

Grade 07 Social Studies Unit 09 Exemplar Lesson 02: Populating the State

Populating the State: Immigration to Hill County

Content Delivery Supplement to **Heart of Texas Tales Website**

This “Immigration to Hill County-supplement” document includes nine links to different articles on the **Heart of Texas Tales** website. [In addition, the following *Supplementary Teacher Materials on European immigration* are provided: 1) Europe slideshow.ppt; 2) Supplement: Letter to Scotland Detailing Hardships of Immigrants Travelling to Hill County with 3) Supplement: Transcription of Letter to Scotland; 4) Supplement: Excerpt of Immigrant Isabella Wood’s Letter to Scotland Describing Life Near Fort Graham 5) Supplement: James Wood Relocates to Escape Indians, with Texas Ranger Buck Barry’s Detailing of Indian Troubles; 6) Map of Military Alliances of WWI.pdf; 7) Outline map of North Atlantic & Europe.pdf; 8) Outline map of major rivers of Texas for showing travel routes from Galveston to Hill County; and 9) Map of major rivers of Texas with counties.]

- I. The first traces of human inhabitants in the area that became Hill County date back to A.D. 1300 and were found at Buzzard Cave on the Brazos River near Blum. [*The earliest settlers came up the Brazos River.*]
- II. In the early eighteenth century (1700’s), groups of the Wichita Indians, the Waco and Tawakoni, established small hunting camps of grass huts along Richland and Pin Oak creeks in the northeastern and southeastern portions of the county. Almost a century later, during the 1820’s, Comanche and Taovaya (Towash) Indians migrated into the region.
 - A. By 1824 Stephen F. Austin had sent a commission to make a treaty with the Indians of the area.
 - B. The land dispute between Austin and Robertson continued to frustrate efforts to establish peace with the Indian groups of the area. In the 1830s Hasinai and Anadarko groups left East Texas, and by February 1844, under the leadership of José María, an Anadarko, they had settled in the Hill County area. [[HoTT website link to Places: Fort Graham](#) (§1-3, §7-8)]
 - C. In an effort to keep watch over Indian activity and intercept Comanche raiding parties, Fort Graham, at the mouth of Bear Creek, was established on March 27, 1849. The outpost was abandoned on November 9, 1853, but a town remained in the area. [[Supplement: Texas Ranger Buck Barry’s Detailing of Indian Troubles](#)]
 - D. Though 240 Indian raids were recorded in the counties surrounding Hill and Johnson counties, there was no record of such raids in Hill or Johnson.
 - E. A lieutenant Whiting made the observation that the area that later became Hill County was probably used as a "council-spot" for discussions and making treaties. Safe passage was given to all people through the area.
 - F. The absence of major Indian raids in the area probably accounts for the abandonment of Fort Graham.
- III. Beginning with Spanish expeditions, Europeans entered the region.

- A. In 1786 Pedro Vial, a Frenchman hired by the Spanish to find a route to Santa Fe from San Antonio, was probably the first European to reach what would become Hill County. He reported stopping at a Tawakoni village on the east side of the Brazos River.
- B. The first Anglo to reach the area that became Hill County was Philip Nolan, in 1801. He established a camp and three stockade fences northeast of Blum on Battle Creek to hold wild mustangs captured in the area. Nolan was killed by the Spanish in March 1801, after being warned to leave the area.
- C. Stephen F. Austin's survey map of 1822 included the Hill County area. A land dispute between Austin and Sterling Clack Robertson began after the Mexican government passed the Law of April 6, 1830. Texans were aggressive in trying to recruit settlers to Texas by offering land grants to new colonists.
 - 1. Austin claimed Robertson had not fulfilled his quota of colonists before the execution of the law, but Robertson won the appeal to the Mexican government and received the land that would later include Hill County.
 - 2. William Steele, the land commissioner for Robertson's colony, had issued the first land grant on March 15, 1825, to Peter Fleming, a twenty-nine-year-old Missourian. The land was located between the Brazos River and Aquilla Creek.
 - 3. In 1835 Robertson kept land for himself and gave further grants to John Burgess, Montgomery Shackelford, and John Carr.
 - 4. Robertson gave the largest grant, twenty-four labores, to William McFarlin. Each parcel of land extended eastward from points along the Brazos River. Mary Beacham, a widow who filed an application for a Texas Head Right Land Grant in 1838, received the parcel of land that eventually became the Carver Homestead. [[HoTT webpage link to Places: Carver Homestead](#) (§1-3)]

