

## Colonization of Texas: Letters to Stephen F. Austin: Seventh Grade Lesson Plan

**Objective:** The student will demonstrate an understanding in a response group activity that will require them to evaluate fictional letters that have been written to Stephen F. Austin. These letters will demonstrate certain characteristics that either meet or do not meet his requirements.

**TEKS:** 7.2(E)

**Materials:** Fictional letters to Stephen F. Austin, graphically organized notes.

**Overview of Activity:** The students will participate in a response group activity that will require them to evaluate fictional letters that contain characteristics of potential colonists to Austin's colony. They will document their results on the graphically organized notes that will show a "Yes" they may go or "No" they may not go.

**Preview:** Students will respond to these questions:

What qualities do you look for in a person that wants to join your sports team?

What advantages would there be to selecting people of good character?

What happens when you let a person on that does not have any experience?

**Activity:**

1. Students will be broken up into groups of 3 to 4 students.
2. Before handing out the packets of letters, pass out the graphically organized notes.
3. Pass out the packets of fictional letters, and directions. Or, you may use AV equipment to show the letters.
4. Read aloud the background information about the activity and explain the characteristics that Austin is looking for in colonists.
5. Start with letter one and read together. Go over each detail and decide whether or not the qualities shown in the letter reflect desired characteristics. Document the yes or no decision on the graphically organized notes.

6. After reviewing the first letter, give groups an opportunity to read the next one on their own. They will then decide if that particular person meets Austin's requirements. Go over together.
7. After reviewing the information, the students will document on the notes whether or not they can go. They will need to write down the characteristics that either meet or do not meet the requirements.
8. Continue the process until all letters have been read and reviewed.
9. Have the groups respond verbally about the results of their findings.
10. Compare results with other groups and have students explain their reasons for their choices.

**Processing:**

The students will create a letter of their own (individually) that describes their situation at home and why they need to make a change. Explain to the students that they do not have to be someone that Stephen F. Austin is going to accept. They may take on the role of an individual that has no place in Austin's colony or one that meets the requirements.