

Ancient Landscapes of South Texas: AP Human Geography

High School, AP Human Geography

TEKS:

History: (c)1, 2
Geography: (c) 3

AP Course and Exam Alignment:

Unit 1 Thinking Geographically - Topics: 1,5,7
Unit 2 Population and Migration - Topic: 10
Unit 3 Culture - Topics: 1,2
Unit 4 Political Patterns - Topics: 3,4
Unit 5 Agriculture and Rural Land Use - Topics: 2,3
Unit 6 Cities and Urban Land Use - Topics: 1
Unit 7 Industrial and Economic Development - Topic: 8

Big Idea: Exploring the ancient landscapes of South Texas reveals the rich natural and cultural history that has influenced the regions's geography.

Objective:

Students will be able to identify and describe the natural and cultural characteristics of South Texas, analyze maps and artifacts to understand their significance, and make connections between ancient landscapes and present-day communities.

Lesson Duration:

90 minutes

Vocabulary

Ancient Landscape, Historical Geography, Geological formations, Preservation, Spatial Patterns, Natural Features, Fossils

Materials:

- [Ancient Landscapes of South Texas Map](#)
- [Ancient Landscapes of South Texas site](#)
- [Ancient Landscapes of South Texas Nearpod](#)
- Supplemental - Ancient Landscapes Traveling Trunk, Projectile Point Immersive Poster, Ancient Landscapes Picture Book

Teacher background

Concept 1: Landscape: The distinctive and visible features and characteristics of a specific area of land, emphasizing its natural features, human modifications, and overall aesthetic composition.

Concept 2: Ancient Landscape: The historical and geological features of a landscape developed over many years (i.e. thousands or millions of years). Providing insight into the past through physical characteristics, such

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as landforms, geological formations, and fossil records. Understanding ancient landscapes can help one gain a better understanding of historical and environmental context.

Concept 3: Spatial Patterns: The arrangement of distribution of people, places, and phenomena on Earth's surface, influenced by factors such as population density, economic activities, and physical geography.

Activity:

The lesson is web based in order to utilize technological tools that are fundamental to the STAAR redesign, while simultaneously focusing on AP Human Geography Essential Knowledge. Access to Nearpod and Google Slides for both the instructor and student are essential. The slides can either be disseminated by live participation or student paced, this gives the teacher versatility in delivering the lesson in class with immediate response and evaluation or to be assigned for homework. All the questions and activities embedded within the lesson will be collected individually for each student and sent to the teacher for immediate assessment. The lesson culminates in an AP Human Geography Free Response Question.

Engage:

Slide 2 Photo Collection

Taken from the Introduction of Ancient Landscapes of South Texas

"We live in a poorly understood and often unjustifiably maligned corner of the United States. Our reality is quite different; starkly beautiful landscapes with a story that is second to none. Ancient landscapes surround us but are invisible to most. When it comes to human perceptions of our broader natural landscape, it may seem that it is immutable and unchanging.. We like to say the ancient landscape is 'hiding in plain sight' You just must know where to look and what to look for."

Guiding Questions

What is a landscape? What features are natural/physical and what represents human/cultural imprints? Identify characteristics that are contemporary and what do you see that are ancient.

Slide 4 Introduction Fill in the Blanks

Using a word bank, have students re engage in the excitement of delving into the depths of time to discover details they may have never encountered before.

Slide 5 Draw it - Landscape

Prompt the students to draw characteristics of South Texas. Have them imagine describing South Texas to someone who is not from here, the goal is to produce an image of what makes South Texas unique.

Slide 6 Collaborative Board - Landscape

Allow the students to share characteristics of South Texas. This could be items they illustrated in Draw it or examples of natural/physical features and human/cultural characteristics.

Explore:

Slide 3 Ancient Landscapes Map

“The goal of this map is to explore the landscape of South Texas through time”

Guiding Questions

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Identify the location of the map. What words would you use to describe the location? What makes this place unique? Would you consider this place a region, what makes it a region? What does the map show, how do you know what the symbols represent? How old is this place, has it always been the same?

