A Day in the Life
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Subject: Social Studies

Grade level: 4

Rationale or Purpose: To explore the roles of a variety of people who lived or worked at a nineteenth-century Texas frontier fort or in a nearby frontier town. To reach a greater understanding of life on the Texas frontier by choosing a character and writing in his/her voice.

Materials:
Notebook paper or student social studies journals and pencils (for taking notes)
Bookmaking materials (optional)

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
Social Studies, Grade 7
- Social Studies 113.23 (1A), identify the major eras in Texas history
- Social Studies 113.23 (6A), identify significant individuals, events and issues
- Social Studies 113.23 (22C), transfer information from one medium to another
- Social Studies 113.23 (22D), create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 7
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (13C), use multiple sources to locate information
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (15C), write to inform
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (16), compose original texts

Social Studies, Grade 4
- Social Studies 114.6 (1A), identify Native-American groups in Texas and describe the regions in which they lived

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4
- English, Language Arts, and Reading (13C), use multiple sources to locate information
- English, Language Arts, and Reading (13E), summarize and organize information
- English, Language Arts, and Reading (15C), write to inform
Activity:
Step 1: Students will get to know at least five of the residents of Fort Griffin and the surrounding area by visiting the interactive scene on the web site.

Step 2: Students will take notes on each of the people they “meet”, recording information about their roles in the community and the details of their daily lives.

Step 3: Students will choose one of the people they read about to research further. (For example, additional research on the life of Joe McComb, the buffalo shooter, could include research on the buffalo and the conflict between the Native Americans and the soldiers at the fort.) Online resources include the Fort Griffin webpages at http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/forts/griffin/index.html; and the Handbook of Texas Online at http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/.

Step 4: Each student will write a story about a day in the life of the person he/she chose. The story should be written in first person and include details from the student’s research.

Student Product: Final copy of story

Closure: Allow time for students to share their writing with a small group or the entire class.

Assessment or evaluation: Evaluate student writings for understanding of the person’s role and appropriate specific details.