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Grade 4

Exploring Texas

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Exploring Texas



TEACHER'S GUIDE

**A HANDS-ON ELEMENTARY
MAPPING PROGRAM**

FIRST EDITION

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ACTIVITY 3

Natural Texas



Atlas pages 16–19

Objectives

- Understand the geographic factors such as landforms and climate that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population. (TEKS 7A)

Materials

- Atlas pages 16–19
- Raised Relief Maps
- map markers

Engage and Connect

Introduce the topic of natural Texas to students.

- **Say:** Since Texas is so big, it has many different physical features.
- **Ask:** If you were to plan a vacation in Texas, where would you like to go? Why?
- **Ask:** What are some of your favorite places that you've visited in Texas?

Allow time for students to share their experiences. In this lesson, students will learn about the natural landforms and climate of Texas. By the end of the lesson, students should be able to understand the geographic factors that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population.

Deliver New Content

1 Understand the geographic factors such as landforms and climate that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population.

a. Have students turn to atlas pages 16–17.

- **Say:** Read along with me as I read.
- **Ask:** What are some of Texas's state symbols? (the mockingbird, the bluebonnet, the pecan tree, and the longhorn)

b. Divide the class into six groups. Distribute a Raised Relief Map and map markers to each group.

- **Say:** Look at map B, what area of Texas would most likely be the home to our state bird, flower, and tree? (the eastern part of the state because it has forests)
- **Say:** Using your map marker, write the word **forests** on the eastern part of Texas in your Raised Relief Map.
- **Ask:** Look at the legend of map B. What are the other two natural regions in Texas? (grass and shrub or desert)

- **Say:** Label the other areas of Texas on the Raised Relief Map: **grass** and **shrub or desert**.
- **Say:** Feel your Raised Relief Map and look at its legend.
- **Ask:** Which area of Texas has the highest elevation? (*western part*)
- **Say:** The highest peak in Texas is called Guadalupe Peak. Find it on the map and circle it.
- **Say:** Due to these different landforms and elevations, Texas has different weather and rainfall throughout the state. Look at map E on page 19. This map shows the average temperatures and rainfall throughout the state.
- **Say:** On your Raised Relief Map, draw a ☔ in the wettest part of Texas.
- **Say:** Draw a ☀ in the hottest part of Texas.
- **Say:** Draw a ❄ in the coldest part of Texas.
- **Ask:** What area of Texas would you like to live in, and why? You may use the sentence stem “I would like to live in ... because....”
- **Ask:** What area of Texas has the most people, based on the landscape and climate?
- **Say:** The eastern part of the state has the highest population. It’s where most of the largest cities in Texas are located.

Activity Sheet 3: Travel to Texas! This worksheet is designed for students to create a travel brochure for Texas. It includes a map of Texas, a legend, and a table for recording information.

Legend:

- ☀ Hottest Location
- ☔ Wettest Location
- ❄ Coldest Location
- ☀ Hottest Location
- ☔ Wettest Location
- ❄ Coldest Location

Table:

State	State Capital	State Flower	State Bird	State Tree	State Fish

Activity Sheet 3

Assess Student Mastery

1. Distribute Activity Sheet 3, *Travel to Texas*.
 - a. Students will use the information from atlas pages 16–19 to create a travel brochure for Texas. They will fill the boxes with information and colorful illustrations that match their labels.

Close the Lesson

1. After students finish their travel brochures, share them by doing a Gallery Tour Pass. Set a timer for 30 seconds. Every time the timer goes off, students pass their brochure to the next person. Continue to do this until students have seen at least ten brochures.
 - **Ask:** After reading so many travel brochures, what’s your favorite part about living in Texas?

- **Say:** In our next unit, we will compare and contrast all of Texas's different regions.