IV. The largest ethnic group in Texas derived directly from Europe was persons of German birth or descent.

- A. As early as 1850, they constituted more than 5 percent of the total Texas population, a proportion that remained constant through the remainder of the nineteenth century. Germans rank behind Hispanics and form the third-largest national-origin group in the state.
- B. Most persons of German descent do not regard themselves as ethnic Germans, however. The German Belt is the product of concepts and processes well known to students of migration, particularly the concept of "dominant personality," the process called "chain migration," and the device of "America letters."
- C. Voluntary migrations generally were begun by a dominant personality, or "true pioneer." This individual was forceful and ambitious, a natural leader, who perceived emigration as a solution to economic, social, political, or religious problems in his homeland. He used his personality to convince others to follow him in migration.

1. In the case of the Texas Germans, Friedrich Diercks, known in Texas under his alias, Johann Friedrich Ernst, was the dominant personality. Ernst had been a professional gardener in the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg in northwestern Germany. He immigrated to America intending to settle in Missouri, but in New Orleans he learned that large land grants were available to Europeans in Stephen F. Austin's colony in Texas. Ernst applied for and in 1831 received a grant of more than 4,000 acres that lay in the northwest corner of what is now Austin County. It formed the nucleus of the German Belt.
2. Ernst wrote lengthy letters to friends in Germany, and through these "America letters" he reached and influenced other prospective migrants. He described a land with a winterless climate like that of Sicily. It had abundant game and fish, was fertile and rich, and awaited the impress of German labor to make it produce abundantly. Taxes were virtually nil, and large tracts of land were available for only a surveyor's fee; hunting and fishing required no licenses. Texas was an earthly paradise.
3. Like other writers of America letters, Ernst stressed the positive aspects of the new land and downplayed or omitted the negative. As a result of Ernst's letters, a small, steady stream of migrants left northwestern Germany for Texas. Within ten years they had established a number of rural communities in the vicinity of Ernst's grant in south central Texas. The chain migration process was a natural result of dominant personalities and their use of emigrant letters.
4. In the late 1830s German immigration to Texas was widely publicized in the Fatherland. The publicity attracted a group of petty noblemen who envisioned a project to colonize German peasants in Texas. The nobles hoped the project would bring them wealth, power, and prestige. They chose Texas as the site for their colony, in part because of the favorable publicity surrounding the Ernst-inspired migration and perhaps because Texas was an independent republic where the princes might exercise some political control. Though this initiative was a financial disaster, it transported thousands of Germans, mostly peasants, to Texas.
5. At about the same time, another colonization project was launched. The Frenchman Henri Castro directed a project that moved more than 2,000 German-speaking settlers, mainly from clusters in the Upper Rhine Plain of Alsace, to Medina County, west of San Antonio. Castroville, founded in 1844, became the nucleus of the Alsatian colony, though many of the immigrants settled in San Antonio because of better economic opportunities there.
6. The German settlers who immigrated to Texas because of Friedrich Ernst, the Adelsverein, and Castro generally were solid middle-class peasants. They were land-owning families, artisans, and, in a few cases, university-educated professional people and intellectuals. The majority were farmers with a modest experience in trade. The Germans were ambitious farmers and artisans who believed their futures were cramped by the social and economic system at home. They were not poverty-stricken

and oppressed. Indeed, they were able to afford the substantial cash investment required in overseas migration.

