

DISCOVER THE BACK 40 TOUR EDUCATOR GUIDE

Pre– and Post-Visit Activities
Based on Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills
Grade Four



UTSA INSTITUTE OF
TEXAN CULTURES
A Smithsonian Affiliate

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Introduction

Dear Educator,

A visit to a museum is always a fun and exciting time for students and you can make their visit even more meaningful by implementing a few simple activities in your classroom. The *Discover the Back 40 Tour Educator Guide* provides you with hands-on learning and discussion activities designed to be completed prior to and after your visit to the Museum. These activities will introduce your students to the different types of buildings, artifacts, and themes they will encounter during their Back 40 Discovery Tour and allow them to expand and reflect on their experiences after their visit. The Back 40 tour and contents of this guide are based on Social Studies, Art, and English Language Arts and Reading TEKS for fourth grade, but can easily be modified for lower or upper grades depending on your individual classroom needs.

For additional resources and information on ITC exhibits and tours, please visit

<http://www.texancultures.com/resources/>

If you have any questions or would like more information on materials, resources and services for students and educators, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,

The Institute of Texan Cultures

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Using this Educator Guide

The *Discover the Back 40 Tour Educator Guide* features a series of inquiry-based and hands-on activities for your use in the classroom. These activities, based on Social Studies, Art, and English Language Arts and Reading TEKS for grade 4, are designed to help students use what they have learned in the classroom to make connections with important concepts explored during their Back 40 living history tour at the Institute of Texan Cultures. These activities will enhance and supplement their learning experience while also emphasizing the important role museums play in preserving the past for future generations.

A variety of classroom activities and discussion questions are provided here along with photographs and background information on our Back 40 exhibit spaces. Feel free to use our ideas or create your own activities using these materials. Whether you've got five minutes or a full hour, you're sure to find something you can use to enhance your students' experience!

"Big Picture" Understanding:

The following "Big Picture" Understanding lies at the heart of the Back 40 tour experience and is woven throughout the lessons provided in this resource guide. Please review and discuss as a class prior to your visit.

- The combination of hard work, resourcefulness, and a sense of community displayed by early settlers helped mold Texas into what it is today.

Pre-Visit Classroom Activities:

Pre-Visit Class Discussion Ideas – These discussion questions will help you get your students thinking about the role and importance of museums within the community and what they wish to learn by visiting the Museum.

When I Visit the Museum... – This worksheet, designed to be used individually or in conjunction with the pre-visit class discussion questions, will help guide your students in thinking about what they want to see and learn when they visit the Institute of Texan Cultures.

Swat the Vocab – This activity will introduce students to important vocabulary words that may be covered during their Back 40 Discovery Tour.

Artifact Detectives – Students will fine-tune their skills in observation and inference as they examine photographs of artifacts they will encounter during their tour.

Reading Buildings, Knowing Places – Students will use what they have learned about the four natural regions of Texas to match each of the Back 40 buildings to their appropriate geographic locations.

Post-Visit Classroom Activities:

Post-Visit Class Reflection Ideas – These wrap-up discussion ideas and activities will help guide your students in reflecting upon their visit to the Museum.

Create a Visitor's Guide – Students will use what they learned during their visit to create a visitor's guide highlighting the Back 40's "must-see" exhibit spaces.

Artifact Advertisement – Students will demonstrate what they have learned about historic artifacts by creating a fictional advertisement.

A Day in the Life – This activity puts students into the shoes of people living on the Texas frontier in the 1800s. Students will write a "day in the life" journal entry as a character of their choosing based on their experiences at the Museum.

The Context Game – This activity helps students review what they learned during their visit to the Museum while emphasizing the importance of preserving context in historical settings.

Teacher Background Information: The “Back 40” Living History Area

The Discover the Back 40 Tour provides students with an overview of Texas history while exploring themes of community, identity, regionalism, immigration, and technology. This hands-on tour invites students to think critically about the past in Texas. Students will tour up to five buildings, including the 1870s Dogtrot Log House, 1880s Frontier Fort, 1890s One-Room Schoolhouse, 1900s Hill-Country Barn, and 1910s West Texas Adobe House. With the guidance of instructors dressed in period clothing, students will spend approximately 10 minutes visiting each building and learning about the people who lived there.



1870s Dogtrot Log House: Our two-room dogtrot cabin is an example of early frontier living. Built with practical use in mind, it served as the center of the universe for most pioneering families and contributed to their overall well-being and sustainability.

Students will learn about the cabin’s construction, pioneer family and social life, chores, work, and more. Students can try their hand at butter churning, make a trip to the garden for veggies, and learn how to wash their clothes using a washboard!



