

FAST FACTS PICTURE GALLERY

Brief Talking Points for Teachers

Look for the displays and items in bold.



Mosasaur

- Prehistoric sea reptile used **flippers** and **fins** to swim
- Lived in the **sea covering South Texas** millions of years ago
- Used **sharp teeth** to eat other animals (**carnivores**)
- Could grow up to 40 feet long or more



The Coahuiltecans

- Many tribes lived in South Texas and northeastern Mexico around 1000 A.D.
- A **family based society**
- **Lived off the land** and shared resources



Stars in domed room—look up!

- Represents the night sky off the mouth of the Rio Grande, 1519.
- Early European explorers **navigated** their ships using the stars—no satellites!



Horse

- The Spanish brought horses on ships to the New World by the 1500s.
- North America did not have horses living there at that time.
- Horses rode below ship's deck in a **sling** to avoid injury.



Jacal

- Introduced in the mid-1700s as a common house built by settlers in New Spain
- Used mostly for sleeping on simple beds
- Cooking done outside to avoid fire
- Made from **wood, mud, and grass or palm leaves**



Spanish Colonial ranch compound, mid-1700s

- Thick **stone walls, heavy gates** and **gun ports** (*tronerias*) protected against Indian attacks
- During raids, ranch workers living in *jacales* would enter the compound for safety.
- The *casa mayor* ("great house"), often two stories, stood inside the compound.



Horno

- **Stone**, beehive-shaped **ovens**
- Starting in the 1700s, the horno was used on early ranches for cooking outside.



Bell from Monterrey, Mexico

- Salvaged from a San Juan, Texas, scrapyard
- Dated **March 6, 1836**—the day the Alamo fell!
- No proven connection with the Alamo



Steamboat

- Common on the Rio Grande, 1850s-1900s
- Carried **crates** of cargo, **cotton bales**, and people
- Most Rio Grande steamboats were built on the Ohio River.



Cattle kingdom

- Starting in the mid-1700s, cowboys drove hardy longhorn cattle on long **trail drives**.
- The **wagon** contains a **chuck box**, a kind of kitchen on wheels for cowboys on the trail.
- Wells and windmills with **pumps** provided water for ranches.
- Cattle were marked with **brands**. **Barbed wire** ended the open-range for cattle.



Steam-powered train

- Connected South Texas with more places, more quickly in 1904
- Carried machinery, tools, lumber, and people
- Brought newcomers who built canals, farms, and more towns and cities
- Most towns had a train **depot** with a **telegraph**.



Canal

- Moved irrigation water from the Rio Grande to farms in 1904
- **Gates** and **valves** controlled and directed the flow of water.

Model T car

- Invented in 1908 and nicknamed the **horseless carriage**
- Transportation became quicker and easier.



The Great War—World War I

- In 1914, the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey) confronted the Allies (France, England, and Russia).
- On May 7, 1915, a German submarine sank the **Lusitania** (see model). Over 1,100 men, women and children died.
- U.S. Soldiers were stationed on the border to train for war. The U.S. officially joined the Allies in April 1917.
- Germany surrendered in November 1918.



Mexican Revolution (1910—1920)

- Fighting in cities like **Matamoros** caused many Mexican **refugees** to flee to the U.S., including the Valley.



Oil, Black Gold!

- A **drill bit** bored into the earth in Starr County, creating the Valley's first oil producing field in 1920.

The packing shed (1920s and 1930s)

- Valley production of agriculture thrived, especially **grapefruit**, **oranges**, **limes**, and other citrus.
- Fruits and vegetables were sorted with **machines**, packed in **crates**, and shipped out in refrigerated **railroad cars** like those shown at the back of the shed.



World War II (US involvement, 1941-1945)

- **Tractors** were busy in the Rio Grande Valley as farmers helped provide food needed by the military. **Ration coupons** were issued for fuel, clothing, and other high-demand items.
- **Old metal parts**, **rubber tires**, **motor oil**, and **cooking scraps** were recycled for war use.
- Some Valley natives helped develop the **atomic bomb** (model overhead) that helped end the war.