Digital Practice

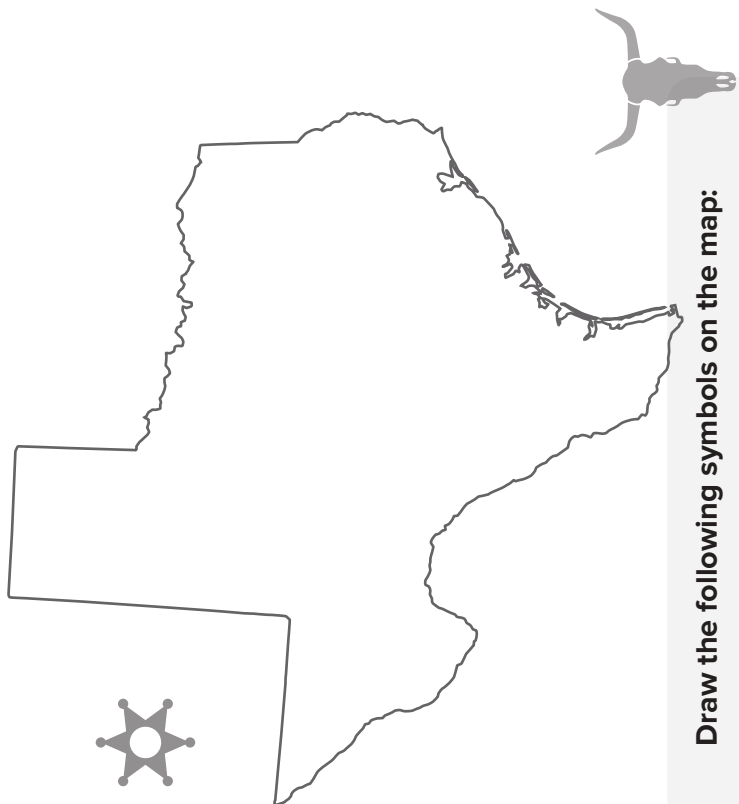
You can invite your students to further explore natural Texas by assigning them the digital activity “Encompass Exploring Texas: Unit 2: Geography of Texas: Natural Texas.” This activity can be found at [NystromWorld.com](https://www.nystromworld.com).

Travel to Texas!

Texas!

Draw a picture of a setting in Texas
(coast, mountain, desert, or plains)

Texas is a great place to visit because ...



Draw the following symbols on the map:

