. Have the students notice the information included in this particular census including the age, sex, birthplace, occupation, school attendance, and the amount of personal and real estate property owned by the individuals listed.

Also included with this lesson are typed copies of two letters from Mrs. Lettie Watkins Walton who is listed with her husband, William Martin Walton, and sons on the same 1860 census page as the famous governor. The letters are to her sister Molly in Carrollton, Mississippi telling about a welcome encounter with General Houston and a visit she and Mrs. Abner Cook (whose husband built the Governor’s Mansion) made to Mrs. Sam Houston. Will Walton came to Austin in 1853 to practice law and later served as State Attorney General. He and his family were boarding with the Cooks during the time these letters were written.

### **Lesson Procedures:**

Introduce primary source materials by having students read a description of Sam Houston from their textbook or other secondary source and then sharing with them the following primary source observations from Frank Brown’s *Annals of Travis County and of the City of Austin From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*. Brown was a well-respected historian who lived from 1833 – 1913 and published *Annals* in 1900.

“My opportunities for knowing General Houston were abundant. Many a time have I stopped when a crowd was gathered about him, the one figure of undivided interest, and listened to his words, fascinated by the charm of his conversation, his dignified and graceful demeanor...”

“General Houston was a little over six feet high, form well proportioned to height, nothing indicating surplus flesh, stout, vigorous, muscular, of easy and graceful carriage, not hurried in his walk, but deliberate.”

“He dressed neatly, not showily, though on special occasions he sometimes wore a vest made of spotted leopard skin and maybe a broadcloth coat with brass buttons. He uniformly wore a broad-brimmed

fur hat, of light yellow color, and of fine texture. He never used a silk tile (*hat*). He carried a stout walking cane made of Texas hickory, capped with silver. The stick had been fashioned from a limb having ten branches, which when trimmed off, had left as many small knots. The knot ends were covered with silver tips, on each of which was engraved a letter with his name. The first tip showed the letter 'S' and the last one, the letter 'N'. Turning the cane so as to see the tips, the letters appeared in regular order spelling his name in full, just as he uniformly wrote it...  
S-A-M H-O-U-S-T-O-N."

Help students compare the two pieces and discuss characteristics that make the primary piece unique. Be certain they understand that Brown was a contemporary of Houston's and met him on many occasions.

Introduce the photographs, census records, and letters and then have jigsaw groups of students serve as detectives to examine the various primary source materials and prepare for a class discussion. Use guiding questions to assist students in putting together the puzzle of these people and events. Help them recognize that Cook and Houston (and all historical figures) led real lives interacting with ordinary people. Students need to reach class or small group consensus on the definition and use of primary source materials. Guiding Questions might include the following:

1. Why were these items saved?
2. What did you learn from each item?
3. How are these items related?
4. Which item do you think provides the most dependable information? Why?
5. How could you further verify the information found in these items?
6. Would the Governor's Mansion be considered a primary source? Explain?

Share the following **"Primary Source Connections"** with students as they work:

- A picture of the famous leopard skin vest is on the Sam Houston Memorial Museum site at [www.shsu.edu/~simm\\_www/Tour/exhibits/l.shtml](http://www.shsu.edu/~simm_www/Tour/exhibits/l.shtml). Always a politician, Houston is said to have explained he chose to wear leopard skin because the scriptures say, "a leopard cannot change his spots."
- On page 71 of the 1860 census, Mrs. Cook is listed as having been born in Tennessee. Point out that the census taker wrote the double "s" with a traditional symbol that looks much like our modern lower-case cursive "f". She and her husband are both 46 years old and they have four boys. All but the youngest boy were enrolled in school during the year the census was taken.
- The Houstons were the largest family to live in the Governor's Mansion. The census shows Sam at age 67, his much younger wife Margaret Lea at age 40, and their seven children. The value of their real estate (land) is shown at \$50,000 and their personal estate at \$10,000. The real estate would have included their property in Huntsville, Texas and the personal estate would have included cash and twelve slaves who also lived on the Mansion grounds. Eber Cave's household is listed above the Houstons. He served as Houston's Secretary of State and his daughter is nine months ("9/12") old.

- Remember that the Waltons were boarding with the Cooks, so their listing on the page with the Houstons must mean that the census taker was collecting information in downtown Austin, probably at the Capitol.
- Lettie thanks her sister for her “letter of 27<sup>th</sup> ultimate” which means Molly’s letter was dated November 27<sup>th</sup>. Writers at this time used the term “instant” to refer to something that occurred within the same month they were writing.
- The stage stop where Lettie met General Houston was possibly this house on the Old San Antonio road in Bastrop. It was owned successively by two Battle of San Jacinto veterans, Jesse Holderman and Campbell Taylor. One reason Houston often stopped here is that his son, Sam Jr., attended Colonel R.T.P. Allen’s Bastrop Military Academy. General Houston had been elected governor by the time of this meeting and must have also been on his way to Austin since he was inaugurated there on December 21, 1959.
- It would be impossible today to just “drop in” on the governor or his wife at the mansion, but you can explain to your students why Mrs. Houston was so eager for company. She was more than seven months pregnant when she invited the ladies for a visit and it would have been considered improper for her to be out and about in her condition. Her youngest son Temple Lea Houston, born August 12, 1860, was the first child born in the mansion. He was not listed on the 1860 census because he was born after the June 1st cut off date.
- The luncheon menu may not sound exciting to students, but it was quite impressive to Lettie. Remind them that fresh fruit and vegetables in August were rare and light bread (wheat flour) was highly prized. Bread in Texas at the time was usually made from ground corn. “Middling” is salt pork used for flavoring.

### **Evaluation:**

Students will gather primary source materials that would provide accurate information about your classroom to “detectives” 150 years from now. These might include artifacts like an electric pencil sharpener or your class’ favorite read-aloud novel. Have them explain how the chosen pieces would fit together to make a complete picture.

### **Extension:**

\* Lead students in gathering primary source materials on other inhabitants of the Governor’s Mansion. Elisha M. Pease (1853-1857) and his family were the first to move in the mansion and there are many extant letters about their time in office. Another colorful resident of the mansion was Wilbert Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel (1939-1941) who also wrote the song “Beautiful Texas.” The original music and information on O’Daniel is on the Texas State Library site <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/characters/btexas-1.html>. A complete list of Mansion inhabitants and their dates in office can be found at <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ref/abouttx/governors.html> and many primary source anecdotes are found in the Jean and Price Daniel’s book, *The Texas Governor’s Mansion*.

