

**GONE TO TEXAS:
PART OF THE NATION'S IMMIGRATION STORY**
from the [Bullock Texas State History Museum](#)



PRE-PROGRAM ACTIVITY: WHAT'S IN YOUR SUITCASE?

Social Studies TEKS:

4th grade: 8a-b, 10b, 12a, 12c, 19a, 21a-d, 22a-e, 23b

7th grade: 7.1b, 7.7e, 7.9b, 7.10a, 7.10b, 7.20a, 7.21a

Objective:

Analyze primary documents and artifacts to understand how immigrants were selective in what they packed to start a new life in Texas.

During this activity students will:

- Identify and analyze primary source documents and artifacts
- Sort primary source artifacts into categories
- Identify various immigrant groups that moved to Texas
- Make predictions about what objects would be valuable for immigrants to bring with them to Texas and draw conclusions as to why these objects were valued

Materials needed:

- **Letter from Hubert Lux:** handout with questions, provide one per group
- **Artifacts Cards:** cut out cards, provide one set per group
- **Artifacts Categories Board:** paste/ tape two pages together, provide one board per group

Divide students into small groups of 2-4 and begin with giving each group a copy of the letter from Hubert Lux.

Warm up:

"Imagine you were moving to another country...How would you feel? What would you want to bring with you? During today's activity we are going to look at what people packed in their suitcases to start a new life in a new place: Texas!"

- Introduce the concept of immigration if necessary

Each group has a copy of a letter that a man named Hubert wrote to his family after he moved to Texas. In your groups, read Hubert's letter to find out more about his new life in Texas and the things he thinks people moving to Texas should bring with them. After you read the letter, answer the questions on your handout with your group. Once you are finished, we will talk about Hubert's letter as a class.

- In their groups, have students read the letter from Hubert Lux, answer the questions together and record their answers on the handout.

- Discuss answers to the questions as a class:
 - Where is Hubert coming from?
Hambach (Germany)
 - Where did he settle?
New Braunfels (Note that New Braunfels was a predominately German settlement; we can still see evidence of its German heritage today. Fredericksburg is another major German settlement.)
 - How long did Hubert's journey take?
50 days (How do you think he got from Germany to Texas?)
 - When is Hubert writing this letter?
1845
 - Is there anything significant about this year?
Same year Texas became a state in the United States of America
 - How does Hubert feel about his new life in Texas?
"I find myself real content and satisfied" "...life is easier here than that of a common peasant's life in Europe. I do not wish to go back"
 - What are some items that Hubert advises others to bring with them to Texas?
"bring along iron, copper and tin house wares, spades and axes, a tub to clean fruit and a plow" "bring a pair of wheels for a cart" "rope and grindstone" "bring garden seed of all kinds, also wheat"
 - What are these items used for?
Farming, building, cooking, preparing food
 - What does this tell us about Hubert's job?
Most likely a farmer
 - Are there any other things we can learn about Hubert from this letter?
Married; some of his family is still in Germany; sends regards to Pastor, which tells us he was probably religious

Introduction:

As we can see from Hubert's letter, packing to start a new life in a new country can be both exciting and overwhelming. Today we are going to look at pictures of some real artifacts that people moving to Texas might have brought with them during the time period of 1845-1924. It is your job to figure out what these objects are and why people from the past might have wanted to bring them to Texas to start their new life.

Activity Instructions:

Give each group a set of **Artifact Cards** and instruct students to categorize them by placing them into the correct place on the **Artifacts Categories Board**. There will only be one artifact that correctly matches each category on the board. Some artifacts might be easy to identify and others may not be so easy to figure out. Encourage to students work together, look for clues, make their most educated guesses and let them know that it is okay to make some incorrect guesses. If students are stuck or frustrated, it might be helpful to give students *hints* about an artifact to guide them in the right direction. Once each group has paired an artifact with each category, go over the answers as a class using the **Artifact Answer Sheet and Descriptions**.

