

Grade 4

Taking a close look at the Texas Czechs can help students understand the political, economic, and social changes in Texas during the last half of the 19th century (4.4). Czechs began to arrive in Texas in the 1850s, but they arrived with little understanding of the internal conflicts going on in the United States at that time. From their point of view, they had just arrived in the U.S.A. when Texas decided to secede from the U.S.A.! Not what they had in mind. Like other recent arrivals from Europe, many had fled military service in the Habsburg Empire and had no inclination to sign up for it in their new homeland.

Doing the **Create an “Institute of Student Cultures” Exhibit Activity** may identify ancestors of your students who arrived during this period, and the questions about why they left their homelands and why they selected Texas as a destination will bring home ideas about (4.4 A) the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on certain Texans; (4.4 B) how the cattle and oil industries attracted Texans and immigrants or provided work for the second generation of immigrant families; and (4.4 C) how the railroads made migration within the United States an easier prospect, especially for farm families from the Midwest. Student experiences will likely hit on settlement clusters (4.8 A), patterns of settlement (4.8 B), population distribution (4.8 D), patterns of work and economic activities (4.13 A, B, C), while identifying customs, celebrations, and traditions (4.20 B), as well as contributions (4.20 C) of individual cultural groups, which can then be studied to discover similarities and differences (4.20 A).

Use the two **“Geography and Culture”** Activities to interpret maps (4.6 A) and consider actual map directions and the culturally influenced directions used in daily life (4.6 B). Why isn't “north” Texas the northernmost part of Texas? Shouldn't “southeast” Texas be in the lower right quadrant of the map—under the Gulf of Mexico? What happened to that old song “East is East, and West is West”? Is it only Texans who “abuse” map directions? Use the concept of eastern Europe/western Europe to show that for people everywhere, map directions have both geographic and cultural meanings. (4.7 C)