Founded in 1967 as the
Hidalgo County Historical Museum

FAST FACTS

Brief Talking Points for Teachers Vocabulary List

1. **atom bomb** – a weapon with great explosive power caused by the splitting of a plutonium or uranium atom
2. **barbed wire** – a wire or wires having small pieces of sharply pointed wire twisted around it, used in a fence
3. **brand** - a burned mark on an animal to show ownership
4. **cotton bale** – a large, tightly packed bundle of cotton
5. **crate** – a wooden box for packing, shipping, or storing
6. **depot** – a railroad station
7. **gunport** – an opening in the wall which allows a gun to fire outside
8. **jacal** – a hutlike structure with a thatched roof of grass or palm leaves and walls consisting of thin stakes driven into the ground close together and plastered with mud
9. **navigate** – to direct a ship on its course through the water
10. **prehistoric** – the period of time before recorded history
11. **pump** - a machine for bringing water up from inside the ground
12. **ration coupon** – a coupon used to purchase something that is available only in limited amounts
13. **refugee** – a person who leaves in a hurry to reach a safer place, especially during a war
14. **salvage** – saving something from being destroyed
15. **scrap yard** – a place where used metal is sold or processed for later melting into new products
16. **sling** – a strap or wide band that forms a loop by which something is suspended or carried
17. **telegraph** – a device used for sending and receiving messages from a distant place

FAST FACTS

Brief Talking Points for Teachers Vocabulary Practice

Complete the sentences using the vocabulary words and phrases. Use each word or phrase one time.

pump – prehistoric – navigate – sling – jacal – gunports – salvaged – scrap yard – depot – ration coupons – cotton bales – brand – crates – telegraph – atom bomb – barbed wire – refugees

1. Early explorers such as La Salle and Pineda used the stars to help _____ their ships.

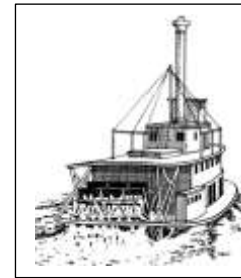
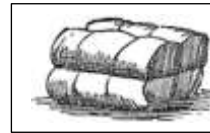


2. The bell from Monterrey, Mexico was _____ from a San Juan _____ . It was about to be destroyed.

3. When the horses crossed the ocean by ship, they rode in a _____ to keep them safe.

4. The mosasaur was a _____ sea reptile that swam in the sea covering South Texas millions of years ago.

5. The steamboat carried _____ and _____ up and down the Rio Grande River.



6. The _____ was a home with a thatched roof. Its walls were made with stakes and mud.

7. The cowboys marked their cattle with a _____ that represented their ranch.

8. For protection against enemies, the thick walls of the Spanish Colonial ranch had _____ to shoot outside.

9. Some ranchers used _____ to make their fences.



10. If a river wasn't nearby, the settlers used a _____ to bring up water from underground.



11. During World War II, US citizens used _____ to purchase certain food, fuel, and clothing.
12. In the early 1900s, people in the valley waited in the _____ for the train to arrive.
13. The destruction caused by the _____ helped end World War II.
14. In the early 1900s, you could quickly send a message across the country by using a _____.
15. Many _____ left Mexico in a hurry because of the dangers they faced during the Mexican revolution.



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Lesson Suggestions

1. Prior to your museum visit, preview pictures and vocabulary.
2. During your museum visit, students will recognize gallery objects from the preview lesson.
Discuss exhibits, emphasizing learned vocabulary.
3. After your museum visit, review pictures and vocabulary.
4. Student will complete vocabulary practice page.

3rd grade TEKS

History: 3.3A Geography: 3.4B

4th grade TEKS

History: 4.1B; 4.2A,C; 4.4B,C; 4.5A Geography: 4.9A English Language Arts: 4.2B

5th grade TEKS

History: 5.1A; 5.5A Geography: 5.9A English Language Arts: 5.2B

7th grade TEKS

History: 7.1A; 7.6B; 7.7A,E Geography: 7.10A English Language Arts: 7.2B

Answer Key

1. navigate
2. salvaged, scrap yard
3. sling
4. prehistoric
5. crates, cotton bales
6. jacal
7. brand
8. gunports
9. barbed wire
10. pump
11. ration coupons
12. depot
13. atom bomb
14. telegraph
15. refugees