Guiding questions for class discussion:

- What artifact did you choose for the _____ category?
 - "Show of fingers": To get the whole class participating as you discuss the answers for each category, have students hold up the number of fingers that correspond to the artifact they chose. For example, if they chose artifact number two for religious item they would hold up two fingers. (They might have to get creative or partner up for 11 and 12!)
 - After all students have shown their guess, reveal the correct answer
- What is this artifact?
 - Listen to student guesses, then reveal the correct answer
 - Read the description of the artifact
- Why did you place this artifact in this particular category?
- Could this artifact possibly fit in more than one category? Which ones?
- Why might people want to bring this item with them to Texas? Or why not?

Wrap up: What's in YOUR suitcase?

Imagine you were making this long journey from your home country in Europe to Texas. What would you bring? Look carefully at the twelve artifacts in front of you. If you can only take FIVE items with you to Texas, what would you choose? Why?

- Individually or in groups: Students will decide which five items they would bring in their suitcase and justify their reasoning.

Optional Extension:

Invite students to share their own families' stories about immigrating to the United States or Texas. Ask them to tell the class about a "treasure" that their family brought with them from their home country and why that object was important to them.

GONE TO TEXAS: WHAT'S IN YOUR SUITCASE?

New Braunfels

In the State of Texas of America

May 1, 1845

Dear Uncle:

I have today decided to write to you and advise you of my present and former location and my journey. The journey from Europe to America was made in 50 days and ended with happiness and good health...

I find myself real content and satisfied because after one is settled, that means he has his house finished and his field fenced in, he needs to work a third as much as one must in Europe. Therefore, life is easier here than that of a common peasant's life in Europe. I do not wish to go back. Anyone who wishes to see me must come here and I do not believe he would regret that.

Whoever comes here would do well to bring along iron, copper and tin house wares, spades and axes, a tub to clean fruit and a plow, as the Germans cannot work with the local plows and they are not as good...It would be well to bring a pair of wheels for a cart. I will double the cost for a rope and grindstone if someone brings me these. All these things are not readily available and are also quite expensive. Also bring garden seed of all kinds, also wheat, in particular summer wheat as that also is not readily available and is the only kind that is planted correctly by the Germans.

I close my writing with the hope that you are healthy as you read this and greetings to you, dear Uncle, and all my relatives and acquaintances, in particular Mr. Pastor Miederjahn from Hambach. Many thousand greetings and I wish all of you a long and lasting health. The same also from my dear wife.

Hubert Lux from Hambach

Where is Hubert coming from?

Where did he settle?

How long did Hubert's journey take?

When is Hubert writing this letter? Is there anything significant about this year?

How does Hubert feel about his new life in Texas?

What are some items that Hubert advises others to bring with them to Texas?

→ What are these items used for?

→ What does this tell us about Hubert's job?

Are there any other things we can learn about Hubert from this letter?

ARTIFACT CARDS: Cut out each card and give one complete set of cards to each group of students





7



8



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10



11



12

GONE TO TEXAS: WHAT'S IN YOUR SUITCASE?
Artifact Answer Sheet and Descriptions

Answers for categorizing activity:

Occupational Tools: #9 Blacksmithing tools	Household Item: #4 Sewing kit	Special Occasion Clothes: # 6 Czech Kroje	Everyday Clothes: #11 Cotton dress
Kitchen: #3 Cookie stamp	Health: #1 Wooden Lemon squeezer	Entertainment: #5 Cards and fiddle	Education: #10 Children's books and alphabet blocks
Religious: #2 Religious statue	Memory: #8 Wedding photo	Furniture: #12 Wooden bed	Food: #7 Food rations

1. Wooden lemon squeezer:

To endure the sea journey to Texas, families soon learned to take plenty of fresh citrus fruits along with them to protect their children from scurvy, a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C. This citrus squeezer would help families get the maximum amount of juice from the limited supply of fruit.

