

LESSON 31

Federal Government

- *Texans in Congress*
- *Federal Funds to Texas by County*
- *U.S. Tax Collections in Texas*
- *Major Military Installations*
- *Federal Courts in Texas*

SOCIAL STUDIES TEKS

4 - 18, 21, 22, 23

7 - 18, 21, 22, 23

8 - 22, 29, 30

STAAR

4, 7 - Writing - 1, 2, 3

4, 7, 8 - Reading - 1, 2, 3

8 - Social Studies - 3

INSTRUCTIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Using the “Texans in Congress” section, students will determine the name of their United States representative or United States senator and select a committee on which that person serves. They will write a letter or call the local office and inquire as to the responsibilities of that committee and the role of their representative/senator.
2. Using **Reapportionment and Congressional Districting Notes**, students will complete the **Reapportionment and Congressional Districting Map**.
3. Students will write a paragraph explaining the problems they faced creating the redistricting map in number 2. Students should discuss the difficulty in making districts geographically compact and contiguous. They will use the map “Congressional Districts” and the chart “U.S. Tax Collections in Texas” as a reference.
4. Students will research biographical data (family background, education, previous jobs, political experience, and accomplishments) of one United States representative and one United States senator. They will compile the information on a T-chart and then compare their political rise to power. The websites www.house.gov and www.senate.gov are suggested resources. Students will present their findings to the class in the form of a PowerPoint.
5. Using the “Federal Courts in Texas” section, students will write an invitation to a federal judge. The invitation should include a request to speak to the class about the role of the federal courts in Texas.

*The entrance to Sheppard Air Force Base at Wichita Falls.
Robert Plocheck photo.*



6. Using the “Federal Funds to Texas by County” section and a blank grid (Appendix), students will create a bar graph reflecting the five counties that were paid the greatest amount of federal funds.
7. Students will compute the percent of increase from the year in which they were born to today for each category using “U.S. Tax Collections in Texas.” Numbers should be rounded to the nearest million.
8. Using a Texas outline map (Appendix) and the “Major Military Installations” section, students will create a symbol for each major military installation and then plot the location of each.
9. Students will answer these questions using the “Major Military Installations” section.
 - a. The total number of active-duty military personnel is _____.
 - b. _____ has the largest number of active-duty military personnel.
 - c. _____ has the least number of active-duty military personnel.
 - d. There are _____ more active-duty Air Force personnel than there are active-duty Navy personnel.
 - e. Army active-duty personnel comprise approximately _____ percent of the total active-duty personnel.
10. Students will define *honor*. Students will list the people in their life that they think are worthy of being honored. As a class, the students will brainstorm examples of how we honor people that are important to us. Students will discuss how we honor soldiers who fight for our country.
 - Students can write a letter to a person serving in the military, thanking him or her for maintaining the security of America. The letter should be illustrated in red, white, and blue.
 - Using the website <http://www.ourmilitary.mil/>, students will select other activities to honor our nation’s military. Together as a class, vote on and decide how you will honor the troops.
11. Using the website www.agd.state.tx.us, three groups of students will research the duties of each of the entities of the Texas Guard. The groups will have to compare similar entities within the United States military branches. Each group will present its findings to the class.



Reapportionment and Congressional Districting Notes

STEPS IN REAPPORTIONMENT

- Using the census taken every ten years (2000, 2010), the Census Bureau determines the number of congressional seats each state should receive.
- Each state receives at least one.
- This plan is then submitted to the president, who in turn, submits it to Congress.
- If Congress does not voice its opposition within sixty days, the plan goes into effect.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTING

- Once Congress assigns the number of seats for each state, the state legislatures draw the lines for each congressional district, which is comprised of approximately 670,000 constituents.
- One seat is assigned to each district.
- Texas has thirty-two seats, therefore Texas has thirty-two congressional districts.
- The population of each district must be the same across the state as well as across the country.

Reapportionment and Congressional Districting Map

The imaginary state shown has thirty-four counties. The population of each county is indicated. The state is entitled to ten members in the United States House of Representatives because its total population is 5,000,000. Divide the state into ten districts. Make each district equal to 500,000 in population, geographically compact, and contiguous. A district may be smaller than a county or may include more than one county.

