LESSON 30
TEXAS ALMANAC TEACHERS GUIDE

Local Government

• Mayors and City Managers of Texas Cities
• Regional Councils of Government
• Wet-Dry Counties
• County Courts, County and District Officials

INSTRUCTIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT QUESTIONS: Students will read “Local Government” in the Government section of the Texas Almanac and answer these questions.

   a. There are __________ counties in Texas. The number has not changed since ________________.
   b. The least-populous county is ____________________.
   c. The county with the most residents is ________________.
   d. Each county has a _____________________________ court.
   e. More than __________ percent of the state’s population lives in cities and towns.
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2. INTERVIEW A CITY OFFICIAL: Students will interview a city official listed in “Mayors and City Managers of Texas Cities.” Questions might include:

- educational background
- term of office
- job responsibilities
- qualifications for the office
- selection process (appointment or election)
- job benefits.

Students will present this information to the class from a first-person perspective.

3. PROBLEM AND PROPOSAL:
   a. Students will attend a meeting of their local governmental body and take notes.
   b. Using these notes, students will brainstorm ideas for local improvements such as new traffic lights, sidewalks, streets, etc.

They will write a proposal addressing the problem and present it to their local governmental body or to their class.

4. REGIONAL COUNCIL PROSPECTUS: Students will read the “Regional Councils of Government” section and locate the regional council for their area. They will write a prospectus to their regional council requesting the construction of a community swimming pool.

5. COUNTY COURTHOUSE SKETCH: Students will make a visit to their county courthouse. They will sketch the courthouse and label any monuments, historical markers, and/or statues present.

6. WET-DRY ELECTION EDITORIAL: Using the “Wet-Dry Counties” section, students will write an editorial supporting or opposing a county’s wet or dry election.

7. CONTACT A COUNTY OFFICIAL: Using the “Texas County and District Officials” section, students will contact one or more of their county officials to determine the job description and qualifications for the position(s); see suggestions in Activity No. 2. They will report back to the class with this information.

There are 24 Regional Councils of Government in Texas. More information can be found at: http://www.txregionalcouncil.org/