2. Religious Statue:

Ignace Muzny brought this statue of an infant Jesus held in his mother's arms to Texas in 1856 when he immigrated from Moravia (now Czech Republic) with his wife Rosalie and their five children. As one of the founding members of Dubina, Fayette County, the Muznys helped establish the local Catholic church in 1876.

3. Cookie Stamp:

Cookies molded by cookie cutters are a beloved tradition at festive celebrations. This cookie stamp, or mold, was brought to Texas by German immigrants in the 1850s. Using a special cookie dough made with extra eggs, bakers rubbed sugar onto the mold and then pressed it into rolled-out dough.

4. Sewing Kit:

The choice to bring a sewing kit when migrating to Texas was an easy one for many immigrants. Because they could only choose so many clothes to bring with them, mending and patching were a part of everyday life. This sewing kit was brought to Texas by immigrants in the 1850s.

5. Playing Cards and Hardanger Fiddle:

The journey from Europe to Texas was long and sometimes very boring, so having some form of entertainment was essential to pass the time. Playing cards, like these from England, were a perfect game to bring on the ship since they were small enough to carry easily. Many immigrants also brought instruments, like this fiddle from Norway, for entertainment and to remember their home country through music.

6. Traditional clothing:

Packing traditional or ceremonial clothes was a way for immigrants to remember the culture and traditions of their homeland. This photograph features a young girl in Texas wearing a Kroj, which

is the traditional Czech and Slovak dress. The decoration, colors and patterns on the Kroj are very symbolic, showing what village or area a person is from as well as their marital status.

7. Food rations:

Most ship tickets came with a daily ration of food such as biscuits, wheat flour, oatmeal, rice, tea, sugar and molasses, however many passengers brought extra food or drink for the long journey ahead. Sometimes if big families or groups from the same town were travelling together, they would pool all of their money to buy supplies that they could all share. They would have to be sure to bring items that wouldn't spoil, since there was no refrigeration.

8. Wedding Photo:

Immigrants starting a new life in Texas would surely want to remember their families and friends from their home country. Bringing photos of family or special occasions were ways to preserve memories of their loved ones at home. This photograph was taken at a wedding in Czechoslovakia and then brought with the family when they moved to Texas in the late 19th century.

9. Blacksmithing Tools:

Immigrants who knew a trade needed to bring their tools with them so they would be able to work and use their skills when they arrived in Texas. These blacksmithing tools would have been used to make things with iron or steel. From top left: anvil, bellows, tongs, rake, hot chisel

10. Children's books and alphabet blocks:

Children's books and alphabet blocks like these from 19th century England would have not only provided entertainment for immigrant children, but also a source of education. Because Texas was still considered the frontier throughout most of the 19th century, most education would have happened at home or in small schools run by the community or a church, and many students had to provide their own school books.

11. Cotton dress:

Throughout the 19th century and even into the 20th century, most children spent their days helping their parents with household chores or working in the family business such as a store or farm. For everyday work, children's clothing needed to be simple and comfortable, like this cotton dress from England.

12. Wooden bed:

For many families during this time period a wooden bed like this one would be a luxury item or family heirloom that had been passed down over generations. As you can imagine, the decision to take or leave furniture like this was very difficult, not only for sentimental reasons, but practical reasons as well. If you were to take a piece of furniture, a bed could be a logical choice since it is used daily and sleeping on the floor might not be appealing! However, bringing furniture like this wooden bed on the long journey to Texas could be very impractical since it is large and very heavy. This bed is attributed to Johann Michael Jahn, who arrived in New Braunfels from Germany about 1846 and whose company stayed in business well into the 20th century. Jahn is New Braunfels best known cabinetmaker.

Images courtesy of: Bullock Texas State History Museum, Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center, Fort Bend Museum, Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture, Star of Texas Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, British Library

ARTIFACT CATEGORIES BOARD

Occupational Tools

Household Item

Kitchen

Health

Religious Item

Memory

ARTIFACT CATEGORIES BOARD

Special Occasion Clothes

Everyday Clothes

Entertainment

Education

Furniture

Food