\* Have students create their own school census forms with questions they feel would be of interest to your school community. Assign census takers to collect information from participating classes in your building. Groups can organize gathered data in outlines or graphic organizers and then present their results to the administration or student body.



#915 Farmer (\$556)

F. BOTT 38 m Va  
C.F. BOTT(Spinster) 30 f Va  
T. BOTT (Farmer) 22 m Ohio

#916 Farmer (\$2000) (\$2755)

W.D.PATTON 30 m Tenn  
M. PATTON 20 f Tex  
H.D. PATTON 8/12 m Tex  
M. BOTT 14 f Mo

#917 Farmer (\$1080)

S.D.PENNINGTON 40 m Ky  
M.J. PENNINGTON 40 f Ky  
L. PENNINGTON 17 f Mo  
I. PENNINGTON 16 m Mo  
M.J. PENNINGTON 15 f Mo

#918 Lawyer (\$12,000) (\$6250)

W.M. WALTON 28 m Miss  
L.A. WALTON 25 f Miss  
N.S. WALTON 5 m Tex  
E.W. WALTON 3 m Miss

#919 Lawyer (\$33000) (\$4000)

D.C. FREEMAN Jr. 32 m Ky  
M.A. FREEMAN 28 f Ky  
I.W. FREEMAN 5 m Tex  
L. FREEMAN 3 f Tex  
R. FREEMAN 6/12 f Tex

#920 Sec. of State (\$1000) (\$500)

E.W. CAVE 29 m Penn  
L.F. CAVE 19 f Tex  
M. CAVE 9/12 f Tex

#921 Governor (\$50000) (\$10000)

Sam HOUSTON 67 m Va  
M.M. HOUSTON 40 f Ala  
Sam HOUSTON Jr. 17 m Tex  
N.E. HOUSTON 13 f Tex  
M.L. HOUSTON 11 f Tex  
M.W. HOUSTON 9 f Tex  
A.P. HOUSTON 8 f Tex  
A.J. HOUSTON 6 m Tex  
W.R. HOUSTON 2 m Tex  
J.J. THOMPSON 22 f Vt  
(Governess)



SCHEDULE 1—Free Inhabitants in The City of Austin in the County of Texas State  
of Texas enumerated by me, on the Third day of August 1860. S. J. Wood Ass't Marshal  
Post Office Austin 273

1	2	3	Description			7	Value of Estate Owned		10	11	12	13	14
			Age	Sex	Color		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate					
		<u>A. Bennett</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>M</u>					<u>Texas</u>				
		<u>A. Bennett</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>F</u>									
		<u>F. W. Bennett</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>M</u>									
		<u>A. F. Bennett</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>F</u>									
		<u>J. J. Bennett</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>M</u>									
<u>519</u>	<u>519</u>	<u>W. F. Bell</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Painter</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>112</u>		<u>Missouri</u>			
		<u>Ann B. Bell</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
		<u>A. E. Bell</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>F</u>									
		<u>John W. Bell</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>M</u>						<u>Texas</u>			
		<u>J. B. Bell</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>M</u>									
<u>521</u>	<u>521</u>	<u>Wm. A. Buntin</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Wagon Maker</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>1200</u>	<u>1500</u>	<u>Tennessee</u>			
		<u>J. M. Buntin</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
		<u>J. W. Buntin</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Farmer</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>50</u>					
<u>521</u>	<u>521</u>	<u>J. J. Brown</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Wagon Maker</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>2000</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>Virginia</u>			
		<u>A. W. Brown</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Mississippi</u>			
		<u>M. J. Brown</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>F</u>						<u>Louisiana</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>W. C. Brown</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>F</u>						<u>Texas</u>			
<u>522</u>	<u>522</u>	<u>A. H. Cook</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Architect</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>25000</u>	<u>8000</u>	<u>Ch. Carolina</u>			
		<u>C. J. Cook</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Tennessee</u>			
		<u>A. H. Cook</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>M</u>						<u>Texas</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>W. F. Cook</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>M</u>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>W. R. Cook</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>M</u>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>C. J. Cook</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>M</u>									
<u>523</u>	<u>523</u>	<u>J. H. Raymond</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Farmer</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>35000</u>	<u>1000</u>	<u>New York</u>			
		<u>W. Raymond</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Ohio</u>			
		<u>J. J. Sifford</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>M</u>						<u>New York</u>			
<u>524</u>	<u>524</u>	<u>J. W. Smith</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Exchange Broker</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>35000</u>	<u>5000</u>	<u>Tennessee</u>			
		<u>W. Smith</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Virginia</u>			
		<u>W. Smith</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>F</u>						<u>Texas</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>J. W. Smith</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>M</u>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<u>J. Smith</u>	<u>7 1/2</u>	<u>F</u>									
		<u>W. S. Hall</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Widow</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Virginia</u>			
<u>525</u>	<u>525</u>	<u>C. M. Kirby</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>F</u>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>4000</u>					
		<u>W. J. Kirby</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>F</u>						<u>Texas</u>			
<u>526</u>	<u>526</u>	<u>Ch. Ruppertell</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Rabber</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>500</u>		<u>Kansas</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<u>C. Ruppertell</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Kansas</u>			
		<u>C. Ruppertell</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>M</u>						<u>Texas</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<u>527</u>	<u>527</u>	<u>J. W. Tibaut</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>Carpenter</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>1000</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Louisiana</u>			
		<u>C. A. Tibaut</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>Wife</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<u>Tennessee</u>			
		<u>F. D. Tibaut</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>F</u>						<u>Texas</u>			

No. white males, 21 No. colored males, \_\_\_\_\_ No. foreign born, \_\_\_\_\_ No. blind, \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. white females, 19 No. colored females, \_\_\_\_\_ No. deaf and dumb, \_\_\_\_\_ No. insane, 12438 33250  
 No. idiots, \_\_\_\_\_ No. paupers, \_\_\_\_\_ No. convicts, \_\_\_\_\_



Dec. 19, 1859 Lettie  
Speed gave me the money day 1860  
Fanny, Banker No. 100

Miss Mary E. Watkins  
Ellicott's Mills  
Maryland

Patapsco  
Susannah

Received from the  
Bank of the  
1860

Austin Texas.