1880s Frontier Fort: The West Texas fort was an important part of the growth of Texas as it expanded westward. The inhabitants of these forts created rugged communities of men, women, and children. They worked for the safety and establishment of life for families pioneering the Texas frontier.

Here, students will learn about the building’s construction, investigate patterns of migration, learn about life as a soldier on the frontier, and explore women’s roles in frontier life. Students will also examine artifacts such as clothing, ration supplies, and soldier’s equipment.



1890s One-Room Schoolhouse: The one-room schoolhouse was the symbol of development of the education system in rural Texas. It was the focal point of many Texas towns. It was not only constructed to serve the community's educational needs but also to function as a community center.

Students will sit in desks typical of nineteenth-century schoolhouses, explore similarities and differences between their school experiences and the experiences of children living in the past, and examine artifacts.



1900s Hill-Country Barn: The barn represents the importance of agriculture to the farming communities of Texas. These groups used hard work and resourcefulness to create the agricultural economy that is so important to Texas today.

Students will enjoy learning about traditional farming practices and equipment, cash crops, and crop processing. Students can try their hand at the hominy block, run a piece of corn through a corn sheller, and more.



1910s West Texas Adobe House: The adobe house represents the daily life and community of a family that would have been living in the Southwest part of the state in the 1900s after the arrival of the railroads. This family may have been the second or third generation to live here.

Students will get a firsthand look at how adobe bricks are made and learn about the daily lives and diet of the people that made up this region. In the kitchen, students will have the chance to try their hand at grinding corn using an authentic *mano* and *metate*!

What's a "Back 40," anyway?

As a unique condition of Texas' annexation into the United States, Texas was allowed to sell land within its borders to repay debts or reward veterans of the Revolution. With the passage of the Homestead Act in 1862, the General Land Office of Texas gained the authority to grant 160 acre parcels (four, 40 acre plots, or a quarter mile square) to settlers for an \$18 filing fee. Homesteaders often built their houses near the front of their property and farmed the portion "out back" – the Back 40.

Preparing for Your Visit: Museum Rules and Etiquette

To help ensure your visit is enjoyable, here are a few rules of etiquette to follow. Please go over these rules with your students and chaperones prior to your visit to the Museum. For your convenience, a planning checklist for chaperones is also provided in your **Field Trip Guide**. Let's have a great day!

1. No food, drink, or gum is allowed in the museum at any time.
2. Photography is permitted during your visit, but flash photography is not allowed.
3. Use inside voices when inside the main museum and its outdoor buildings.
4. Listen to your tour guide, and always raise your hand to ask a question.
5. Walk, do not run, in the museum. Stay with your group at all times.
6. When "hands-on" objects are passed around, please handle them gently and pass them promptly so that everyone in your group will have a chance to see.
7. Listen carefully during the tour and try to remember at least one or two "fun" facts or artifacts you learned about in each of the buildings. You'll need that information to complete some activities when you get back to class!
8. Most importantly, have FUN!

Pre-Visit Class Discussion Ideas:

- Open with questions like: Who has been to a museum? What do museums offer that can't be found in a book or online? Why is it important to study history and culture? How is visiting a museum different from visiting another cultural site or attraction such as a zoo or park? Why do you think museums are an important part of communities?
- Make an experience chart to discuss what students know about the Museum, what they think they might see and what they want to learn. Save this chart for discussion after the trip. Alternatively, you may use the "When I Visit the Museum..." handout provided in this guide.
- Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast 19th century life to life today. You may choose to explore topics such as food, clothing, tools, or home and social life.
- Compare a map of 19th century Texas to today. Discuss with students the changes that have occurred over time.
- Engage students in a discussion about the importance of hard work and resourcefulness on the Texas frontier. What does it mean to be hard working? How did Texas pioneers make the best of what they had? How are these characteristics important today?

Name: _____

Date: _____

When I Visit the Museum...

Directions: Use this worksheet to show what you would like to see and learn when you visit the Institute of Texan Cultures.

When I visit the Museum, I'd like to see...

When I visit the Museum, I'd like to learn...

Pre-Visit Activity: Swat the Vocab!

In this activity, students will be introduced to important vocabulary words that may be covered during their Discover the Back 40 Tour. This activity can be used to introduce students to new words or as a review to check for previous understanding.

