

How can I best use these materials to support the Social Studies TEKS for Grade 5?

America's haunting legends, such as the hanging of Chipita Rodriguez or the Jean Lafitte ghost story, reflect the times during which they were created and the people who created them.

- **Culture:** Approach the “Haunting Legends” activity as an exercise in cultural diversity (5.22A, 5.22B). Place the local “Haunting Legends” activity in your teaching plans as a parallel project to viewing another “Haunting Legend” such as Jean Lafitte, pirate hero of the War of 1812, and the many tales and sightings of his ghost. (See *Cajun Folktales* by J.J. Reneaux, August House, 1992; *From Sea to Shining Sea: A Treasury of American Folklore and Folksongs* compiled by Amy L. Cohen, Scholastic, 1993; *A Treasury of North American Folktales* compiled by Catherine Peck, W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1999.) Follow that with the student project, then discuss how the hanging of Chipita Rodriguez and other regional haunting legends reflect their time and place. Also, how do such stories reflect the attitudes and values of the people who told—and still tell—them? (Look for attitudes related to race, gender, age, disability. Do attitudes change over time? Do values change? Discuss.)
- **Economics:** The Ghost Town discussion question (depending upon the ghost towns in your area) illustrates the concept of supply and demand (5.13A); knowledge of local ghost towns will help students analyze how people in one part of the United States earn a living, past and present, including changes caused by geographic factors (5.13B) and by migration and limited resources (5.13C). When studying other industries, include the ghost towns related to economic transitions, such as Dodge City, Kansas, a once-thriving destination for cattle drives, and Deadwood, South Dakota, a gold-mining boomtown. Introduce the local ghost towns discussion activity to “bring home” these concepts.
- **Culture:** Students can identify racial, ethnic, and religious groups (5.23A) by their stories, describe the traditions reflected in each story, and observe the storytelling tradition as practiced in that culture (5.23B). The stories and traditions your students collect are among those “contributions of selected racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity” (5.23C). Discuss “How do the stories told by different groups differ?” (Various responses.) “What do the stories told by different groups have in common?” (They are frightening to children and teenagers.) “Why would loving parents tell their children stories that will most certainly frighten them?” (To keep them safe and away from danger until they are old enough to make sound judgments for themselves.) Are there real dangers associated with deteriorating buildings? Isolated places when one is alone after dark? (Hear student answers.) Introduce the term “Cautionary Tales.” Help students figure out the meaning.
- Students will call upon and practice many Social Studies skills as described in 5.25, 5.26, and 5.27 in collecting and developing the “Haunting Legends” and following through with the activities.

In addition, the highly motivating content of this issue indirectly supports these content parameters for 5th grade.

- Students learn more about one region in the United States, South Texas, which results from physical features and human activity, and identify how people adapt to and modify the environment.
- Students will touch on customs of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups as specifically related to folklore and transmitted by oral storytelling.
- Students use critical-thinking skills including sequencing, categorizing, and summarizing information and drawing inferences and conclusions.
- Students will discover rich primary materials on their own.
- Students will set the history and culture of their own Texas region within the framework of its time and place in American history and culture and reinforce the skills in the geography and social studies strands.
- Students will attain a greater depth of understanding of complex content material by integrating critical thinking skills and social studies content with content from other disciplines, notably the language arts.