7. By 1850, when the organized projects ended, the German Belt in Texas was well established. America letters and chain migration continued through the 1850s but stopped with the Union blockade of Confederate ports.
 8. After the Civil War ended, ships loaded with German immigrants once again unloaded at the Galveston wharves. From 1865 to the early 1890s, more Germans arrived in Texas than during the thirty years before the war. The number probably reached 40,000. Many of them settled in the rural areas and towns of the German Belt. Interestingly, the postbellum [def.: *after-the-war*] immigrants generally avoided the Hill Country. Chain migration, aided by America letters, clearly played a role.
 9. However, by the 1890's, German immigrants who had earlier come to the midwestern states of Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, and neighboring states moved to Texas.
- D. The Germans who settled Texas were diverse in many ways. They included peasant farmers and intellectuals; Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and atheists; Prussians, Saxons, Hessians, and Alsatians; abolitionists and slaveowners; farmers and townsfolk; frugal, honest folk and ax murderers. They differed in dialect, customs, and physical features.
1. A majority had been farmers in Germany, and most came seeking economic opportunities. A few dissident intellectuals fleeing the 1848 revolutions sought political freedom, but few came for religious freedom. The German settlements in Texas reflected their diversity.
 2. Because of their diversity, Texas Germans had a varied impact in achievements and influence in the state. They distinguished themselves in many professions and activities-Chester W. Nimitz^{qv} in the military, Robert J. Kleberg in ranching, Gustav Schleicher in politics, and Charles A. Schreiner in retail business.
 3. Many German settlements had distinctive architecture, foods, customs, religion, language, politics, and economy. In the Hill Country the settlers built half-timbered and stone houses, miles of rock fences, and grand Gothic churches with jagged towers reaching skyward. They spoke a distinctive German patois [def: *slang*] in the streets and stores, ate spiced sausage and sauerkraut in cafes, and drank such Texas German. They polkaed in countless dance halls, watched rifle competitions at rural venues, and witnessed the ancient Germanic custom of Easter Fires at Fredericksburg. Neat, prosperous farms and ranches occupied the countryside.
- E. German cultural influence in Texas reached a peak in the 1890s.
1. The settlers had survived the difficult years of pioneering, and their relative isolation had preserved much that was German. In the years that followed, acculturation took a heavy toll. Two world wars

and the associated anti-German prejudice damaged the interest in German folkways and curtailed the use of the German language.

2. After the early 1900s the rural German communities received no additional immigrants from German Europe, and Anglo-Texan culture increasingly penetrated the Teutonic rural world. Rural depopulation, intermarriage, and modern communications increasingly obliterated rural German Texas.
3. In the early 1950s the thriving German-language press, vital to cultural survival in a literate society, fell silent, signaling the end of an era.

V. The Czechs are another ethnic group that has contributed to Texas and Hill County life and culture since the early 1800's.

A. The Czechs are a Slavic people from Bohemia, Moravia, and parts of Silesia.

[Teacher's materials: Map of Military Alliances of WWI.pdf for break-down of European areas that immigrants came from.]

1. Among the first Czechs to arrive in Texas were the writer Carl Postl (Charles Sealsfield), who may have visited the Texas-Louisiana borderland as early as 1823; Frederick Lemský, who arrived in 1836 and played the fife in the Texas band at the battle of San Jacinto; Bohumir Menzl, a Catholic priest who moved to New Braunfels in 1840; and Anthony M. Dignowity.
2. Rev. Josef Arnošt Bergmann, however, can best be described as the "father" of Czech immigration to Texas. Soon after arriving at the Austin County community of Cat Spring, Bergmann began writing to his friends in Europe about the opportunities that awaited future immigrants. His letters stimulated Bohemian and Moravian immigration.