Before you begin, you'll need to gather the following materials:

- Three flyswatters
- Large whiteboard
- Dry erase markers

Directions:

1. Begin by telling students they'll be reviewing a few important words they may hear during their Back 40 living history tour at the Museum. You may wish to share some of the background information provided above to help orient your students to the subject matter.
2. Write some or all of the vocabulary words (below) scattered across the board.
3. Divide students into three groups.
4. Have one person from each group come to the board, and give each one a flyswatter.
5. Read each of the definitions below to the students. The first student to strike the correct vocabulary word with their flyswatter earns 1 point for his or her team. Limit the number of times students are allowed to strike the board to keep them from simply guessing. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins!

Vocabulary Words:

- **Region:** A large geographical area whose parts have something in common.
- **Government:** A system for ruling or running a town or country.
- **Expand:** To spread out.
- **Frontier:** The farthest part of a settled country, next to lands that are not yet settled.
- **Natural Resource:** A resource that comes from the earth.
- **Renewable Resource:** A resource that can be replaced after it is used.
- **Environment:** The surroundings of living things.
- **Cash Crop:** A crop that is grown to be sold at a market.
- **Agriculture:** The planting of seeds to grow food.
- **Livestock:** Beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, chickens, and turkeys.
- **Irrigation:** A system of transporting water to crops.
- **Buffalo Soldier:** African American fighter on the frontier.
- **Cavalry:** A group of soldiers who fight battles on horseback.
- **Adobe:** Bricks formed with clay and straw that are dried in the sun.
- **Rural:** In the countryside.
- **Urban:** In the city.
- **Climate:** The weather patterns of an area over a long period of time.
- **Weather:** Description of the air at a certain time and place.

Closure:

1. Review any vocabulary words the students found particularly difficult to understand.
2. Instruct students to listen for these words during their Back 40 tour and think about where they have heard or read these words in their school lessons.

Pre-Visit Activity: Artifact Detectives

In this activity, students will work in groups to examine images of artifacts they'll encounter during their Back 40 tour at the Museum. After examining an image of an artifact, students will work together to determine the artifact's use and share their findings by teaching a lesson on the object to fellow classmates.

Before you begin, you'll need to gather the following materials:

- Back 40 artifact cards
- Blank notebook paper to record observations and inferences

Directions:

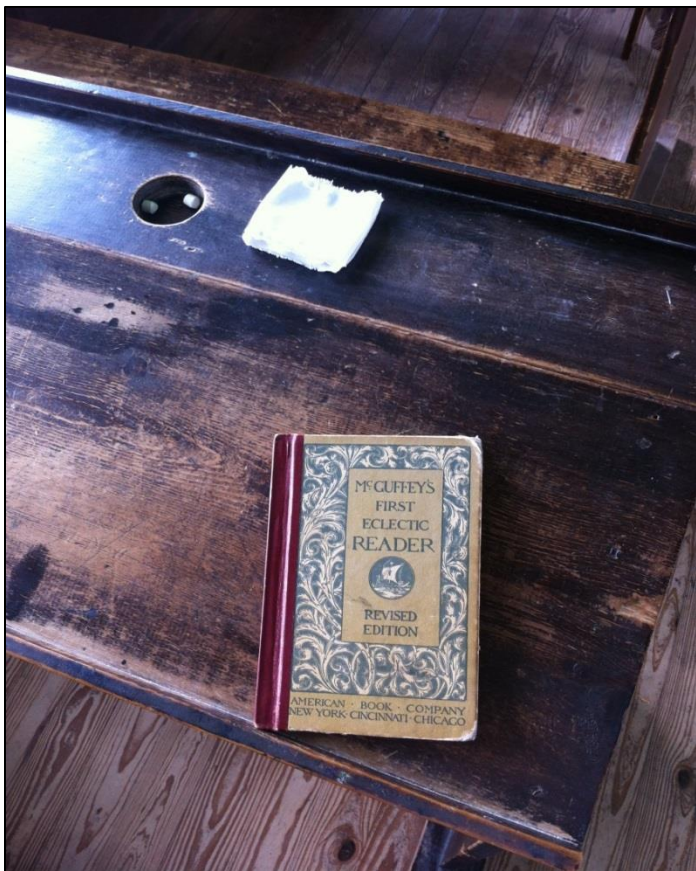
1. Explain to students that while they are on their field trip at the Museum, they will see some historic artifacts that were very important to life on the Texas frontier.
2. Begin the activity as an entire class by showing the students one of the artifact cards. Model proper investigative techniques:
 - What type of artifact is it? Direct students' attention to the material from which it was made. Is it made of wood, bone, metal, glass, or something else? Can you tell?
 - What qualities does the artifact have? Ask students to describe how the artifact looks. What color is it? What shape is it? Do you think it is heavy or light? Does it have any decorations on it?
3. After you have worked together to describe the physical characteristics of the artifact, ask students to make inferences about its purpose and who may have used it. Use these questions to help you guide the discussion:
 - Who might have used the artifact?
 - Where might the artifact have been used?
 - What might it have been used for, and where?
 - When might the artifact have been used?
4. Work your way through higher levels of thinking by discussing with students how the artifact reflects the technology of the time in which it was used, what stories it may tell, and whether or not they are items that look or function similar to the artifact today.
5. Split your students up into small groups of 3-4 people. Distribute notebook paper and one artifact card to each group. Tell students they are now "artifact detectives" tasked with figuring out what their mystery artifact is and what it was used for. Ask students to record their observations and inferences on a blank sheet of paper. Monitor the students as they complete the activity, and make sure students are using proper questioning techniques to make inferences about their objects.
6. After students have completed the exercise and made a determination about the use of the object based on their observations, instruct students to select a spokesperson for their group who will teach a lesson about their artifact to another group.
7. Pair each group of students with another. Instruct students to take turns presenting their findings about their artifact to their classmates.

