

# San Antonio Missions



**TRICENTENNIAL THEME:** Tricentennial

**SUBJECT:** Social Studies

**GRADEBAND/LEVEL:** Middle School/Grades 6-8

**WRITTEN BY:** Fay Matcalf, U.S. National Park Service

**TEKS:**

6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
113.18.2B;3A	113.19.1A;2C	113.20.11A-C

## DESCRIPTION:

Topics: This lesson can be used in teaching units on Spanish conquests in the Americas or the early colonization of the United States. It could also be used in a geography unit to illustrate the movement and settlement of people. Time period: Early 18th Century

## LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- 1 To explain the significant role that Spanish missions played in the early history of Texas and the Southwest.
- 4 To describe the psychological and cultural factors that led the Coahuiltecan (Kwa- weel-tekens) Indians to accept mission life.
- 4 To explain the role irrigation systems, such as acequias (ah-SAY-key-ahs), played in the development of Texas farmland and other arid areas.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

The materials listed below either can be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students. The maps and images appear twice: in a low-resolution version with associated questions and alone in a larger, high-resolution version.

1) Two maps of the mission sites <https://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/2sanantonio/2locate1.htm>

2) Two readings about mission life on the Spanish frontier and its impact on American Indian culture.

<https://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/2sanantonio/2facts1.htm> and

3) Five photograph and one drawing of Mission San José and a mission irrigation system <https://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/2sanantonio/2visual1.htm>

## Visiting the Missions:

The missions of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park are located along Mission Road, south of San Antonio, Texas; signs help guide motorists along the route. The missions are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Daylight Savings Time), except for New Year's Day and Christmas. For additional information, write to the Superintendent, San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, 2202 Roosevelt Avenue, San Antonio, Texas 78210 or visit the park web pages (<https://www.nps.gov/saan/index.htm>).



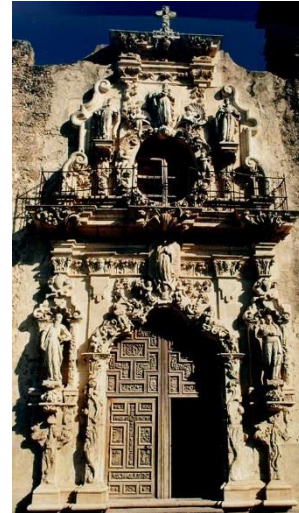
**ENGAGE** (Opening Activity - Access Prior Learning / Stimulate Interest / Generate Questions):

You can obtain a high-quality version of the photo at <https://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/2sanantonio/2images/2img3ch.jp.g>

Ask Students:

“What style of architecture is this? What purpose do you think this building serves?”

Have them answer in journals or discuss as a class.



**EXPLORE** (Probing or Clarifying Questions):

Explore map 1 as a class (link in materials section) and answer the following questions.

1. Examine the location of the missions. What do their locations have in common? Why do you think that this was important?
2. Compare the dates of the first established mission, presidio (military town or encampment), and village with the dates of the first mission in the San Antonio River area. Why do you think the later missions were built in a more central part of Texas?

**EXPLAIN** (Concepts Explained):

Explore map 2 as a class (link in materials section) and answer the following questions.

1. Measure the distances between the missions. Why do you think they were located so closely together? (Additional information is provided in Reading 1.)
2. Map 2 is a recent view of the area around the missions. How do the street names reflect the history of San Antonio, Texas, and the United States?

**ELABORATE** (Applications and Extensions):

Have students read both the readings linked in the materials section and answer the questions that follow. Students can work independently or in small groups/partners.

Extension:

Consider visiting one or all of the San Antonio Missions in order to experience the architecture and history in person.

**EVALUATE:**

Check for understanding through the asking of probing questions and discuss student analysis of the readings.