

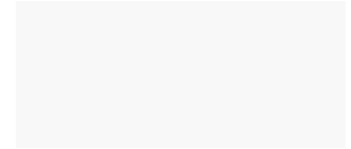
# TEXAS HISTORY TOP TEN: European Exploration

The Bullock Texas State History Museum's website is filled with artifacts, oral histories, highlights from curators, and interesting stories. The Texas History Top Ten tool is perfect if you only have a short amount of time, want a broad overview, or want to find hidden gems about a particular topic. Use this lists to help expand your content knowledge while planning classroom lessons for your students, or send your students on assignment to explore the Top Ten lists on their own.

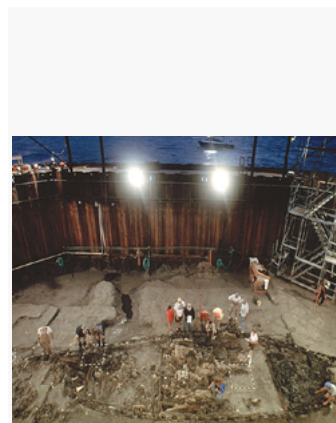
## European Exploration

Spanish conquistadors sought out riches in the land now called Texas. Finding none, they largely ignored the region until a French expedition got their attention.

- 1. [Spanish silver and gold](#)**  
Silver and gold mined and minted in Mexico and sent to Spain; on the voyage, the ship wrecked off the coast of Texas
- 2. [Book including two maps](#)**  
One made secretly in Spain improves the shape of South America from its depiction in other world maps of the 1520s. The second map is one of the very first maps to be centered on North America
- 3. [Early letter from the Americas](#)**  
One of the earliest surviving letters from the Americas, written by the explorer, Juan Ponce de León
- 4. [Unusual artifacts from La Belle](#)**  
Find out about the swivel gun, glass good luck charm, and a rat skeleton
- 5. [Conquistadors Campfire Story](#)**  
Hover over the characters and select "Conquistadors" to discover how the explorers came looking for gold and glory, but found something else



*Bronze four-pound cannon found on the ship La Belle*



*Excavating La Belle within the cofferdam in Matagorda Bay. Photograph by Robert Clark.*

- 6. [Chronology of Conquistadors](#)**  
Select the "Conquistadors" icon on the timeline (unselect "Texas History Timeline") to trace the chronology of Spanish explorers in Texas
- 7. [La Belle: the Ship that Changed History exhibition](#)**  
This exhibition microsite takes a deep-dive into the story of La Salle and *La Belle*, with educational resources and artifacts, such as a bronze cannon, muskets, farming tools, trade goods, and glass beads. Includes 3 4-5 minute videos
- 8. [Landing in the wrong place makes a difference](#)**  
The difficulties of La Salle's exploration led to the loss of all his ship. Includes a 5 minute video
- 9. [From ocean to museum](#)**  
How the *La Belle* ship went from an ocean grave to a museum exhibition. Includes a 4 minute video
- 10. [Schedule a live videoconference session for your class](#)**  
"First Encounters: When the Conquistadors Met the Karankawa"  
"La Belle: The Ship That Changed History"

# Types of Resources

The Bullock Museum has a diversity of resources and voices to tell the many Stories of Texas. While using the Texas History Top Ten, explore a variety of tools:

## Artifacts

Get an up-close look at the artifacts the Museum has displayed, and learn about their importance in Texas history. View the full Artifact Gallery [here](#).

## Campfire Stories

Using the mosaic embedded in the Museum's floor, interact with Texans from the past gathered around a campfire to share their stories. Discover the people who shaped Texas. View the mosaic [here](#).

## Special Exhibitions and Events

Explore some of the stories and artifacts from the Bullock Museum's past temporary exhibitions and special events focusing on unique aspects of Texas history. View all past special exhibitions [here](#).

## Texas History Timeline

Use the interactive timeline tool to mix and match different events and stories to see how they line up in the chronology of Texas history. View the full timeline [here](#).

## Texas Story Project

Read oral history stories submitted by diverse Texans about their connections to the past. The Texas Story Project is best for finding stories that you wouldn't find in textbooks, like family stories and Texas folklore, and are generally not written by professional historians. View the full Texas Story Project [here](#).

## Assorted Resources

Watch videos or participate in an [interactive distance learning program](#).

New Top Ten lists will be added over time to round out the full scope of the Texas History curriculum, so keep returning to the [website](#) for updates. Looking for more resources on these topics beyond the Top Ten, or curious how other teachers have used what is found on these lists? [Email Education@TheStoryofTexas.com](mailto:Email_Education@TheStoryofTexas.com).



*Discover the AT-6A "Texan" Airplane in the Artifact Gallery*