Closure:

1. How does each artifact help accomplish a certain task? What time period do you think the artifacts came from?
2. Let students know to be on the lookout for these artifacts during their Back 40 tour. When you return to the classroom after your tour, lead your students in a discussion about whether or not their inferences were correct.



Left to right, top to bottom: Meat grinder; corn sheller; mano and metate; iron.



Let to right, top to bottom: School book; adobe brick mold; hominy block; water pail with ladle.

Pre-Visit Activity: Reading Buildings, Knowing Places

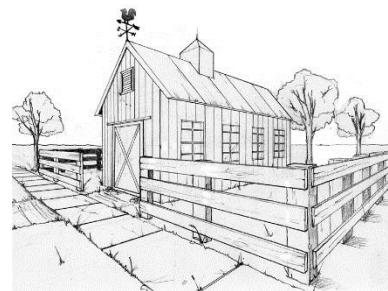
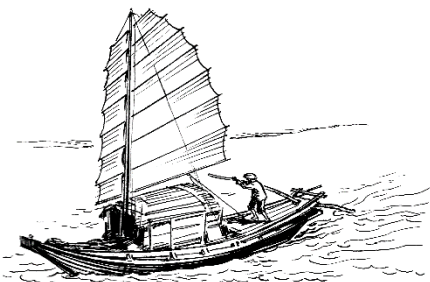
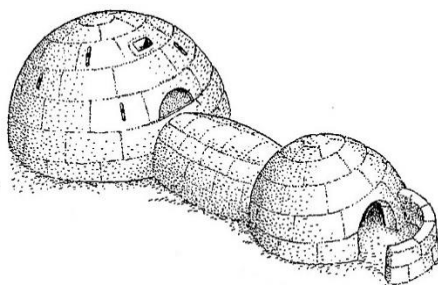
In this activity, students will utilize what they have learned about the four natural regions of Texas to match buildings they will encounter on their Back 40 tour to their appropriate locations. Students will “read” images of each building, place them on a map of Texas, and identify the important characteristics that make each building suitable for its environment.

Before you begin, you’ll need to gather the following materials:

- Large table or wall map illustrating the four natural regions of Texas
- Printouts of the five Back 40 buildings, or use these PowerPoint slides to project the images
- Flip chart paper or whiteboard
- Flip chart or dry erase markers

Directions:

1. Begin by engaging students in a discussion about the four natural regions of Texas: Mountains and Basins, Great Plains, North Central Plains, Coastal Plains. What is a natural region? What is the environment like in each of Texas’ four regions? What are some of the cities in each of these regions? What is each region best known for? How are each of the regions similar or different? What kinds of buildings do you think you would find in each region? You may wish to create a graphic organizer to organize your students’ thoughts on the whiteboard or on chart paper.
2. Show students images of different kinds of homes and buildings that may be found in different places. Here are a few to help you get started:



3. Discuss with students the function and importance of these structures in accomplishing a specific task. What are they used for? Where might they be found? How does the construction of each of the buildings reflect the kinds of natural resources that are available? How are each of the buildings similar or different? Could you find a boat or igloo in the middle of Texas? Why or why not? Would a log cabin be a good house if you live in a large city?