Dec 19<sup>th</sup> 1859.

My Own Sister

Your very kind & affectionate letter of 27<sup>th</sup> ult. was gladly received a few days after my arrival here. We reached here on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. Passed thro' one place in Texas where there were six cases of yellow fever - remained about an hour in the place. I did not feel very comfortable going into a house in that place - but it was raining & we had to wait for the stage.

We took the cars at Algiers & opposite New Orleans - Had a fine opportunity of seeing the country down there & a miserable sickly looking country it is - so low - flat & so much water. I saw fields of cabbages & sugar cane & groves of oranges.

We came the Berwick's bay route & was not on the Gulf half so long as the other way. I saw one of my family was sick. Monday night while in the stage the severest barthern fever felt, blew up - we stood it till about 1 o'clock when we arrived at a stage stand - all of us went to the house to warm. It commenced snowing

Austin, Texas,

June 20<sup>th</sup> / 66

My Dear Sister

Your kind letter of 25<sup>th</sup> ult. was  
gladly received some weeks since & it is true I  
had heard from you again. It was not my in-  
tention to delay writing to you for such a length  
of time - but time has passed off more rapidly  
than I thought & several things has prevented  
my writing. Two weeks ago we changed our  
boarding house. We are now boarding at  
one of the prettiest & nicest houses in Austin.  
Mrs Cook is a cousin of Dr Wm. Barber of Col-  
umbus - is an excellent & neat house keeper.  
Every thing is clean & nice like it is at Mother's.  
We pay \$5.00 per month - live well - are  
much pleased so far. Yesterday evening  
I call on Gov. Houston's wife for first time  
& this morning she sent over for Mrs  
Cook & self to spend the day with her. We  
went & passed a very pleasant day. Mrs.  
H. is a perfect lady - & makes any one  
feel so easy in her house. We had a good  
dinner for five Austin & the day weather  
Bill of Fare, Cabbage & milleding,  
Roast beef, Roast hen, Roasting ears, Rice  
Tomatoes, Ochre, Stewed dried apples.  
Butter, Corn bread, Light bread.

## Walton Letters

Austin, Texas  
Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1859

My Own Sister,

Your very kind and affectionate letter of 27<sup>th</sup> ultimate was gladly received a few days after my arrival here. We passed through one place in Texas where there were six cases of yellow fever, remained about an hour in that place. I did not feel very comfortable going into a house there, but it was raining and we had to wait for the stage.

We took the railroad cars at Algiers, opposite New Orleans. Had a fine opportunity of seeing the country down there and a miserable, sickly looking country it is, so low and flat and so much water. I saw fields of cabbages and sugar cane and groves of oranges. We came the Berwicks Bay route and were not on the Gulf half so long as the other way. Not one of my family was sick. Monday night while in the stage, the severest Norther I ever felt blew up. We stood it till about 1 o'clock when we arrived at a stage stand. All of us went into the house to warm. It commenced snowing and the driver was prevailed upon to remain until morning. We sat up wrapped in blankets by the fire till daylight and when we started again, it was still snowing and continued to snow nearly all day, the wind blowing like a storm.

The next night, Tuesday, we stopped to get supper. The driver said he must go on, but General Sam Houston happened to be at the place and said that if the stage would stay all night, he would write to the Post Office Department so that the mail contractors should not suffer on account of failure of the mails. Bless the old General, he got us one good night's rest out of the cold. At the place where we stopped the night, several heads of hogs were frozen to death. We traveled all that day and next night and reached here about daylight Thursday morning. That was one time I was glad to get to Austin. I sat by the fire all that day, could not even get away to put on clean clothes, though I was really muddy and dirty. I will give you a description of our crossing the Brazos River some day. As cold as it was and snow on the ground, we had to get out and walk several times. Once while we were crossing a river, we just had to jump up and down to keep at all warm. Oh! You can form no idea of a Norther, having never experienced one. The children did not suffer at all, they were wrapped in blankets on our laps. It sleeted last night and has been quite cold today – another cold Norther blowing.

December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Sister, I have seated myself to finish this letter. General Houston was inaugurated Governor yesterday, at the Capitol, of course. I went but there was such an immense crowd, I left without even getting a glimpse of him. There was a splendid ball (for Austin, it was) last night. I went and remained till 3 o'clock, came home and slept from 4 o'clock till 8 o'clock. I merely went to see the people and the supper, did not dance and had no desire to do so. Will remained at home with the children.

Will has gone to his office to attend to business. Good night Baby.

Your devoted sister,  
Lettie

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Austin, Texas  
June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1860

My Dear Sister,

Your kind letter of 25<sup>th</sup> ultimate was gladly received some weeks since and it is time I heard from you again. It was not my intention to delay writing to you for such a length of time, but time has passed off more rapidly than I thought and several things have prevented my writing.

Two weeks ago we changed our boarding house. We are now boarding at one of the prettiest and nicest houses in Austin. Mrs. Cook is a cousin of Dr. William Hart's of Carrollton, is an excellent cook and neat housekeeper. Everything is clean and nice like it is at Mother's. We pay \$55.00 per month, live well, and are much pleased so far.

Yesterday evening I called on Governor Houston's wife for the first time, and this morning she sent over for Mrs. Cook and self to spend the day with her. We went and passed a very pleasant day. Mrs. Houston is a perfect lady and makes anyone feel so easy in her house. We had a good dinner for Austin, Texas and the dry weather. "Bill of Fare" - Cabbage and middling, Roast beef, Roast hen, Roasting ears, Rice, Tomatoes, Okra, Stewed dried apples, Butter, Corn bread, Light bread, Dried apple pie, Pound cake, Pineapple and ginger preserves, Water, and Coffee. I was much pleased with my visit and saw more vegetables than I have seen at any one time this year. It is very dry and has been awful hot weather, but it is pleasanter now.