B. The first immigrants were chiefly poor laborers from northeastern Bohemia.

1. On August 19, 1851, headed by Josef Šilar, they began a long journey that eventually brought them through Galveston. Dangerous and unhealthful traveling conditions reduced the group's numbers by half.
2. Two years later, a second group of immigrants from the same geographical area came to Texas. Their leader, Josef L. Lešikar, who had been influenced by Bergmann's letters, had helped organize the first group. In the following years many groups of immigrants came from Moravia. The transatlantic voyage grew less dangerous, and Galveston became established as the preferred port of entry.
3. Cat Spring continued to be the point of dispersal for the immigrants. The Central Texas counties of Austin, Fayette, Lavaca, and Washington had early Czech settlements, and Fayette County in particular became established as the center of Czech population in Texas.

C. Friction between Czechs and Anglo-Americans developed temporarily during the Civil War. Many recent immigrants did not fully understand the conflict between North and South, and at the same time they

were suspect as foreigners. Most significantly, virtually none of them had any allegiance to the institution of slavery, not only for moral reasons, but also because the concept of slavery was alien to their system of intensive family farming.

- D. During the years of greatest immigration before World War I, the abundance of good, relatively inexpensive farmland in Texas undoubtedly provided the chief motivation for the immigrants, most of whom had been small landowners who saw little chance for economic achievement at home. Political and religious oppression and military conscription in the Austrian Empire also encouraged emigration. [def.: immigration = *moving into*; emigration = *moving out of*]
1. By the twentieth century approximately 250 Czech communities had been settled in Texas, especially in Blackland Prairie areas where farming looked promising. The greatest concentration was found in Lavaca and Fayette counties, though Czech settlement extended into Washington, Burleson, and Brazos counties.
 2. North of this strip was a larger belt of Blackland Prairie, where more scattered Czech communities were located in an area running northeast from Williamson County through Bell County and into McLennan County, with smaller offshoots to the north in Hill, Ellis, and Kaufman counties.
- E. Two basic characteristics of the Czechs in Texas lie at the heart of their social structure: the extremely close-knit family unit and the attitude toward land.
1. The typical Czech farm family was a largely self-contained economic and social unit whose main purpose was to cultivate the land. Farming was a way of life not clearly separated from other life goals and not seen merely as a way of making money. The rural Czech settlements were characterized by such cooperative institutions as the beef club, designed to provide each member family with a supply of fresh beef weekly during the spring and summer.
 2. In the 1950's, Alprons Urbanovsky, a Czech farmer from Aquilla, became a famous inventor for his contribution to the improvement of farming conditions in the Texas heat. It was believed that his invention was the first of its kind in the state and possibly the nation. [[HoTT website link to People: Alphons Urbanovsky](#) (all §)]
 3. Settlements also often had an egalitarian social structure, a characteristic that helps to explain the Czechs' pronounced enthusiasm for American democratic ideals. Communities became established, and social clubs and organizations began to proliferate.
 4. Perhaps as many as 90 percent of the Czech immigrants were Catholics in their homeland, and the majority of these maintained an allegiance to the Catholic Church in Texas.
 5. A wealth of oral literature has also been preserved in Texas, including stories, proverbs, and especially folk songs. Singing and dancing were the most popular forms of folk art maintained in Texas, but other forms, such as certain games and elaborate wedding rituals, have been preserved. In

addition, certain ethnic foods, such as the pastry *koláč*, have become well known to virtually all Texans.