 Highest Elevation

 Highest Temperature

 Desert/Shrub

 Largest Population

 Most Rainfall



State Bird	State Flower	State Tree	State Animal

NYSTROM

ATLAS

EXPLORING
Texas



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20th-Century Texas

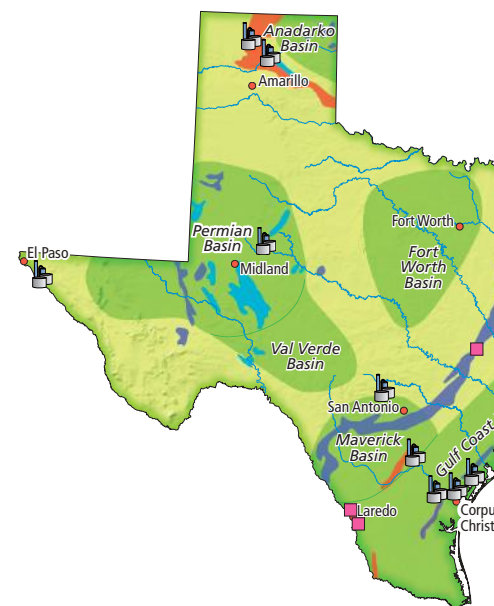
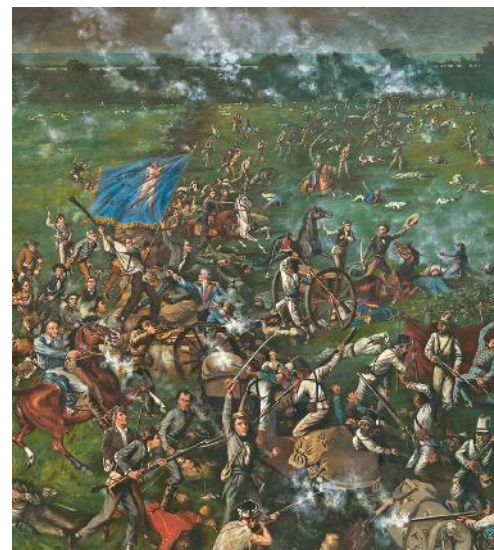
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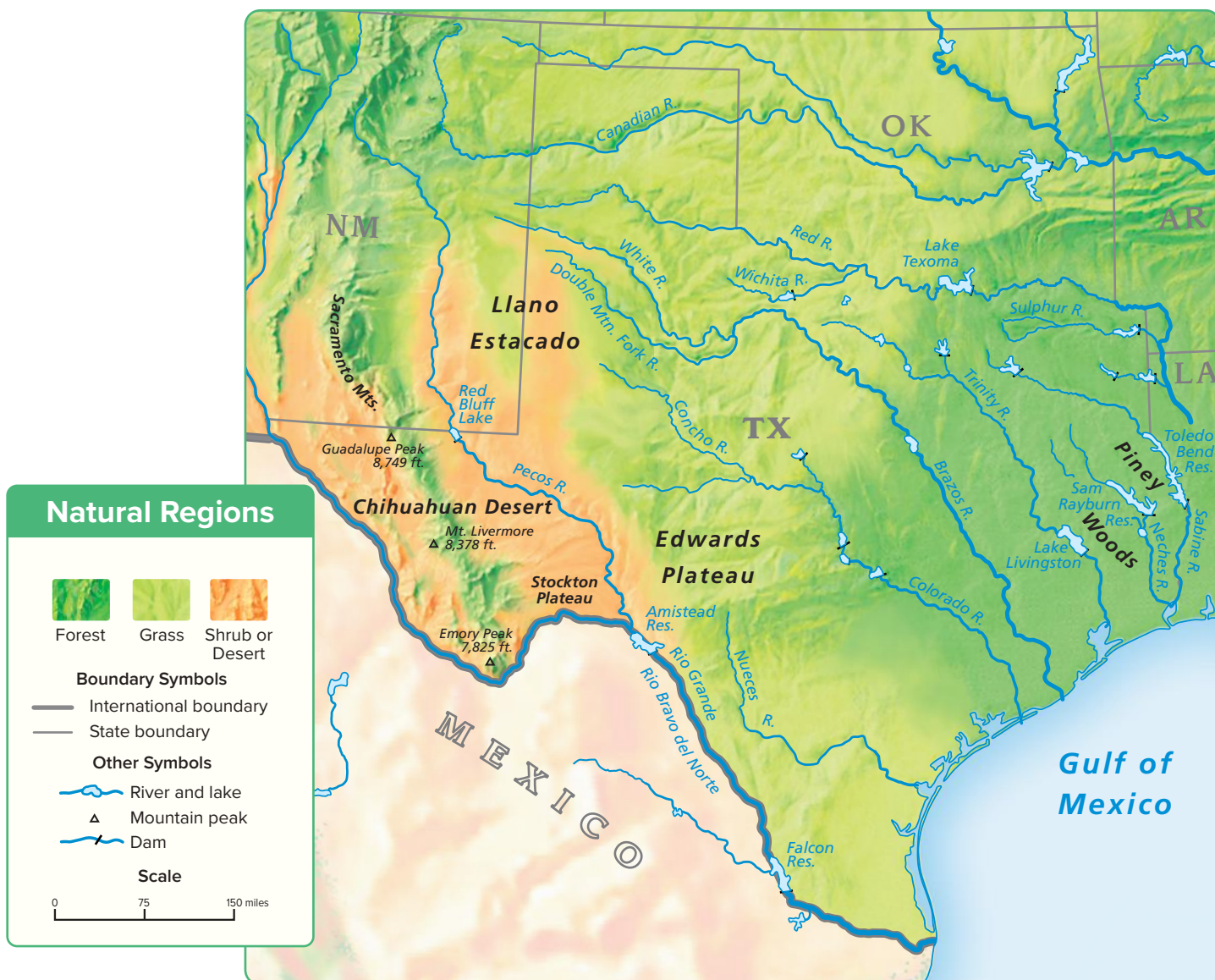
Physical Features

Because Texas is so large, it has a lot of geographic **diversity**.