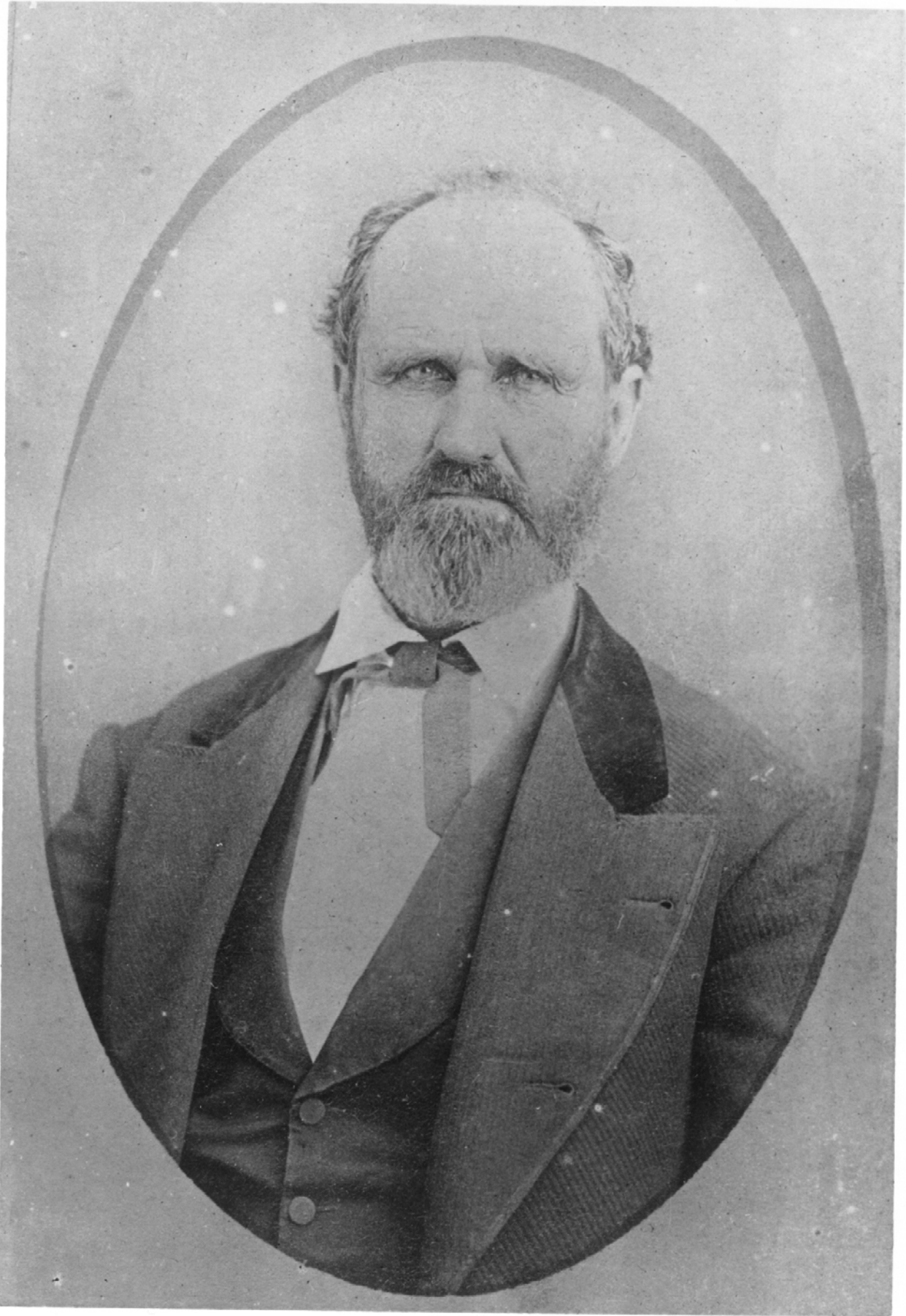
I arose this morning a little after sunrise and two mornings previous at daybreak and Will and self took long walks before our breakfast. Goodnight sister.

