Ranching in Texas

• From the Texas Almanac 2006–2007

INSTRUCTIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. CATTLE BRANDS: The teacher will discuss the history of cattle brands and demonstrate designing and reading the brands. For more information see:
   http://www.tscrabrands.com/design-brand.html
   http://www.cowboyshowcase.com/brands.htm
   http://www.sloanbrands.com/history.htm

   Students will complete “Cattle Brands — The Cowboy’s Mark” Student Activity Sheet. Then, they can create their own brand and draw it on the “Beef Cattle” Student Activity Sheet.

2. CATTLE RANCH PRESENTATION: Students will select and conduct research on a large Texas cattle ranch or an important rancher. They will create a presentation for the class, including maps and illustrations.

3. RANCHING ROUNDUPT (CAUSE & EFFECT): Students will read “Ranching in a Changing Land” on pages 26–31 of the Texas Almanac 2006–2007 or the online article:
   http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/agriculture/ranching-changing-land

   Students then will write an effect for the causes in the “Ranching Roundup” Student Activity Sheet.

A cowboy drives a herd of Longhorns on Big Bend State Ranch in Brewster County. Texas Almanac file photo.
Cattle Brands – The Cowboy’s Mark

A brand showed ownership of cattle. Cattlemen were proud of their brands and often named their ranches after their brands. The history of brands goes back to the early Egyptians who are shown in tomb paintings branding their spotted cattle. Hernán Cortés branded the cattle he brought from Spain. Stephen F. Austin used a Spanish brand. Texas cowhands followed three basic rules in reading a brand correctly:

1. **Left to Right**
2. **Top to Bottom**
3. **Outside to Inside**

Examples of the Cowboy Alphabet

- Running W
- Crazy R
- Lazy R
- Rocking R
- Flying R
- Bar
- Rail
- Slash
- Half circle
- Circle

See if you can name these brands:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 
Cattle Brands – The Cowboy’s Mark

Create your own cattle brand and draw it on this Texas longhorn.
Ranching Roundup

Use pages 26–31 of the *Texas Almanac 2006–2007* to write an EFFECT for the CAUSES listed below. The article is also online at:

http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/agriculture/ranching-changing-land

1. **CAUSE:** The Catholic missions were established.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

2. **CAUSE:** Many of the missions were abandoned because of hostile Indians.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

3. **CAUSE:** The Old Three Hundred were primarily farmers.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

4. **CAUSE:** Texas was too far from markets in the eastern United States.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

5. **CAUSE:** After the Civil War, Texas was financially drained and cattle were worth more money in the North and East.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

6. **CAUSE:** At the northern markets, the best prices for cattle were earned by the first herds to arrive.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

7. **CAUSE:** The ranchmen began seeing the need to own their grazing land.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

8. **CAUSE:** Windmills were used to produce water from underground.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

9. **CAUSE:** Mesquite, cedar, and other invading plants consumed horrendous amounts of water, as well as displaced the original vegetation.
   **EFFECT:** ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

10. **CAUSE:** The screwworm was eradicated.
    **EFFECT:** ______________________________
    ______________________________
    ______________________________

11. **CAUSE:** Exotic animals have been introduced over much of the Hill Country.
    **EFFECT:** ______________________________
    ______________________________
    ______________________________

12. **CAUSE:** Irrigation and municipal pumping have increased.
    **EFFECT:** ______________________________
    ______________________________
    ______________________________