4. Introduce the images of the Back 40 buildings one at a time. As you present each image, ask students to carefully study it for a few moments. Do not share any background information about the buildings. You may wish to record student responses on the board. Use these questions to help guide the discussion:
 - What is the setting of the building? What is around it? Can you tell? Are there lots of trees?
 - What materials do you think were used in the construction of this building?
 - Do you see any floors (stories), windows, doors, or porches? Can you find any lines and shapes on the building? If so, which ones?
 - What kinds of decorations do you see on the building? Are there many or none?
5. After the students have made their observations, guide them in analyzing and interpreting what they have seen:
 - When do you think the building was built? What clues tell you this?
 - What was this building used for? Is it a house where people lived? Is it a place where people worked? What clues tell you about what people did in each of the buildings?
 - Based on what you have seen, what part of Texas do you think this building came from? Why is the building a good fit for the region? Have students back up their responses with evidence on the types of natural resources available, climate, etc.
6. Repeat this process for each of the five buildings. Match each of the buildings to their proper locations on the map of Texas. **Descriptions and guiding discussion questions are included with the teacher copies of the images for your reference.**

Closure:

1. Let students know they will have the chance to see each of these buildings on their Back 40 tour.
2. Review with students that different styles of buildings can be found in different places. On the Texas frontier, pioneers had to be very resourceful in constructing their homes and workplaces. They used available natural resources based on where they lived in the state. Why does a log cabin fit in well in East Texas? Why does it make sense to build an adobe house in West Texas? Compare and contrast the style and layouts of each of the buildings.

Modification and Extension Ideas:

- This activity can also be completed individually. You may choose to have your students label and color the different regions on a blank map of Texas, then illustrate each of the Back 40 buildings in their appropriate environments. Our “Reading a Building” Quick Start Guide, available for download on our [website](#), may be helpful in walking your students through the analysis on their own.
- Distribute copies of the images to your students, then have them “complete the picture” by illustrating the appropriate landscape that would surround each building.
- When you return to the classroom after your visit, have students share what they recall about the construction of each of the buildings they visited. What other details did they notice? Were their initial assumptions about the buildings correct?

1870s Dogtrot Log House: East Texas (Coastal Plains Region)



The natural landscape of East Texas provided plenty of trees the pioneers could use in the construction of their log cabins. The logs would be cut and hewn by hand, and joined at the corners with matching grooves. Students should notice the logs used to build the cabin, the trees surrounding the cabin, the doorways and porch structure, the rock chimney, and be able to identify other features such as the garden in front of the house. The porch provided plenty of shade in the summer time, and the fireplace would keep the home warm during the cold winter months.

Discussion Ideas:

- What region of Texas is known for lots of trees? Is this cabin a good fit for an environment full of trees?
- What does the garden tell you about the lifestyle of the people who lived in this log cabin?
- Why might a log cabin have been a good shelter for people living in East Texas?
- Based on what you can see, how many rooms do you think the cabin had? How many people might have lived here?
- How did people take advantage of natural resources to construct this cabin and gardens?

1880s Frontier Fort: West Texas (Great Plains Region)



This limestone building exemplifies the architecture of the West Texas fort system built as pioneers made their way westward. This building would have been part of a larger complex of buildings designed as the main headquarters for army operations. When examining the image, students could point out the limestone used to construct the fort, details such as window size and style, the location of the chimney, materials used to create the roof shingles, and number of doors.

Discussion Ideas:

- How is this building similar to or different than the log cabin you just saw?
- What natural resources were used in the construction of this building? What region of Texas is best known for having these resources?
- Based on what you can see, how many rooms do you think this building had?

1890s One-Room Schoolhouse: South Texas (Coastal Plains Region)



This South Texas one-room schoolhouse signified the development of a strong community. The one-room schoolhouse may have looked different depending on the region of Texas in which it was located. This particular schoolhouse is constructed of wood, but it was not uncommon for some schoolhouses to be made of logs or sod. Students should notice the number of windows along the side of the building (might these have been mirrored on the opposite side of the building?), door, construction materials, and chimney from the wood-burning stove.

Discussion Ideas:

- How is this building similar to or different than the two you have just seen?
- How many students do you think went to school here? What kinds of transportation did children have to use to get to school during this time?
- Why might the schoolhouse have had a stove?
- How is this building similar to or different than the buildings at your school?

1900s Barn: Hill Country (North Central Plains Region)



Constructed of wood, the hill-country barn represents the importance of agriculture to the farming communities of Texas. Students may point out the color, size, and shape of the barn; note the covered wagon and what it may have been used for; and infer the use of the metal objects on the grass near the barn.

Discussion Ideas:

- How is this building similar to or different than the other buildings you have seen? Did this building function more as a living space or as a working space?
- What do you think the metal objects on the grass near the barn are? What evidence do you have to support your inference?
- What might the covered wagon have been used for? Why do you say that?

