

Fort Davis

National Historic Site

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Curriculum Materials Grades 6-8

Teacher Notes: Introduction to Park Handouts

Topic: Students will begin to acquire background information on Fort Davis with this activity. By using the park brochure and other site handouts, students will learn about Fort Davis’s place in history. Being able to utilize information that is found at places such as historic sites, businesses or the work place is a necessary real-world skill. These activities are multidisciplinary covering reading for content skills, reading comprehension, art, and writing activities.

Objectives and Standards: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/>

Grade 6

Social Studies

113.22: 1,2, 7, 20, 21,22,23

Language Arts

110.22: 4, 10, 11, 13, 14 15

Grade 7

Social Studies

111.23: 1,5,6,8,9,10,11,19,20,

21,22,23

Language Arts

110.23: 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15

Grade 8

Social Studies

111.24: 1, 6,10,13,30,31,32

Language Arts

110.24: 4, 10, 11, 13, 14 15

Materials Needed:

For each student:

Copy of park brochure—contact the park to obtain up to 10 full-color brochures

Copy of handouts and discussion questions

Lesson Activities:

Historic readings/background information:

1. The Welcome Recruit handout can be read individually or as a class. The goal of this handout is to encourage students to develop and use content area reading strategies.
2. Provide the students with the opportunity to read the articles included and answer the discussion questions either individually, as a small group or whole class. The class can be divided into groups. Each group can be assigned one handout and set of questions. Upon completion they can summarize and report to the rest of the class.
3. Teacher may choose the topics to be read. Not all topics need to read if time is short. Topics such as “African Americans in the Frontier Army” and/or “Black Recipients of the Medal of Honor can be used during February as part of Black History Month. “Moving with the Frontier Army-10th Cavalry Officers Wives Follow the Guidon” can be used as part of Women’s History Month in March.
4. As a wrap up for these readings, students can design a brochure or scavenger hunt for younger students to show what they have learned in an interesting and informative way.

Wrap-up and Assessment:

Discuss with students the information they have learned. Answer keys are below for teacher.

Discussion Questions - Park Handouts Answer Keys

The First Fort Davis 1854-1862

1. Fort Davis was initially established in _____1854_____. It was named in honor of **Jefferson Davis** _____ who was _____Secretary of War_____.
2. What was the purpose of the fort? **To protect the San Antonio-El Paso Road.**
3. What event made travel on the San Antonio-El Paso Road become important? **Discovery of gold in California**
4. What type of soldiers staffed the first Fort Davis? **Infantry or foot soldiers**
5. Why do you think it was difficult for infantry soldiers to protect the road from Indian raids? **The Indians had horses and moved quickly, and there were great distances between San Antonio and El Paso**
6. Why did the U.S. Army bring camels to the Southwest? **They were adapted to a desert climate, could carry more than a mule and required less water and food.**
7. What happened to the experiment? **It was discontinued with the start of the Civil War.**
8. When did the Federal troops leave Fort Davis? Why? **Spring of 1861 because the Civil War had begun.**
9. How long did the Confederate troops occupy the fort? **For a little over a year**
10. Why do you think the fort was rebuilt in the flat area east of the canyon instead of the original site back in the canyon? **The post would be easier to defend.**

African Americans in the Frontier Army

1. What did the 1866 “Act to Increase and Fix the Military Pease Establishment of the United States” do? **Created 30 new regiments that “shall be composed of colored men.” Established black regiments.**
2. Name the Black Regiments established by the Act.**9th 10th Cavalry, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st Infantry**
3. Which regiment was stationed at Ft. Davis in 1867? **9th Cavalry** Were the regiment officers also black? **No, the officers were white**
4. Which black regiment played a vital role in the Victorio and Geronimo campaigns? **10th Cavalry**
5. CO I of the 25th infantry constructed what essential service for the southwestern forts? **They constructed 91 ½ miles of telegraph line from Ft. Davis to Eagle Spring.**
6. What was another name for the black regiments? **Buffalo Soldiers**
Design a bookmark to highlight the accomplishments of the African American Regiments in the Southwest? **Accept designs that demonstrate an understanding of the Buffalo Soldiers part in Fort Davis History**

Black Recipients of the Medal of Honor from the Frontier Indian Wars

1. What is the Medal of Honor and why is it given? **The Medal of Honor is the highest award that can be given to a member of the Armed Services of the United States. It is presented by the president, in the name of Congress, to an individual who while serving his country “distinguished himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty.”**
2. Summarize the reasons these soldiers received the Medal of Honor.
 - a. Emanuel Stance: **Protected government wagons from several Apaches**
 - b. George Jordan: **For bravery at the Battle of Tularosa**

- c. Thomas Shaw “extraordinary courage under fire in preventing the Indians from surrounding the command”
- d. Sergeant William McBrayer: For demonstrating “coolness, bravery, and good marksmanship under extremely difficult circumstances”
- e. Sergeant Benjamin Brown and Corporal Isaiah Mays: For courageously defending other soldiers
- f. Private Adam Paine: “invaluable assistance to Colonel Mackenzie at the Battle of Canyon Blanco”
- g. Private Factor, Trumpeter Isaac Payne, Sergeant John Ward: For rescuing their commander

3. Which Medal of Honor winner(s) would you like to meet? What questions would you ask them about their heroism? Write your answer on the back of the paper. **Accept appropriate answers.**

The Post Hospital at Fort Davis

- 1. Why was it important to have good medical care on the frontier? **It was important that soldiers were healthy and able to do their jobs. Injuries and illness were common on the frontier.**
- 2. What type of rooms was part of the hospital? **Patient wards, surgeon’s office, dispensary, kitchen, dining room hospital steward’s room, linen room, isolation ward and storeroom.**
- 3. Where did some of the post surgeons of Fort Davis get some of their medical experience? **During the Civil War**
- 4. List the duties of the post surgeon. **Inspection of the fort for sanitary conditions, treat wounded and sick, collect natural history specimens and weather statistics**
- 5. List the other members of the hospital staff. **Hospital steward, nurses, cooks and matrons**
- 6. If you lived at the time would you have wanted to be treated by a Ft. Davis surgeon? Why or why not. **Accept appropriate answers.**

Moving with the Frontier Army Tenth Cavalry Officers’ Wives Follow the Guidon

- 1. Why did Mrs. Grierson regret leaving Ft. Davis in 1885? **She would be leaving a son behind at Fort Davis.**
- 2. Which of the ladies described in the article would you consider the most adventuresome? Why? **Helen Fuller Davis left behind letters that described her trip.**
- 3. If you were a wife and mother at that time, which would you choose: to travel by train or to travel with the regiment? Give your reasons. **Accept appropriate answers.**