Your affectionate sister,  
Lettie Walton



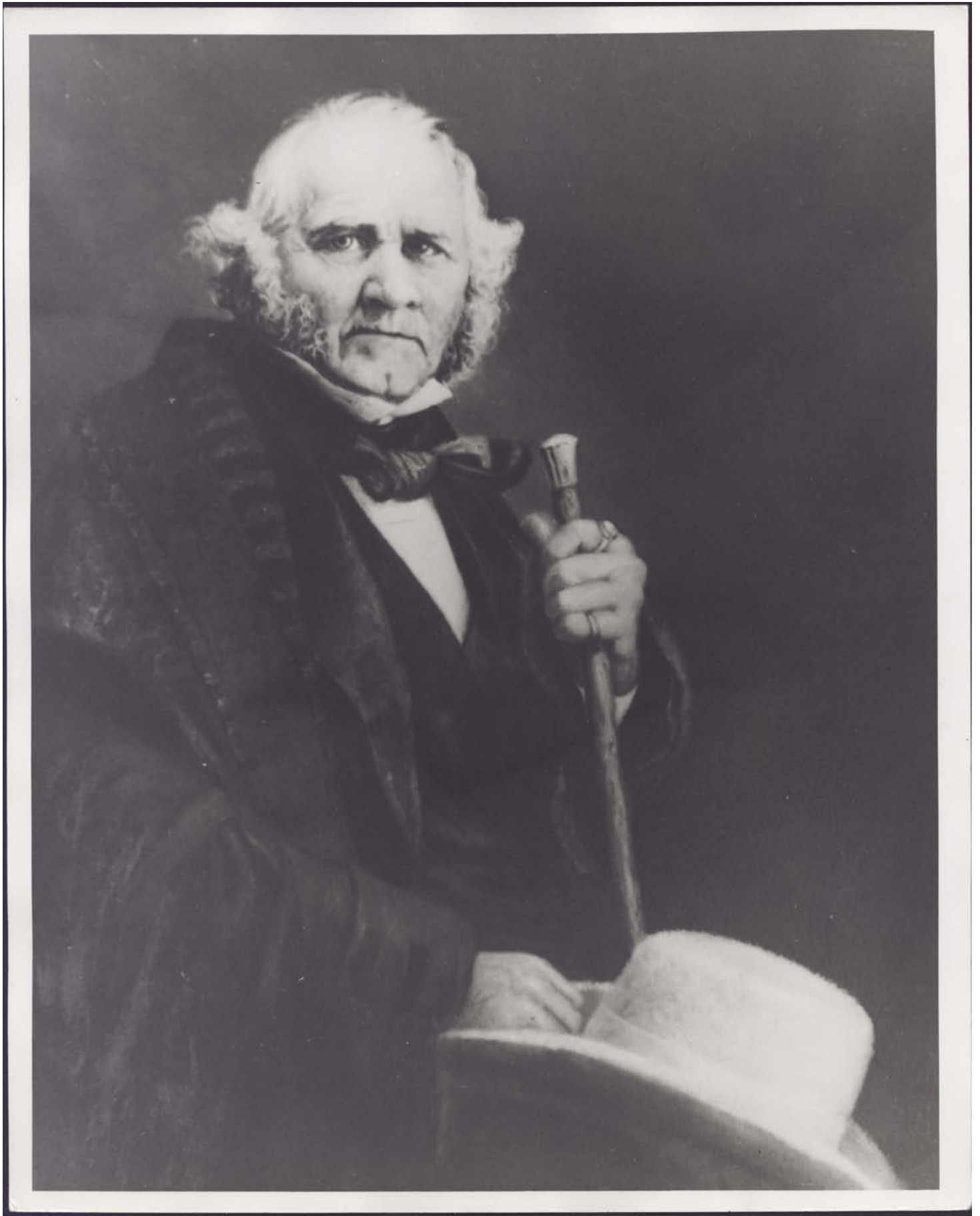
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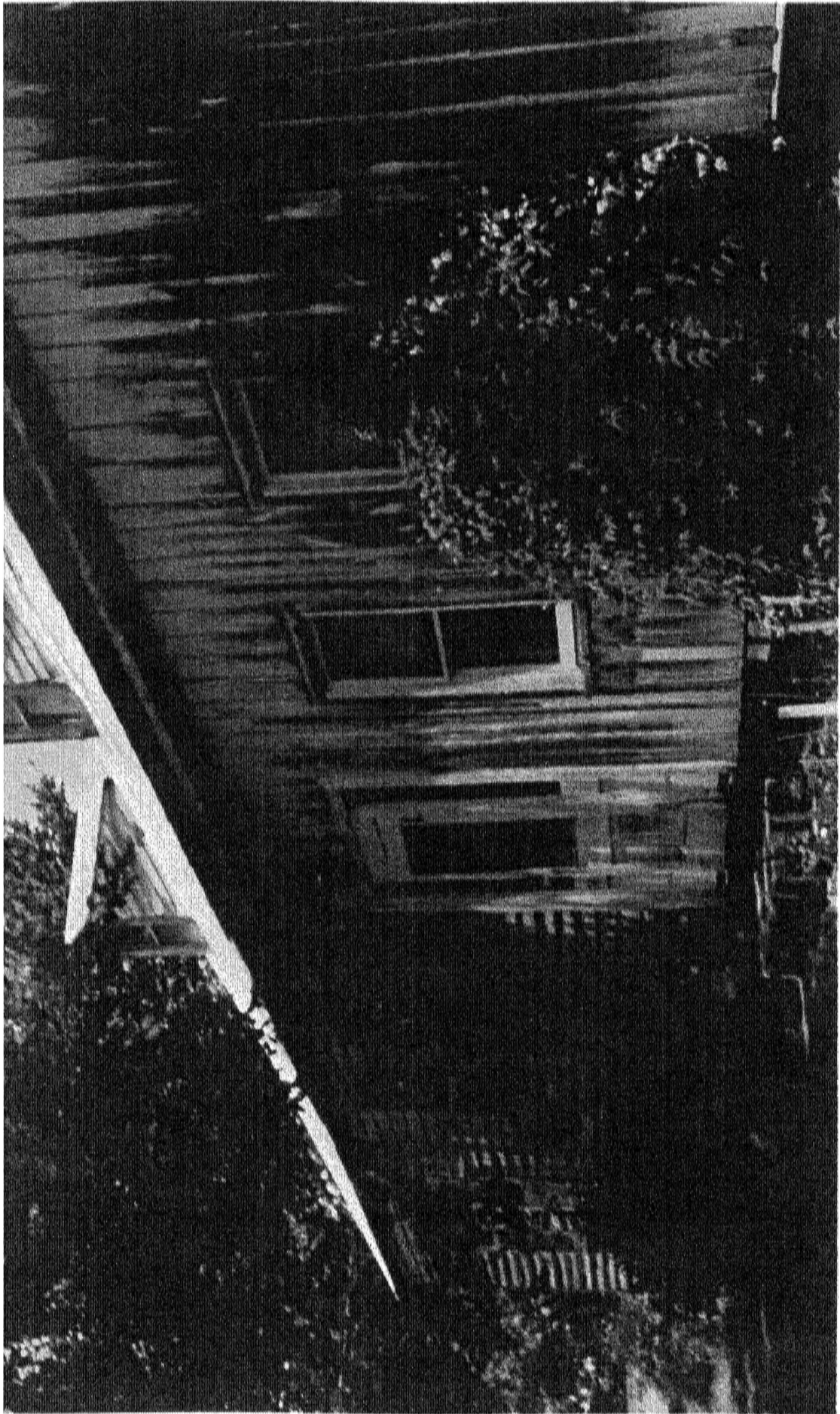
PICA 08592 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library



Austin History Center, Austin Public Library PICB 01890







**STAGE STOP AT BASTROP.** Many, many times Sam Houston stopped at this cypress-and-cedar house in Bastrop on the Old San Antonio Road. Owned successively by two San Jacinto veterans, Jesse Holderman and Campbell Taylor, it was built in 1836 and early designated as a stage stand. Houston had a special interest in Bastrop, for Sam, Jr., was a cadet at Allen Academy there. In October, 1860, the Governor spoke in the town against disunion. The county later voted not to secede.



# This House is Your House



## *The Governor's Mansion Texas' Front Porch since 1856*

### IV Who Can We Become?

**Student Objectives:** The students will study former residents of the Governor's Mansion to develop a list of "hero characteristics" and use that list to identify other famous or unknown heroes in the past and present and hero traits within themselves.

**Materials Needed:**

- \* Books and resource materials about outstanding men and women of the past and today. Newspapers, magazines, and other contemporary news sources. Oral interviews, news clippings, or letters to illustrate family research.
- \* Student copies of *Responsibility Circles* sheet.

**Time Needed:**

These lessons should be part of an ongoing study that takes as little or as much time as the teacher and students choose to spend. Classroom time will vary with activities chosen.

**Student Background Information:**

The particular heroes selected for study should be chosen specifically for the class involved and meet the students' needs and interests. Many students will think that people must be male, famous, or even dead before they can be considered a hero. They must learn to think beyond just comic book, military, or life-saving heroes to realize that many "unsung heroes" provide quiet service to their community, country, or fellow man.