6. Beginning in the 1960s, as part of a national interest in ethnic awareness, Czech ethnic festivals and celebrations became increasingly popular, although the use of the language continued to decline.
7. The Czech Heritage Society, founded in 1982, had fourteen chapters in Texas by 2003. A number of Czech festivals are held in the state annually, including Czech Fest in Rosenberg, Czhilispiel in Flatonia, Westfest in West, and the National Polka Festival in Ennis. Several radio stations in Central Texas regularly play Czech music.
8. Hill County residents, both those descended from Czech immigrants to Central Texas and those who are have long been neighbors of the Czech descendants and the next-door community of West (just over the county line in McLennan County) enjoy participating in Czech festivals and dining on Czech specialties and bakery items that are reminiscent of this rich culture and heritage.
1. The town of West had become a station on the Texas Electric Traction Railway. [[HoTT website link to Everyday Life: Interurban Electric Railway](#) (all §)]

F. By 1900 the railroad and available university lands began to bring large numbers of Czechs and Germans to the previously-established Anglo-American community.

2. Cotton and small grain production, along with cattle ranching, were the area's chief occupations. [[HoTT website link to Everyday Life: Cotton is King](#) (Part I)]
3. In 1920, the town had a textile mill, a mop and broom factory, and a sausage and chili plant. The West Independent School District was established in 1923.
4. In 1989 West was known for its restaurants and bakeries that specialized in Czech and German foods. Nemecek Brothers Meat Market, established in 1896, is known throughout the state for its Czech hams and sausages. West had ninety businesses, a hospital, a combined library and museum, and a weekly newspaper.
5. The Westfest occurs annually on Labor Day weekend and attracts around 50,000 people. This festival celebrates with music, dance, and food the rich heritage that the Czechs brought to Texas.

VI. Immigrants from the British Isles were lured here by "land agents" with promises of land at 25¢ an acre. [[link on Heart of Texas Tales website to Events: Founding of Hill County](#) (§5-8 + link to letter & transcription)]

- A. James and Isabella Wood sold their farm in Scotland for \$485 an acre and bought land 'sight unseen' for 25¢ an acre in Bosque County.
- B. New arrivals to America, via Galveston, suffered many hardships travelling to Hill County. [[link on Heart of Texas Tales website to Events: Founding of Hill County, James Wood to read 1\) family letter that was sent back to Scotland; and 2\) Texas Ranger Buck Barry's Detailing of Indian Troubles](#) (in Teacher's Resources).]

- C. Land agents neglected to mention the presence of Indians in the area.
 - D. The Woods moved east of the Brazos River, near Fort Graham, seeking safety from the Indians. . [\[link on Heart of Texas Tales website to Teacher Resources: supplement-excerpt from Isabella Wood's letter\]](#)
 - E. A few years later, James Wood became the first naturalized citizen of Hill County.
 - F. Soon after the Hill County was organized, one of the precinct meetings was held at his home.
- VII. For African Americans, immigration came principally through slavery, which came to be a way of life in Texas settlements, even as the Mexican government had strongly expressed disapproval of the system.
- A. Slavery gained a foothold because:
 - 1. Anglo-Texans generally perceived blacks as destined for servitude; most of the immigrants came from the lower South, states where attitudes prescribed specific roles for both races.
 - 2. The immigrants considered slavery essential for the economic growth of Texas.
 - B. By 1836, 5,000 slaves resided in Texas, concentrated in the Anglo settlements.
 - C. The two largest racial minorities in Texas, blacks and Hispanics, developed partially separate social communities during the late nineteenth century.
 - 1. Partly because of Anglo-American discrimination, which produced segregation in some activities; and
 - 2. Partly because of the lack of opportunity in other activities.
 - D. In spite of the number of black Texans continuing to increase, in 1900 their number had declined in percentage of the state's population because other ethnic groups grew even more rapidly through immigration.
 - E. Most blacks labored as sharecroppers, but some herded cattle, and others worked on railroads, in lumber camps, on seaport docks, or as skilled craftsmen.
 - F. A small but growing number acquired their own land or opened small businesses.
 - G. To meet economic and social problems, black farmers organized solidarity groups.
 - 1. The Colored Farmers' Alliance organized in the 1880's.
 - 2. Some urban workers joined local unions or the Knights of Labor, however racial discrimination limited their opportunities.
 - 3. Black Texans formed their own churches, primarily Baptist and Methodist, to acquire leadership roles and control over their religious activities.
 - 4. They attended segregated public schools that generally received less funding than those for whites.
 - 5. The churches established several black colleges, and the state established Prairie View A&M College (now Prairie View A&M University).

