

How can I best use these materials to support the Social Studies TEKS for Grade 8?

Use these motivating materials for a post-TAKS glimpse at the years after the Civil War. The “Creating and Using a Timeline” activity focuses on world events, inventions, and publications that occurred during O. Henry’s lifespan, 1862-1910. Read aloud a story with a ranch or railroad setting, do the Timeline activity and the Learning from Historical Photographs discussion, then conclude with “Jimmy Hayes and Muriel” or “A Caballero’s Way” for a view of the struggles in the Nueces Strip and attitudes which parallel the larger American syndrome of racial mistrust and ethnic and religious segregation. Team with a literature colleague or invite the principal in to read. The highly motivating content of this issue directly supports the content goals for 8th grade in the following ways:

- The impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. Born in 1834, Hall would have been among the first to learn and practice the new technology of photography. In full prints such as may be found in our “Photographs and Paragraphs” exhibit, the rounded edges of the “birdseye” lens shows clearly in many photographs as do clues that subjects had to hold still for a matter of seconds while the lens was open: a fan-shaped blur of dog tail wagging, for example. Consider what a new concept photography was to most folks a century ago and how far the technology has come since then.
- The impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations may be glimpsed in the activity “Creating and Using a Timeline.”
- Primary resources such as O. Henry’s stories, Hall’s photographs, and Mrs. Wood’s speech offer students an opportunity to glean important information firsthand, like a historian or social sciences researcher does.

Activities support the essential knowledge and skills (TEKS):

- **History.** Like Raidler in “Hygeia at the Solito,” a good proportion of early Anglo settlers of the brush country immigrated from the South. Although they had not been slaves, they had experienced loss of property and social position, especially those who were Confederates. Educated sons of once-prominent families rode westward with an expectation to lead and manage and a sense of comfort at the top of a layered society which could no longer be met at home (8.9 B and C). Some brought one or two of their former slaves.
- **Geography.** Compare and contrast the physical and human characteristics of the brush country with those of the American South (8.11 B and 8.12 A).
- **Economics.** Identify economic differences between the South and the brush country in the years after the Civil War (8.13 B).
- **Citizenship.** Lingering border disputes, ethnic prejudices, and inconsistent applications of the rights of citizenship made for misunderstanding and frequent abuse by Texas Rangers of Mexican Texans living in the Nueces Strip, whose rights were clearly not unalienable. (8.20 A and F).
- **Culture.** Not resolved until almost 1920, the conflicts between Texas Rangers and Mexican Texans are highlighted in stories such as “Jimmy Hayes and Muriel” and “A Caballero’s Way” (8.24 C). The daughters of the Irish who colonized in South Texas and married into Tejano families turn up in his stories, too; now marrying into the new Anglo-American population are women like Rosita McMullen Lane (“A Chaparral Christmas”) and Santa McAllister Yeager (“Hearts and Crosses”), as well as Josefa O’Donnell (“The Princess and the Puma”) playing coy with Ripley Givens (8.24 A). Reading or listening to O. Henry’s Texas stories and doing the “Creating and Using a Timeline” activity allows students to analyze the relationship between the fine arts and continuity and change in the American way of life (8.27 B). His contemporary stories of 1880s South Texas or 1900s New York City transcend American culture and convey universal themes (8.27 C).
- **Science, technology, and society.** The stories and photographs which accompany this issue, as well as the “Creating and Using a Timeline” activity can help students analyze the effect of transportation systems on the growth, development, and urbanization of the United States (8.28 B). Read “The Missing Chord” and consider the short-lived popularity of the Pianola, or player piano (see notes in the Annotated Bibliography), a technical innovation which influenced daily life for about three decades (8.29 B).
- **Social Studies Skills.** Use the Texas Ranger stories (“Jimmy Hayes and Muriel” and “A Caballero’s Way”) to identify points of view from the historical context and the frame of reference that influenced participants, then support a point of view or identify bias (8.30 D, E, and F). Use a corroborating resource such as “The Political Landscape” on our Web site or your knowledge of O. Henry’s life from the “Creating and Using a Timeline” activity to evaluate the validity of O. Henry’s story characters’ views (8.30 F).