**Teacher Background Information:**

Teachers may want to use their campus character education program to organize the class hero characteristics. *Character Counts!*, <http://charactercounts.org>, for example, emphasizes six pillars of ethical behavior – Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. These pillars can also represent the six Ionic order columns which have stood tall on the Governor's Mansion porch for over 150 years. Other character lessons and resources can be found at <http://www.goodcharacter.com>.

The study of significant men and women is essential for every young person because these shared heroes form part of the foundation for our heritage. These men and women also seem to have common fundamental characteristics which can be listed and used as criteria to identify other heroes. These characteristics include such traits as the ability to solve problems, the unselfish willingness to give of themselves in response to the needs of others, a readiness to take the initiative in a time of need, and a firm belief in and respect for the worth and the rights of each individual. Each class will develop a unique list, but there will be similar items on every list.

No man or woman is perfect, no human has lived without some selfish thought or action, and everyone has made mistakes. The heroes studied will be no exception, so students will discover that heroes are simply ordinary, imperfect people who care enough to develop their strengths to benefit others. The ultimate goal of this study is for students to realize that each one of them can become a hero in his or her own way.

### **Lesson Procedures:**

1. **Mansion Heroes** – Begin with the quotes about **Sam Houston** found in the *Who Do We Know?* lesson and share information from any of the excellent biographies on Houston. Guide the class in discussing what they know about Houston and identifying his hero characteristics. Remind them to consider how Houston remained loyal to the Union Because he knew it would be best for Texas, even though he would lose his job as governor.

Choose other residents of the Governor’s Mansion to profile. **Ann Richards**, for example, is especially interesting to students because she once was a teacher and she had a wonderful sense of humor. Her ability to overcome personal challenges provides an excellent opportunity to point out that heroes are not perfect, but they do rise above their weaknesses. Richards once said about herself,

*“I believe in recovery, and I believe that as a role model I have the responsibility to let young people know that you can make a mistake and come back from it.”*

Richards was instrumental in bringing women and minorities into positions of power in our state government. Current governor, Rick Perry, said of her,

*“She was an endearing and enduring figure in Texas politics. She paved the way as a leader and a role model for women who aspire to the highest levels of leadership.”*

It may be most interesting for students to hear how leaders such as Richards saw their own impact on Texas. She once told reporters,

*“The reality is that the greatest part of my life was the opportunity to be in public service. To make a difference for the community I live in, for the state that I love, to be able to try to make things better, whether they turned out in the fashion I expected them to or not.”*

Teachers can find portraits and biographies of all governors on the Texas State Library site, <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/governors/index.html>

Continue the hero study with additional men and women that interest the teacher and class. Ask the children if there are ways in which some of these heroes are alike. Have them compare how they acted when people around them had problems. Accept all comments, but begin to emphasize common traits such as those listed in the background information. After a full discussion in which many characteristics have been listed and considered, work with students to develop a final class list of the traits they feel are most important. When the list is complete, make a copy for each child and keep one posted in the classroom for reference.

**2. Hero Hall of Fame** – Assign student detectives the task of listening to the news, reading articles in the newspaper, and asking questions of people in their family and neighborhood in an attempt to identify a relatively unsung hero in historical or modern Texas. Have each student write a brief composition or present information orally about the hero they have located, showing why that person meets the class hero criteria. As the reports begin to come in, propose some way of giving special honor to these

people. The Austin Independent School District, for example, named the **Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders** in honor of the former governor. Suggest creating a classroom Hero Hall of Fame. This might be a bulletin board or scrapbook or even a display corner in the room. Some teachers may choose to have the student who proposed an individual for the Hall of Fame write that person to notify them of the honor.

**3. The Hero in Me** - Begin by displaying the *Responsibility Circles* and discussing the significance of the labels. Ask students to discuss a young person's responsibilities in each area. Expect some confusion in the large, civic circle and be ready with suggestions such as obey laws, respect private property, respect the rights of others, and take pride in one's city, state, heritage, etc. Share some incident in your own life that serves to illustrate that even adults sometimes have problems carrying out all their responsibilities.

Begin the next lesson by having students jot down for their own use a list of two or three responsibilities which are hard for them to remember or get around to doing. Discuss the consequences of neglecting responsibilities to oneself or to others. Bring up the concept of a football or basketball goal and present the idea that we can set goals for ourselves in any responsibility area. Pass out individual sheets showing the responsibility circles and the contract at the bottom where the student can agree to take care of one of their difficult responsibilities for a given length of time. Encourage the students in their efforts by arranging short individual conference to ask about their progress and make any needed suggestions.

