

Newspaper Reporter: The Economy of Texas

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, students will think like a newspaper reporter and create a YouTube channel for people to learn about the economy of Texas.

Activity

Step 1: Background on Texas Economy (5-10 minutes)

- Show [Video: The Economy of Texas](#).
- Explain to students that economy of Texas started with four different industries: cattle and bison, cotton, timber and oil. Show [Handout: The Four Natural Resources and the Economy of Texas](#).
- As a class, discuss how natural resources are important to a state economy. Then, discuss the following:
 - How do natural resources help a new area to grow? (e.g., Settlers came to Texas to farm and start businesses, settlers wanted to find ways to make money to help the economy grow, etc.)
 - What resources were already available in Texas when settlers first arrived? (e.g. climate, in that the settlers learned to work with it, forests for lumber, bison and seafood such as fish and crabs)
 - What did people have to do in order to use the other resources of Texas (natural gas and oil, cotton) (e.g., land had to be made ready to plant cotton, cattle brought in or caught, machinery for oil, natural gas)
 - How can climate impact other resources? (e.g., a drought can impact a good growing season and if cattle are getting enough water and food, hurricanes can disrupt oil production, fishing)
- Next, explain to students that newspaper reporters and other professionals make claims. A claim is an argument that is backed up with evidence. As a class, look at the handout and discuss the different pictures. As a class, come up with one claim (e.g., Texas is an important producer of oil and natural gas). Discuss how the pictures can be used as evidence to back up the claim.
 - Teacher Note: You should have the class only come up with one claim, because they will need to think of their own claims in the next step.
- Next, explain to students that newspaper reporters and other professionals create YouTube channels to post videos about their findings. Ask students why a newspaper reporter would do this. Discuss the following statistics related to YouTube:
 - There are 1.9 billion active users on YouTube each month
 - 81% of parents let their kids watch YouTube
 - There are 80 different languages represented on YouTube
- As a class, discuss how professionals use YouTube and other social media platforms to teach others about their research and to work with other professionals in their field (including professionals in other parts of the world).

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.

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Step 2: Activity Set Up (5 minutes)

- Tell students they will create their own YouTube episode! Provide students with [Handout: Creating a Youtube Episode](#).
- Review step 1 and discuss why it is important to choose an audience before you design an episode. Discuss how professionals think about their audience when they are teaching others! (e.g., they might use simpler words if the video is to be made for students who are just learning about a topic for the first time, they might use more advanced language when talking to professionals, they would need to add captions if the audience had auditory impairments).
- Teacher Note: Students will need to look at [Handout: The Four Natural Resources and the Economy of Texas](#) and the [Handout: The Economy of Texas Source Sheet](#) while they are designing their episode. You can display this on a smartboard, print out copies for students, or email it to students for use on tablets or personal computers.

Step 3: Brainstorming and Planning (25+ minutes)

- Have students complete Steps 1-3 on the handout. As students are working, discuss the following:
 - Why is it important to learn about the economy of a place? (e.g., an economy plays an important role in the development and history of a place and can help explain how a place functions)
 - Why would economies be different in different places? (e.g., different natural resources available, different populations of people with different skills, etc.)
- Discuss with students how to use evidence to make a claim. If students are stuck, use the following prompts:
 - What natural resources were already present in Texas that could be used to help grow an economy?
 - What surprised you in learning about the economy of Texas? How can what you learned be used to make a claim?
 - Why is the conservation of natural resources important to the economy of Texas?
- If time permits, students can create replicas of artifacts to show during their episodes. Students can choose artifacts from the handout provided to recreate using art supplies and building materials.

Step 4: Recording and Watching Episodes (15 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now record their episodes.
- Have students use the video feature on a tablet or phone to record each other. Provide students with [Handout: How to Record a Youtube Episode Like a Professional](#). As a class, review the steps that students will take to record their episode in a professional way.
- If you are short on time, have students complete this step on another day.
- When students are finished recording their episodes, watch the episodes as a class. Discuss how professionals provide feedback to each other in a constructive and respectful way. Have students watch each other's episodes and provide feedback using [Handout: Providing Professional Feedback](#).
- Discuss similarities and differences between the episodes. Explain that professionals often have different opinions about a topic and will choose different sources to support their claims.

Extra Time? Uploading Videos and Viewing Party

- You can upload episodes to YouTube and have a private channel so only students and guardians can see the episodes.
- Host a viewing party with other classes. This is a great way for students across multiple grade levels to learn what other grade levels are working on and provide feedback on each others' projects.

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Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: The Economy of Texas
- Handout: The Four Natural Resources and the Economy of Texas
- Handout: Creating a Youtube Episode
- Handout: The Economy of Texas Source Sheet
- Handout: How to Record a Youtube Episode Like a Professional
- Handout: Providing Professional Feedback

Not Provided Online:

- Tablet or Smart Phone

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