

LESSON 26

TEXAS ALMANAC TEACHERS GUIDE

Elections in Texas

- *Primary and General Elections*
- *Legislative Session*
- *Political Parties*

SOCIAL STUDIES TEKS

4 - 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23

7 - 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23

8 - 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29,30

STAAR

4, 7 - Writing - 1, 2, 3

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

8 - Social Studies - 3

INSTRUCTIONAL SUGGESTIONS

- 1. RECENT PRIMARY & ELECTION:** Using information in the Texas Almanac or on the website

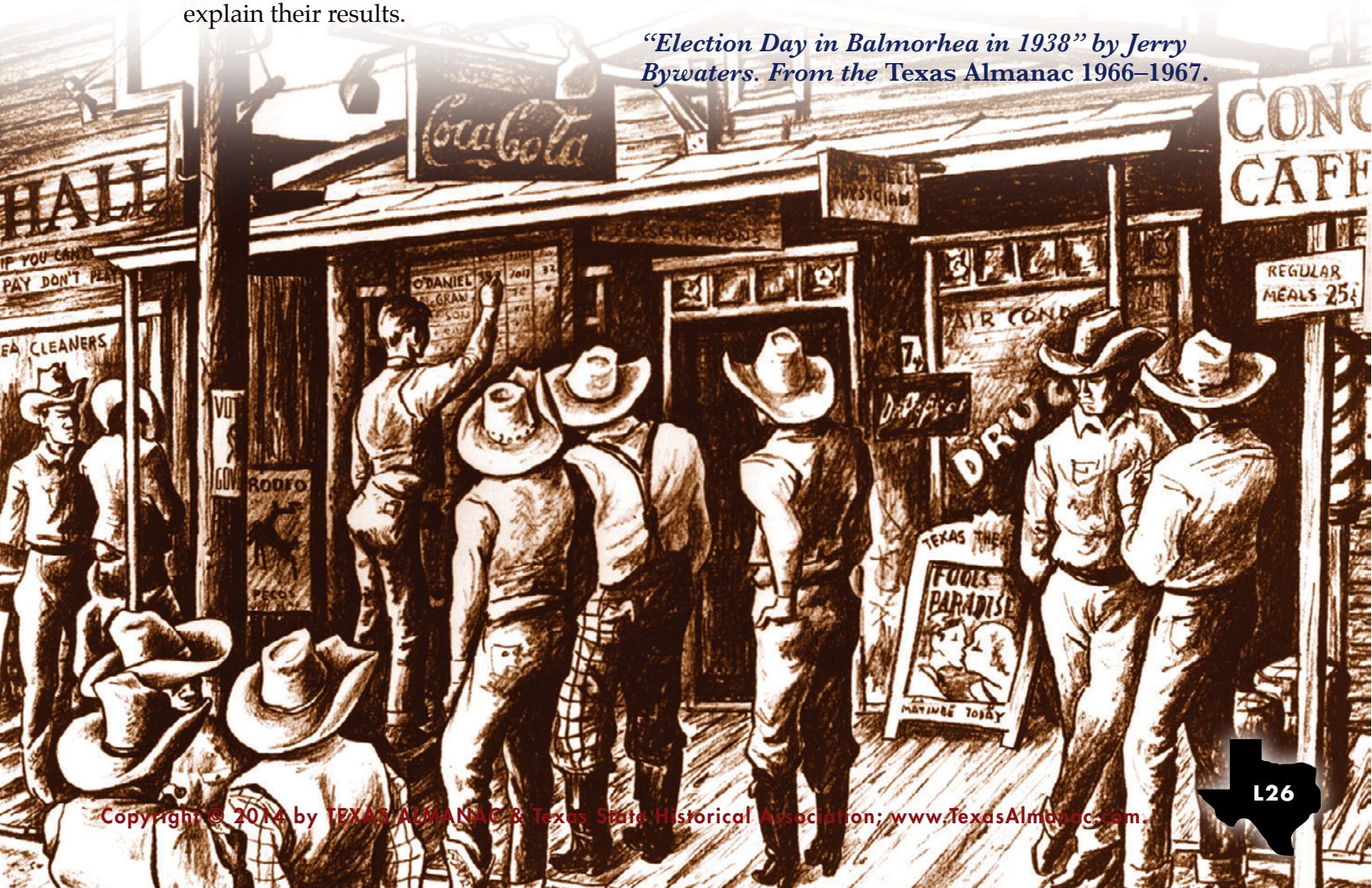
<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/elections>

about the most recent **presidential or gubernatorial election**, students will **answer the questions** on the **Student Activity Worksheet**.

- 2. COUNTY VOTES LINE GRAPH:** Using the article in the Texas Almanac's Elections section about the most recent General Election of president, senator, or governor, students will select their county and four other counties to **create a line graph depicting the votes cast** in the election.