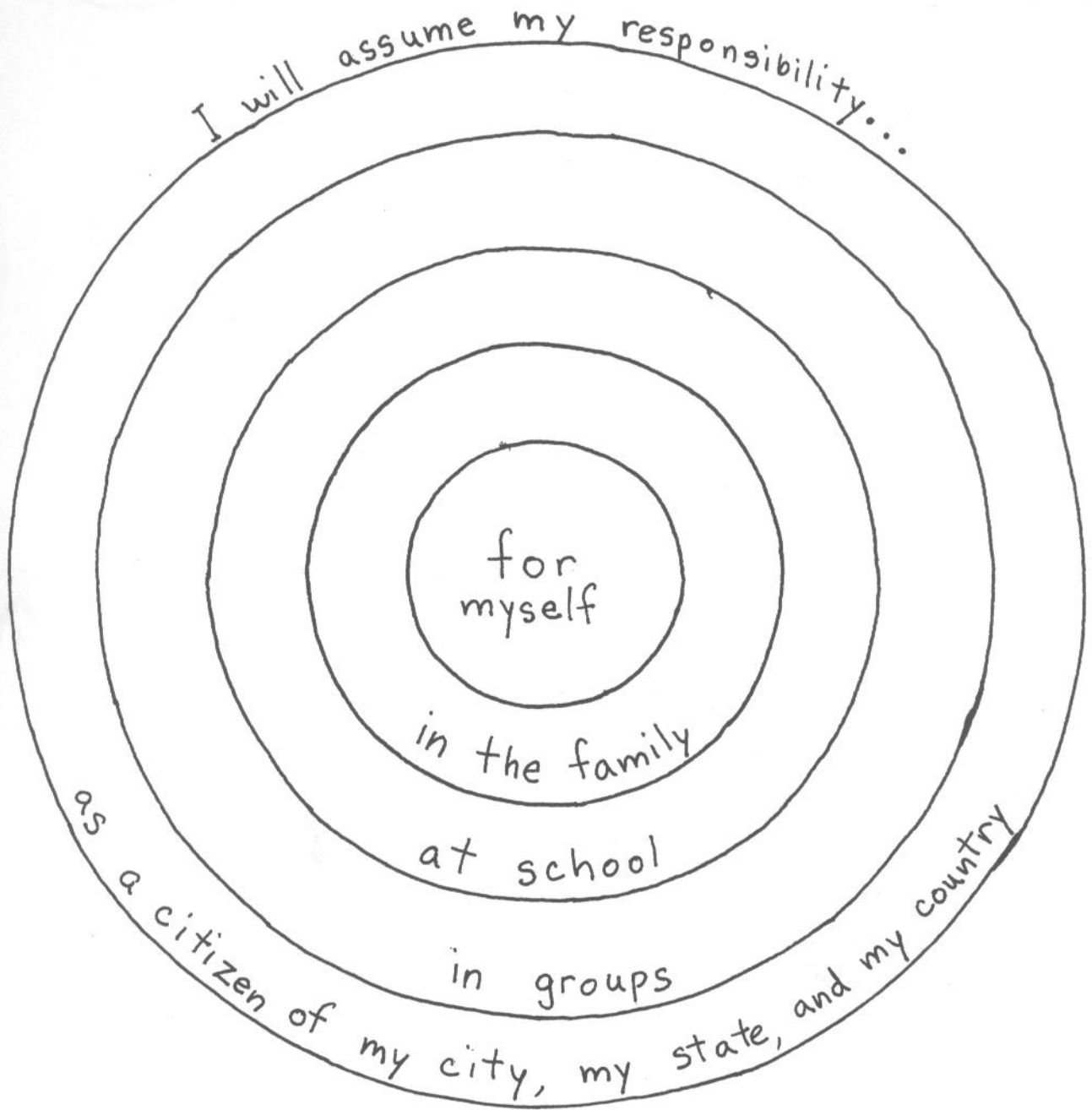
**Evaluation:**

Students will create a written report and/or visual to appropriately honor one of their discovered heroes. They will keep track of their progress in carrying out their selected responsibilities.

**Extension:**

Debate the value of heroes in modern society. Do we need individuals that symbolize what our state/nation/community stands for? Is it possible to distinguish between true heroes and celebrities? Which receive more coverage in the media?

# Responsibility Circles



I will carry out my responsibility:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Area)  
by \_\_\_\_\_ (Duty)  
for \_\_\_\_\_ (Time period)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)



# This House is Your House



## *The Governor's Mansion Texas' Front Porch since 1856*

### **V How Can We Help?**

**Student Objective:** Students will research and analyze information, participate in civic affairs, and effectively communicate with elected or appointed officials.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- \* Current information from the Office of the Governor  
Texas Governor's Mansion Restoration Fund ( [www.governor.state.tx.us/](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/) )  
c/o Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 12878  
Austin, Texas 78711-2878  
866-771-5829
- \* Transparency or copies of *Decision Machine* sheet
- \* Names and addresses of state officials can be found at <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>
- \* Local officials and addresses can be found on your city or county web sites
- \* Copies of *If Buildings Could Talk* guide sheets if selecting Extension activity

#### **Time Required:**

Practicing decision skills should take one class period. Selecting and planning a class project will take several class periods. Time required to complete project will depend on the project chosen. The Extension activity could be segmented into ongoing short time periods to allow individual students to research a building and report findings.

#### **Student Background:**

The 2008 Presidential Election encouraged many young citizens to become more involved in civic affairs. Though our students were too young to vote, they are not too young to express their opinions, volunteer their time, and advocate for a cause in which they believe.

#### **Teacher Background:**

Now that your class understands the value of the Governor's Mansion, involve them in the restoration process or in local historical preservation efforts. Make certain any selected class project complies with state, school district, and campus policies on fund raising and student involvement in civic activity.

#### **Lesson Procedures:**

Share the following excerpt from an editorial appearing in the *Austin Statesman* newspaper in 1883:

“The (Governor's) mansion was built 27 years ago and it has already done the services usually expected of houses. The state could well afford to rebuild it, but this not being a necessity, it should provide for such renovation as will make the house suitable...

for probably 27 years longer.”

“...As it is, it is not fit for a residence. The dampness of the walls, the leaky roof, and other notable faults, making it unfit for humans to dwell

in...It is a noted fact that the residents of the mansion have for many years been plagued with disease. As far back as the day of Governor Houston it has had this reputation.”

The Texas Legislature responded to this cry for action and did appropriate money for the needed repairs. Fortunately, the Governor’s Mansion lasted for more than just an additional 27 years. Challenge students to learn from this effective advocate and become active citizens of their community and state. Their first step would be deciding how they can “Stand Tall for Texas” and best support the efforts to restore the Mansion.

Define making a decision as making a choice. Ask students to tell how they make good decisions and key in on any suggestions that hint at considering consequences. Discuss consequences and define them as what will probably happen if one decides to do a certain thing. Point out that a decision implies there is more than one possible choice or option available. Making a careful decision means thinking ahead to what the consequences of each choice would be before the decision is made.

Display a transparency or drawing of the “Decision Making Machine” and illustrate its use with some life-like situations in which a decision needs to be made. One example would be a scenario in which a child is deciding whether to take a library book to the cafeteria during lunch or to leave it in his/her desk. The student has just reached an exciting part in the story and hates to put it down. This scenario shows students that there may be both positive and negative consequences for any choice. The student would enjoy reading the book during lunch, but would not want to spill food on school property. Use the machine to help students clarify the choices and consequences.

Share the following quote from Governor Rick Perry that ran in the *Austin American Statesman* on June 9, 2008:

“Though it can certainly be rebuilt, what Texas has lost today can never be replaced. Like all Texans, we hope that this remarkable building which has served as the home for our family and other Texas governors for the last 150 years, can be saved and restored.”