1910s Adobe House: Southwest Texas (Mountains and Basins Region)



This West Texas adobe house would have been typical of homes found in what is now the present-day cities of Marfa, Presidio, and Alpine. Adobe is a mixture of soil, straw, and grass that was mixed with water and then dried in the sun using wooden molds. The dried bricks would then be covered with a lime mixture to protect the home from mold and insects. Adobe is also a natural insulator – it keeps the house cool in extreme summer heat and warm during the colder winter months.

Discussion Ideas:

- How is this home different than the others you have just learned about? What do you notice about the shapes of the different buildings, and how are each suitable for their environment? Do you think this adobe house would work well in a very cold climate?
- What do you notice about the porch of the home? Is it open or closed? What would be the benefit to having an open-air porch in this region of Texas?

Back to the Classroom: Post-Visit Reflections

The following class reflection ideas are intended to help your students reflect on what they saw, what they learned, and how it relates both to their school lessons and to their community. These discussion questions may be used in conjunction with one of the hands-on learning activities or completed by themselves, depending on your individual classroom needs.

Post-Visit Class Reflection Ideas:

- Review the experience chart your class created before the visit. What did they see during their tour? What did they learn?
- Review the “Big Picture” Understanding with your students. Discuss the ways in which the themes of hard work, resourcefulness, and community were exemplified by the objects they saw and the buildings they toured during their visit.
- Have students write letters to the Museum about their visit – we love hearing from you! Letters and projects can be sent to UTSA’s Institute of Texan Cultures, Department of Education, 801 E. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd., San Antonio, TX, 78205 or via email at itceducation@utsa.edu.
- Have students record their experiences at the Museum in a creative journal project using words, drawings, or pictures. Then, have students share one or two things they found most interesting with the class.
- Compare and contrast a 19th century log cabin or schoolhouse building to a home or school today. Ask students to think about what our homes may look like in the future.
- Create a classroom museum. Discuss with students the importance of museums in preserving culture and history for future generations, and have students draw a picture or bring in an object from home to share with the class. Why is the object important to you, and why should it be included in the class museum?

Post-Visit Activity: Create a Visitor's Guide

In this activity, students will write and illustrate a visitor's guide to the Institute of Texan Cultures' Back 40 living history area based on their visit. This activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Before you begin, you'll need to gather the following materials:

- Colored construction paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Flip chart paper or whiteboard
- Flip chart or dry erase markers
- Examples of visitor's guides provided on our [website](#)

Directions:

1. Begin by reviewing with students the types of buildings and artifacts they discovered during their Back 40 tour. It may be helpful to create a poster or draw a chart on the whiteboard to record student responses.
2. Instruct students to think about some of their favorite buildings and artifacts they learned about at the Museum. Ask them to think about what they feel others should know before coming to the Museum. What is the "must see" exhibit on the Back 40?
3. Tell students that they will be creating a visitor's guide based on what they saw during their Back 40 tour.
4. Discuss with students the different sections that should be included in a visitor's guide. Refer to the examples provided on our website above if you need ideas to help you get started. You may wish to write the following headings on the board to help guide the students:
 - Cover/title page with photo
 - Maps, diagrams, and/or images
 - Textual information on the buildings, programs, or tours
 - Location of the Museum or address, hours, and admission prices
5. Distribute construction paper and crayons, markers, or colored pencils to the students.
6. Instruct students to fold their pieces of construction paper in half or in thirds. Give students time to write and illustrate their visitor's guide. Monitor the students' progress throughout the activity.
7. Have students share their visitor's guide with a partner, in small groups, or with the entire class. Display completed visitor's guides around the classroom.

Closure:

1. Review what students found most interesting about their Back 40 living history tour. Engage students in a discussion about why they chose to include certain artifacts or buildings in their visitor's guides. What is the main message they wish to convey with their guides?

Extension and Modification Ideas:

- Have students complete the activity on a computer using word processing software or online using a simple infographic creator such as [Easel.ly](#).
- Have students create a "sales pitch" for the Museum and use their visitor's guides to persuade their classmates to visit the Museum.

Post-Visit Activity: Artifact Advertisement

In this activity, students will recall their observations of historic artifacts at the Museum and reconstruct the context in which they were used by creating a fictional advertisement.