Students will **compare their findings and their charts** with others in the class and attempt to explain their results.

"Election Day in Balmorhea in 1938" by Jerry Bywaters. From the Texas Almanac 1966–1967.



LESSON 26 – Elections in Texas

- 3. GENERAL ELECTION PIE GRAPHS:** Students will use the General Election section of the Texas Almanac to locate their United States representative, their state senator, and one justice on the Texas Court of Appeals.

They will construct **three pie graphs: one for each political race**. Each graph will reflect all of the candidates in that race, their party affiliations with party symbols, and the vote percentage each candidate won. Encourage students to make their pie graphs colorful for easy reading.

- 4. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES & T-CHART:** Using the article about the most recent Texas Legislative session found in the Texas Almanac's Elections section *or* Government section *or* on the Almanac's website:

<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/government/government>

students should identify **five major issues or pieces of legislation** from the session.

They should then **identify one issue** that they feel has the most impact on them personally, **create a T-chart** listing its positives and negatives, and **write a paragraph** explaining the impact.

- 5. PARTY PLATFORMS & CAMPAIGN:** Students will use the "Political Party Organizations" information in the Almanac's Elections section and the websites for the Republican, Democratic, Libertarian, or Green parties to research two or more platforms of the parties of their choosing:

<http://www.texasgop.org/>

<http://www.txdemocrats.org/>

<https://lptexas.org/>

<http://web.txgreens.org/>

Students should create a **campaign jingle**, a **billboard**, a **commercial**, or a **bumper sticker** publicizing two or more of the parties.

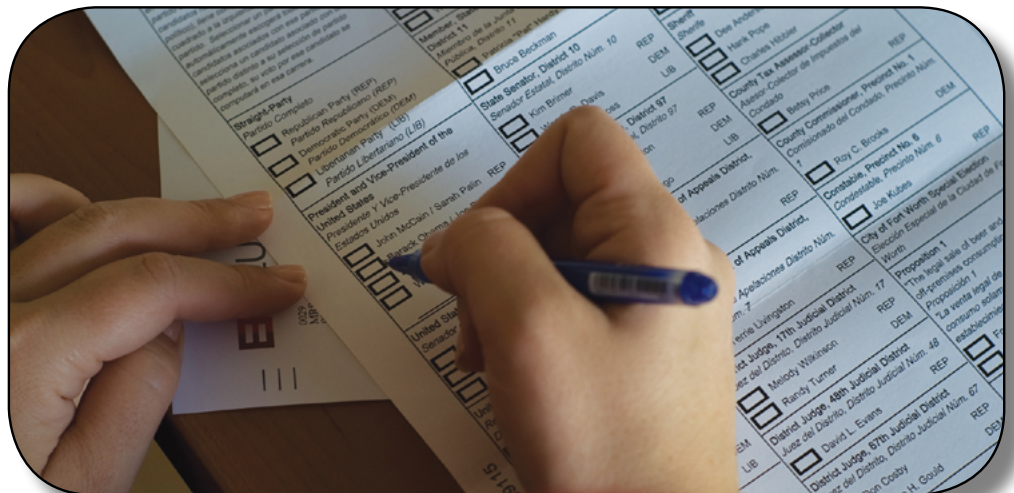
- 6. COMPARISON ESSAY:** Students will choose one of these suggested topics:

**social security • stem cell research • education • environment
homeland security • health care • social security**

Students should **do research and then write an essay** comparing the philosophies of two or more political parties toward their topic.

7. SECESSION

EDITORIAL: From time to time, the question of Texas secession arises in conversation and in political circles. Students will **write an editorial** defending a position **for or against Texas secession** and why the outcome of such a decision could be good or bad for the State of Texas. Students should consider both the short- and long-term political, economic, and social effects of secession in their arguments.



A voter marks an election ballot. Photo by Lars Plougmann (CC)

Recent Primary & General Election Questions

Use Primary Election and General Election information in the Texas Almanac or on the website <http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/elections> about the most recent presidential OR gubernatorial election to answer the following questions:

1. Who were the Democratic candidates? **Circle** the one that Texas favored in primary voting. _____

2. Who were the Republican candidates? **Circle** the one that Texas favored in primary voting. _____

3. Which candidate did Texas voters favor in the General Election? By what percentage? _____
4. If a presidential election, was the choice of Texans elected president? _____
Provide an explanation of why or why not this was the case. _____

5. What is the likely impact of this election (either presidential or gubernatorial) on Texas's influence at the national level? _____

6. Since taking office, what has the president or governor done and how has it impacted Texas? _____

7. Are there other factors, such as increased representation or outcomes in other states, that have increased or decreased the influence of Texas in national politics? _____