- ▶ Natural features vary greatly from one part of the state to another.
- ▶ The state has a wide variety of plant and animal life.
- ▶ Texas's state symbols show some of what its citizens appreciate about the state's natural diversity.



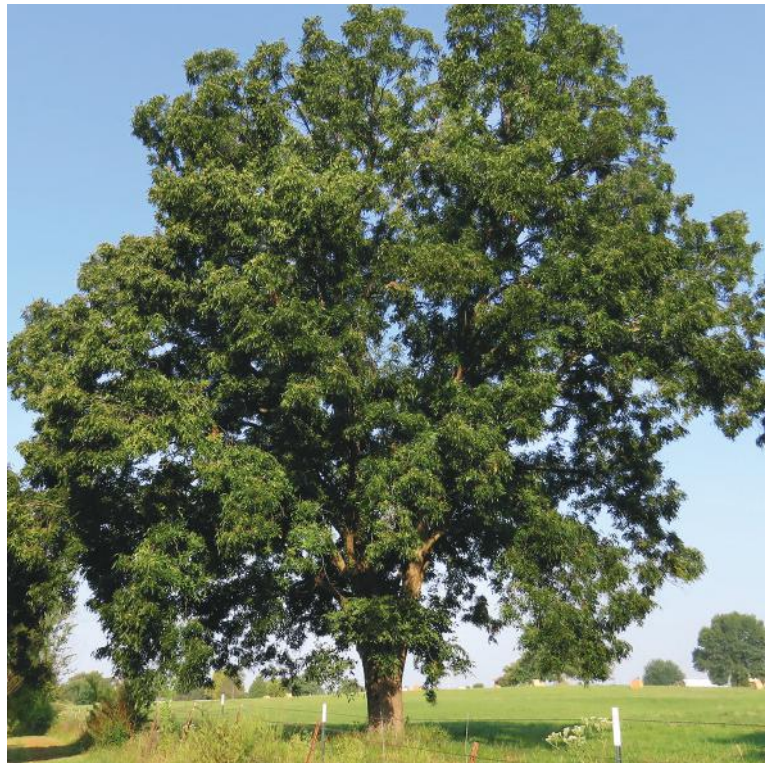
A The northern mockingbird is the state bird of Texas. It is found in almost all parts of the state.



B Texas has mountains, deserts, forests, rivers, lakes, and **coastline**.



- C** The bluebonnet has been the official state flower since 1901. The two main species of the flower grow naturally only in Texas.



- D** The pecan is the state tree. A pecan tree can live for more than 200 years.



- E** Texas has several state animals. The longhorn is the state's official large mammal. Its horns can measure over eight feet from tip to tip.

Geographic Diversity

There are many ways to classify the natural and physical qualities of Texas.

- ▶ Texas is divided into four **regions**. Each is different.
- ▶ Weather varies widely throughout the state.
- ▶ Texas has a wide range of **elevations**. Areas along the Gulf Coast are at sea level. Guadalupe Peak is 8,749 feet above sea level.

Geographic Regions

- Mountains and Basins
- Great Plains
- North Central Plains
- Coastal Plains



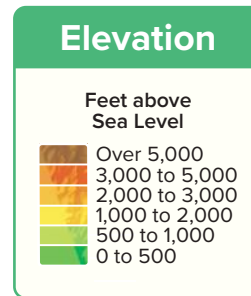
A This map shows the four regions in Texas.



B Texas is one of the warmest states in the nation. But Texans still get to experience different seasons, like fall in Fort Worth.

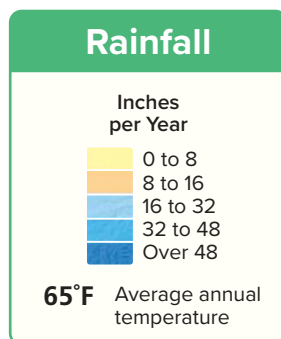


C At 8,749 feet, Guadalupe Peak is the highest point in Texas. It is located in the Mountains and Basins region.



D

The highest elevations in the state are in West Texas.



E

The Great Plains region has the coldest average temperatures, and the Rio Grande Valley has the hottest. East Texas has the most **precipitation**, and West Texas is the driest region.