6. Black Texans formed their own fraternal and social groups and continued to celebrate emancipation each June 19 (Juneteenth) with parades, picnics, and games.

H. Some native Black Texas began to emerge as artists who gained fame.

1. Sutton Griggs became one of the better-known black novelists in the 1890's.
2. Ragtime musician Scott Joplin moved north in the 1890's to as his fame grew. In 1879, Joplin wrote a composition in honor of the "Crash at Crush" railroad publicity stunt in Hill County.

[HoTT website link to [Events: Crash at Crush](#) for story and to hear Scott Joplin recording. (all §)]

I. Segregation existed for blacks throughout Texas.

1. They were segregated in most railroads, ships, and theaters.
2. Blacks faced exclusion from most hotels and restaurants.
3. They also received uneven justice as exclusion from juries became common.

J. During the 1980's minority populations grew considerably in the state.

1. Hispanic population figures increased by 45 percent.
2. African Americans increased by 17 percent, and
3. Whites grew by only 10 percent.

VIII. Most early Hispanic Texans were situated in central and southern Texas, where they made their livelihood as field workers.

A. Immigration of the 1820's and 1830's established in Mexican Texas social divisions with origins in the colonial era of Mexico.

1. The *ricos* occupied the upper crust of society; their standing rested on government position, family, racial background, business, and land possession.
2. At the bottom lived *peones* and day laborers, usually mixed-bloods and Hispanicized Indians.
3. The aristocrats sent their children to schools in Coahuila, Mexico, or had private tutors for them.
4. Throughout the Mexican era, it was the *ricos* who voiced political opinions.
5. Hispanic women lived in a society that stressed frontier ruggedness and masculinity.
6. Hispanic women encountered numerous political and legal restraints, (even as Mexican law permitted women numerous freedoms, such as the right to have their own property while married and the right to judicial redress).
 - a. Women could not be officeholders or exercise the franchise.
 - b. Adulteresses could faced harsh penalties and risked the loss of their property.
 - c. Divorces were difficult to obtain.

- d. In the tradition of other Western societies of that era, Tejanas (Texan-Mexican women) ate only after having served their husbands, then ate apart from the men.
- B. The end of the 19th century showed a significant growth in the population of Hispanic Texans.
 - 1. Partially through immigration, Hispanic Texans showed an increase in number in 1900.
 - 2. The population of Mexican birth in Texas growth during 1880 to 1900 accounted for about two-thirds of the Mexican-born population in all the United States.
 - 3. Mexican Texans formed a majority in the region below San Antonio and along the Rio Grande, where they had some political power.
 - 4. They maintained their culture through Spanish-language newspapers, observance of Mexican holidays, and the formation of *sociedades mutualistas* (mutual-aid societies).
 - 5. Some owned ranches or operated small businesses, though most herded cattle or sheep and did manual labor in towns or on railroads.
- C. Immigration, especially from Mexico and Germany, contributed significantly to the population by the turn of the century, doubling the numbers from 1880 to 3 million in 1900.
- D. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 prompted massive Mexican immigration to Texas.
- VIII. Other ethnic populations came in small numbers to Hill County more or less by happenstance. [[HoTT website link to People: Andrews Café](#) (all §) [for story of Greek immigrants passing through on the Interurban Electric Railway who decided to move to Hillsboro and open a café that stayed in business from 1916 - 1969.](#)]
- IX. During the 1980's minority populations in general had grown considerably in the state.
 - 1. Between 1980 and 1990 Hispanic population figures increased by 45 percent.
 - 2. African Americans grew by 17 percent.
 - 3. Whites increased by 10 percent.

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