Before you begin, you'll need to gather the following materials:

- Advertisements from magazines to share with students
- A classroom object (ball, paper clip, book)
- Colored construction and scratch paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Directions:

1. Begin by showing students advertisements from magazines. Discuss the products being sold and the types of things that go into creating an advertisement.
2. Display a classroom object of any kind – it could be a pen, ball, coffee mug, etc. – and ask students to think about what information would be important to include in an advertisement for the product as practice for creating their own ads. You may wish to complete this portion of the activity as a group or have students work individually.
3. Instruct students to think about an artifact on the tour they found interesting. Tell students that they will now create a fictional advertisement for that artifact. The advertisement must tell why the artifact is unique, how it is used, and how it would benefit the purchaser.
4. Provide students with scratch paper and ask them to sketch out the rough drafts of their advertisements. Encourage them to work in pairs or small groups for this brainstorming phase of the activity. Monitor the students to be sure they are recording the proper information.
5. Have students complete the final drafts of their advertisements using colored construction paper and crayons, markers, or colored pencils.

Closure:

1. Have students share their advertisements with the class. Discuss the uses of each of the artifacts and how they contributed to everyday life on the Texas frontier.

Extension and Modification Ideas:

- Have students complete the activity on a computer using word processing software or online using a simple infographic creator such as [Easel.ly](https://www.easel.ly/).
- Have students create a second advertisement for a modern-day object with similar use.

Post-Visit Activity: A Day in the Life

In this activity, students will write a “day in the life” journal narrative from the perspective of an individual living on the Texas frontier in the 19th century.

Before you begin, you’ll need to gather the following materials:

- Enough copies of the “A Day in the Life” handout to distribute to your students OR
- Blank notebook paper

Directions:

1. Begin by telling students they will be writing a journal entry from the perspective of someone who lived on the Texas frontier during the 19th century.
2. Review with the students the five different buildings they visited on the Back 40. Who lived or worked in each of the buildings? What were their jobs? What did they do for fun, and how did they dress? What kinds of foods did they eat? What was school like? Encourage students to make connections between what they learned at the Museum and what they have learned in the classroom.
3. Ask students to imagine they lived on the Texas frontier during the 19th century. They may base their “character” on any one of the Back 40 buildings – the log house, barn, schoolhouse, adobe house, or fort. Students may choose to be a student or teacher at the schoolhouse, a child living in the log cabin, a soldier at the fort, etc. Encourage students to think about what life may have been like based on the artifacts they saw and the stories they heard during their tour. Ask students to describe a typical day in the life of their character – what is your daily routine, what are you thinking about, and who are you spending time with? What would your character see, hear, feel, or talk about?
4. Distribute copies of the “A Day in the Life” handout or blank sheets of notebook paper. Give students time to complete their journal entries, and monitor and assist students as needed.
5. Have students share their journal entries with the class.

Closure:

1. Engage the class in a discussion regarding the reasons they chose to write from the perspectives of their chosen individuals. What did you use from the Museum to inspire your journal writing, and what did you already know about from your school lessons?
2. Discuss with the students the themes of hard work and resourcefulness as introduced in the “Big Picture Understanding” (page 3). In what ways do their characters exemplify hard work and resourcefulness? What about community?
3. In what ways are the students’ characters similar or different? How do their journal entries show that history can be told from many different perspectives?

Modification Idea:

- Instead of writing a journal entry, have students create an Instagram or Facebook-style post to share what their character might’ve been up to on any given day.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A Day in the Life

Directions: Based on what you learned during your Back 40 tour at the Museum, write a journal entry from the perspective of a person living on the Texas frontier in the 1800s. You may use additional sheets of notebook paper if needed.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Post-Visit Activity: The Context Game

Students will recall artifacts they discovered in each of the Back 40 buildings to learn about the importance of preserving context in historic settings. Students will play a game and use critical thinking skills (observation and inference) to match artifacts to their proper locations.

Before you begin, you'll need to gather the following materials:

- Colored index cards (enough to distribute 5-6 of each color to student groups of 4)
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Sheets of paper to record each group's responses
- A bell or timer

Directions:

1. Discuss the words *artifact* and *context* with your students. Tell students that an artifact is a term for any object made or used by people. An artifact's context, or situation or location in which it is found, is very important in learning about people and places in history. Inform students that all of the items they saw, handled, and learned about in each of the Back 40 buildings are artifacts.
2. Ask students to think about something in their bedroom that is very important to them. Ask students: how does that object tell something about you, along with everything else in your room? Everything together tells about you because it is in context.
3. Instruct students to imagine that their important object has been taken out of their bedroom and is found in a park, at school, or in some other public place. Ask students: how does this change what is known about you? If the objects you saw in each of the buildings on their Back 40 tour had been found someplace else, would we still know as much about them? If artifacts are moved, the information about them is often lost.
4. Tell students that they will now review some of the objects they learned about while on their Back 40 tour. Divide the class into groups of 4. Assign each group one of 6 colored index cards; if you have fewer or more than 24 students, adjust your group sizes accordingly. Give each group 5-6 cards.
5. Assign each group one of the Back 40 buildings, but make sure they do not share their building with another group! You may have two groups working on the same building depending on your class size.
6. As a group, students will recall the different kinds of objects they saw in that building during their tour. Each student will then draw that object on their index card. Instruct students to stack their cards once they are finished. Have students decide amongst themselves who will be the recorder, who will handle the cards, and who will present their group's findings to the class.
7. Instruct students to pass the stack of cards to the next group of students. That group then records their observations about what building the artifacts came from, what they are, and what their function is. The stack of cards is passed to the next group until every group has seen every stack of cards. After the first pass, be sure the card handler removes one of the cards in their stack before handing it to the next group – the stacks of cards should get smaller with each pass. Set a timer or ring a bell to signal it's time to pass cards to the next group.
8. When every group has seen all the stacks of cards, have each group's presenter share their inferences and learn the identity of the building from the other groups.

Closure:

1. As the stacks of cards got smaller and smaller, was it easier or more difficult to figure out which building each of the artifacts came from?
2. Could some of the artifacts have been housed in both the log cabin and barn? The fort and log cabin? Which artifacts were very specific to a particular building? For example, could an adobe brick mold have been found in the schoolhouse? Probably not!

3. Discuss the importance of each object to life on the Texas frontier. How did each object help people get their work done? Prepare food? Entertain?

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies

§113.15. Social Studies, Grade 4. (b) Knowledge and skills. (4) History. The student understands the political, economic, and social changes in Texas during the last half of the 19th century. The student is expected to: (C) identify the impact of railroads on life in Texas, including changes to cities and major industries; and (D) examine the effects upon American Indian life resulting from changes in Texas, including the Red River War, building of U.S. forts and railroads, and loss of buffalo. (7) Geography. The student understands the concept of regions. The student is expected to: (A) describe a variety of regions in Texas and the United States such as political, population, and economic regions that result from patterns of human activity; (B) identify, locate, and compare the geographic regions of Texas (Mountains and Basins, Great Plains, North Central Plains, Coastal Plains), including their landforms, climate, and vegetation. (8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to: (B) describe and explain the location and distribution of various towns and cities in Texas, past and present; and (C) explain the geographic factors such as landforms and climate that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population in Texas, past and present. (9) Geography. The student understands how people adapt to and modify their environment. The student is expected to: (A) describe ways people have adapted to and modified their environment in Texas, past and present, such as timber clearing, agricultural production, wetlands drainage, energy production, and construction of dams; (B) identify reasons why people have adapted to and modified their environment in Texas, past and present, such as the use of natural resources to meet basic needs, facilitate transportation, and enhance recreational activities. (12) Economics. The student understands patterns of work and economic activities in Texas. The student is expected to: (A) explain how people in different regions of Texas earn their living, past and present, through a subsistence economy and providing goods and services; (B) explain how geographic factors such as climate, transportation, and natural resources have influenced the location of economic activities in Texas; (C) analyze the effects of exploration, immigration, migration, and limited resources on the economic development and growth of Texas. (22) 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.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Art

§117.14. Art, Grade 4. (b) Knowledge and skills. (2) Creative expression/performance. The student expresses ideas through original artworks, using a variety of media with appropriate skill. The student is expected to: (A) integrate a variety of ideas about self, life events, family, and community in original artworks; (B) design original artworks. (4) Response/evaluation. The student makes informed judgments about personal artworks and the artworks of others. The student is expected to: (A) describe intent and form conclusions about personal artworks; and (B) interpret ideas and moods in original artworks, portfolios, and exhibitions by peers and others.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for English Language Arts and Reading

§110.15. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4. (b) Knowledge and skills. (16) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to: (A) write imaginative stories that build the plot to a climax and contain details about the characters and setting. (18) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to: (A) create brief compositions that: (i) establish a central idea in a topic sentence; (ii) include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations; and (iii) contain a concluding statement. (19) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write

persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write persuasive essays for appropriate audiences that establish a position and use supporting details. (27) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A) listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments; and (B) follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action. (28) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to express an opinion supported by accurate information, employing eye contact, speaking rate, volume, and enunciation, and the conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively. (29) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate in teacher- and student-led discussions by posing and answering questions with appropriate detail and by providing suggestions that build upon the ideas of others.