



Protecting the Past How YOU Can Help

Every year many archaeological or historic sites are lost in Texas and around the country due to vandalism. Each site that is vandalized or destroyed is lost forever. Irreplaceable bits of our heritage are being lost every day in this manner by people who don't understand or who just do not care. In order to prevent such destruction, each of us must become more knowledgeable about the protection and preservation of archaeological and historic sites.

Save Our Past ---Act it Out

1. In small groups, choose from the scenarios below and act out for the class:

<p>Card # 1 An abandoned historic site is about to be destroyed to create a movie theater. You and your classmates have a chance to advise the City Council about the history of the building. Should it be destroyed? Consider both sides. What would you tell the City Council about preserving your city's heritage?</p>	<p>Card #2 You are walking through Fort Davis on your trip when a classmate sees a foundation that he/she thinks would be great to walk on like a balance beam. You know that this is harmful to the foundation and will eventually destroy it. What would you tell that person about the need to preserve the old foundation? If no one sees your classmate, does it matter?</p>
<p>Card #3 You get off the bus at Fort Davis National Historic Site and see a patch of lovely wildflowers. One of your classmates decides to pick the wild flowers for a bouquet. Is this something he/she should do in a national park? What would you say?</p>	<p>Card #4 You stop at a roadside park for lunch. The scenery offers a great view of the mountains but you notice that many initials and pictures are carved into the wooden table top. What is this type of damage called? You and your friends discuss this and how it makes you feel.</p>
<p>Card #5 As you walk by one of the historic houses at Fort Davis National Historic Site, your sharp eyes notice a piece of china half buried in the dirt. As you look closer, it seems to be part of a china doll head. You and your friend are excited to get to see such a piece of history. Discuss with your friend what you should do? Do you dig it up? Do you leave it and report your find to a ranger?</p>	<p>Card # 6 Your class stops at the cottonwood grove picnic area at Fort Davis National Historic Site. It is amazing to see these large historic trees (some are 120+ years old). Someone ignores the sign and ducks under the rope. He wants to climb the tree. Discuss with that person why climbing the tree would not be a good idea. What might be the consequences?</p>

2. Choose one of these activities:
 - A. Create a poster and a new advertising slogan to encourage people to more aware of protecting historic sites, including your local historical sites.
 - B. Using Internet and print resources, develop a persuasive PowerPoint presentation to encourage people to help protect our history.
 - C. Ideas and memories are important glimpses into history and should be recorded. Interview an older person in your family. By doing so, you can help preserve part of your family's history before it is gone.
 - D. Prepare a speech you might give as a volunteer at Fort Davis that would encourage people not to remove artifacts, historical or natural, from the park. Park visitors taking things from the park is a problem. What can the park do to help people understand?

3. Does your community have places where you can volunteer? As a volunteer, you can make a difference in your community and fill a valuable role. Check out historical sites, museums, social agencies, and groups like Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. You can help make your community a better place to live. Write a poem or essay about how volunteering makes it a better world.

4. True story: In 2003 at Fort Davis National Historic Site, two individuals entered the park after hours and defaced cliff faces along the base of the mountain. They painted their names on the rocks in over twenty places, then trashed their paint cans & brushes when they left. Damage such as this is punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$5,000 fine. This was an act of vandalism and criminal trespass, and the court fined them. It took over 100 hours for local Boy Scout volunteers and park staff to tediously remove the paint; scars still remain. Why do you think these two people did this? Was it wrong? Do you think visitors to Fort Davis want to see graffiti? What punishment do you think the judge should have given them? How can we prevent this happening in the future?
 - A. Discuss this with your classmates.
 - B. Write a newspaper article or present a simulated news broadcast about this act of vandalism and its consequences.
 - C. Have a group of students act out this story, even the courtroom drama.