Slide 7 La Villa Meteorite

Click on the title and image to be redirected to the UTRGV research on the artifact. Students will be able to analyze pictures and expository text to develop awareness of time and unique characteristics of South Texas.

Slide 9 Roma Sandstone

Slide 11 Catahoula Volcanic Ash

Slide 13 La Sal del Rey

Slide 15 South Texas Sand Sheet

Slide 17 Pleistocene Megafauna

Explain:

Slide 8 Draw It Meteorite Text

Using the highlighter tool, identify 3 sentences in the text that explains the dating of the meteorite.

Slide 9 Fill in the Blanks Roma Sandstone

Use the word bank to simulate in line text responses to complete the expository text.

Slide 12 Draw It Catahoula Volcanic Ash

Using the highlighter tool cite evidence from the text to recognize cause and effect relationships.

Slide 14 Quiz Sal del Rey

Read the text, answer a question with more than one correct answer - simulates multi select question types.

Slide 16 Fill in the Blanks South Texas Sand Sheet

Use the word bank to simulate in line text responses to complete the expository text.

Slide 18 Draw it Pleistocene Megafauna

Explain the type of animals from this time period and the location of their fossils.

Extend:

Slide 19 Drag and Drop South Texas Map

Make the connection between ancient artifacts and modern settlements using a tech tool that simulates drag and drop question types.

Slide 21 Matching Pairs

Pair ancient sites with their descriptions, simulating match table grid question types.

Slide 23 Poll

Close the lesson surveying the attitudes and perceptions of the students after they have learned more about the ancient characteristics of South Texas.

Evaluate:

Slide 20 Time to Climb

Answer 7 comprehension questions about the content of the lesson.

Slide 22 Open Ended Question

Evaluate the students comprehension and understanding of the lesson by collecting short constructed responses that seek to explain the meaning of text and the purpose of the ancient landscapes research to unearth artifacts that are “hiding in plain sight”.

Slide 24 AP Human Geography FRQ

Use the Ancient Landscapes Map to create a stimulus based question. Give the students approximately 25 minutes to answer each part of the question. Their responses should be hand written on a separate sheet of paper.

Printable Question and Rubric:

AP Human Geography FRQ

- A. Define the concept of sequent occupance.
- B. Describe how the ancient landscapes of South Texas reveal different eras of settlement in the region.
- C. Explain how placelessness creates uniform landscapes that limit distinctive traits of a place.
- D. Use the map to identify the change in the shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico at different times.
- E. Identify a contemporary technological feature on the landscape of South Texas.
- F. Using an example from the Ancient Landscapes of South Texas, explain how the human environment interaction has been integral in fostering human settlement.
- G. Explain how the location of South Texas represents a frontier that has attracted migration and human settlement over time.

FRQ Rubric

- A: Sequent occupance is the notion that successive societies leave their cultural imprints on a place, each contributing to the cumulative cultural landscape.
- B. Settlement in South Texas has existed for thousands of years as evidenced by the artifacts that have been left behind by the indigenous (chert and mortar holes), Spanish settlers (hand-dug wells), Mexican and Texan settlers (salt mines and windmills), and wind turbines contemporarily.
- C. The increase of globalization and influence of corporations has led to a reduction in local distinctiveness on the landscape. Placelessness can be seen by the development of fast food chains and retail stores on the landscape that are common across the United States.
- D. The shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico has been located west from its present location at 2 different points on the map: Eocene time period, 43 million years ago and Oligocene time period 27 million years ago.
- E. One contemporary technological feature on the map are wind turbines. Museums, mines, and Mexican Free Tailed Bat Colony are also acceptable.
- F. The map shows ancient Native American foot trails that create a route from the Rio Grande River to salt mines north of the river. Native Americans used the water and salt to grow and preserve food and were also sites for hunting.
- G. The natural resources and geographic features of South Texas have historically provided an environmental pull factor influencing human settlement. As a location it has been settled by different groups of people across thousands of years, and continues to be a site people are desperately seeking to migrate towards.