Based on their understanding of the importance of the Governor’s Mansion, guide students in deciding how they can help restore the mansion. Possible projects could range from donating their pennies to the restoration to educating others and organizing a more ambitious fundraising effort. They may decide to write letters to state or local officials encouraging them to become involved. Let the class brainstorm ideas and use their decision-making skills to think through consequences and select the project that best matches their desire to help and your criteria for available time and curriculum needs. Have them set reasonable goals for their project and document their efforts and progress towards those goals.

**Evaluation:**

Students will evaluate their project based on their goals and documentation. Teachers may choose to evaluate projects based on student effort, cooperation, and written production.



**Extension:**

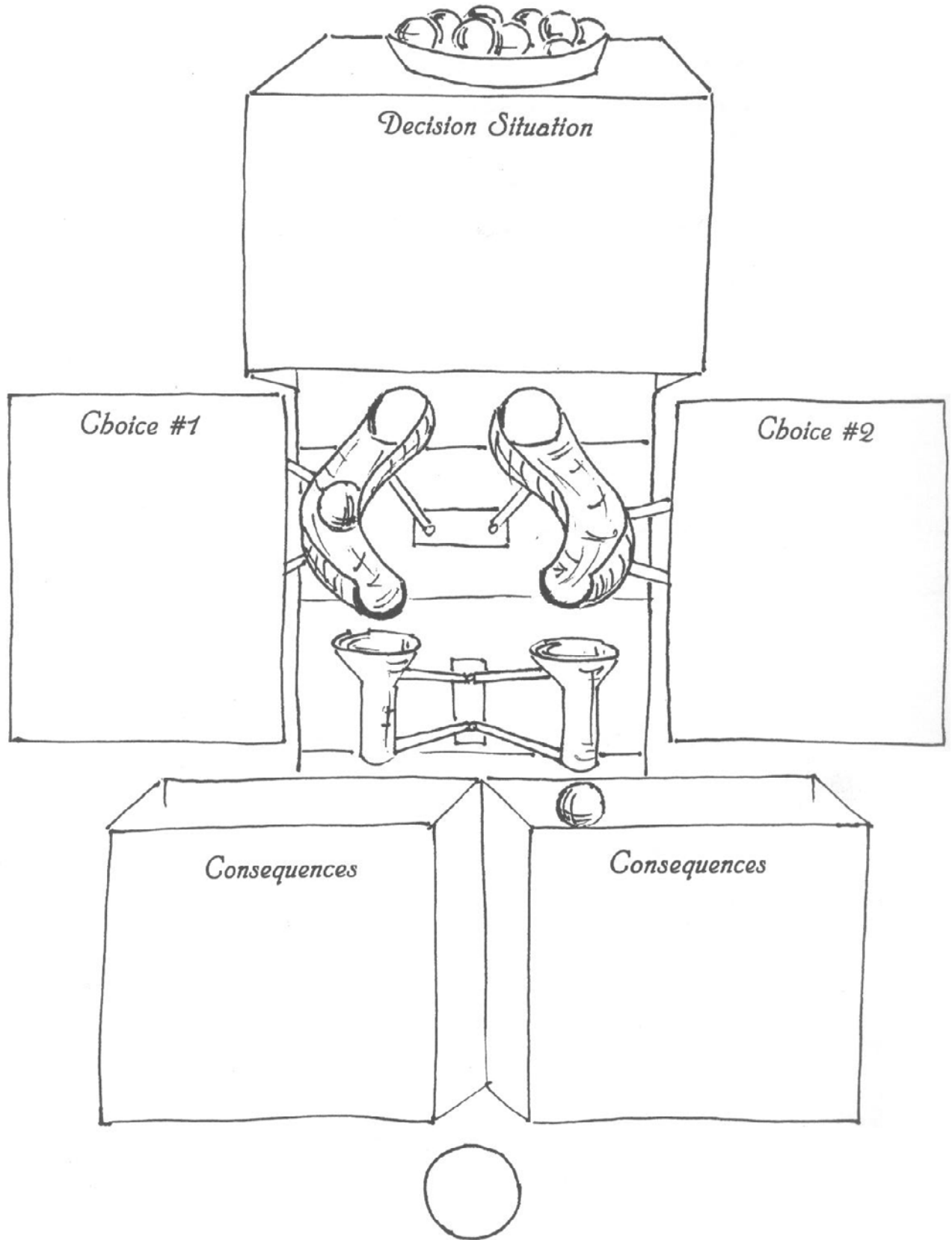
Read the following quote from *The Austin Daily Statesman* newspaper, October 5, 1884. The article was written in response to the news that some old buildings in Austin were going to be torn down to make room for Colonel Driskill's "new" hotel which still stands in downtown Austin today.

“Thus one by one the old land-marks leave us and but a few of the  
original houses of Austin remain.

A few years hence, the citizen of thirty years ago will be a comparative  
stranger in the home of his youth with no familiar objects to greet his eye  
save the eternal hills on which the capital city sits enthroned  
as a queen in her royal beauty  
and the sparkling Colorado at her feet.”

Students will be surprised that Texans worried about losing historic buildings over 100 years ago! Some Texas cities are fortunate to still have some of their historic buildings because ordinary citizens and preservationists recognized their value and were willing to fight to save them. Explain that historic preservation is the maintenance and/or rehabilitation of historic buildings, sites, or structures.

Ask students to become preservationists by educating other citizens about the importance of historic structures. As a class or in groups, have students select a historic landmark to adopt. Using the “If Buildings Could Talk” sheet as a guide, students will research the landmark, obtain pictures if possible, and document the landmark's importance to our city. Invite area architects or builders to contribute their knowledge to the project. Interview citizens familiar with the building or site. Try to find out about the people who lived in or used the site. Students use their gathered information to write a paragraph on each outline section on the Report Sheet or notebook paper. When the written reports are complete, share the information by presenting it to neighborhood groups or mailing reports to city council members. Encourage students to become active citizens who will work to maintain their city's reminders of the past.



## If Buildings Could Talk – Research Outline

### I. General Information

Location

Use Today

Date Built

### II. Description – Size, shape, colors, materials, special features

### III. Make a sketch of the landmark on plain paper

### IV. Tell how the landmark has been used in the past How has it influenced the lives of people in the community?

### V. How have people changed or adapted the landmark? What are the plans for the future?

Try to find a photograph of the landmark in a reference book. Glue a copy of the picture to the back of your report sheet.

# If Buildings Could Talk – Report

General Information

Landmark's Past

Description

Changes and Future Plans