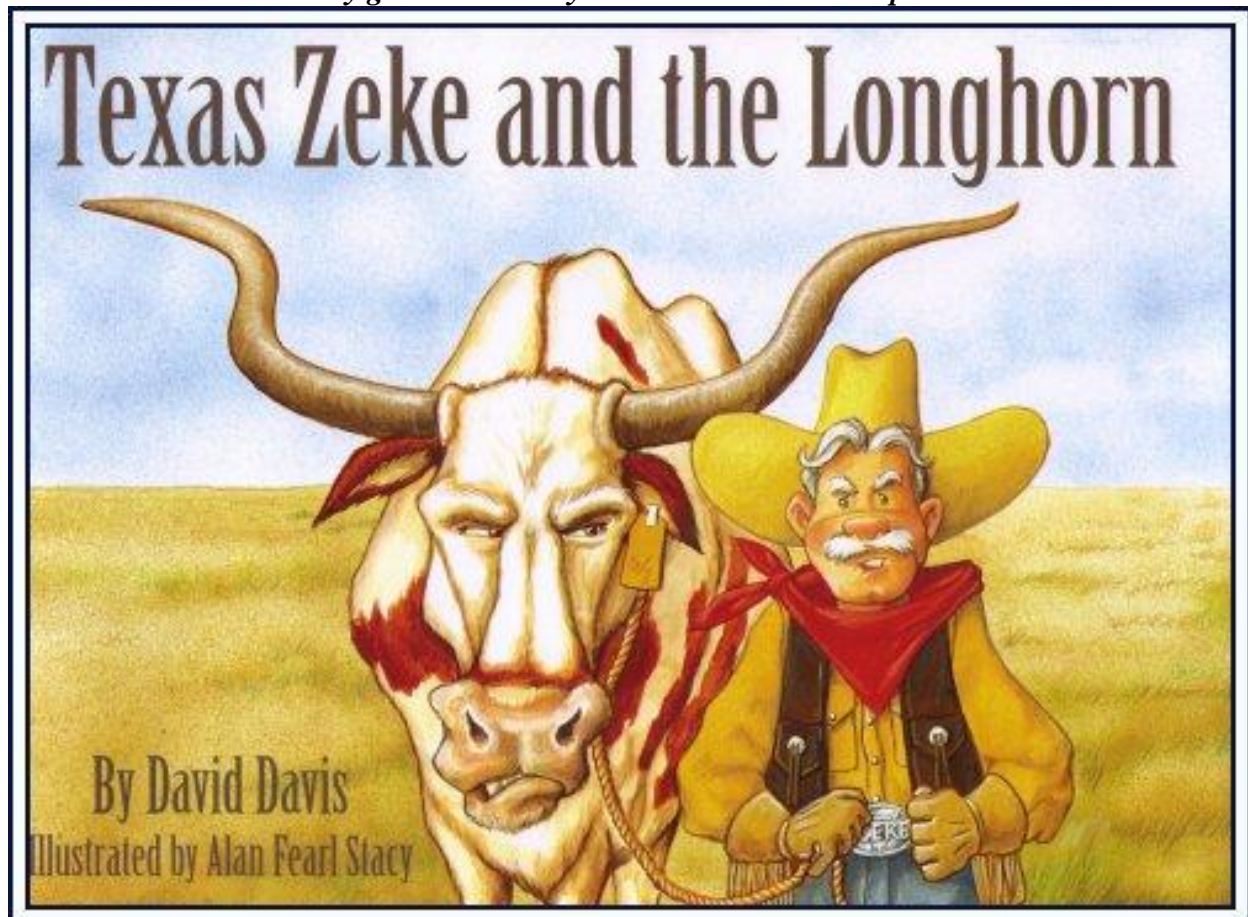


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CURRICULUM GUIDE
TEXAS ZEKE AND THE
LONGHORN

Study guide created by David Davis----- Reproducible



By Award-Winning Writer David Davis
Illustrated by Alan Stacy

To schedule events contact David at www.davidrdavis.com email: lastditchus@yahoo.com
Texas Zeke and the Longhorn ISBN 978-1-58980-348-0

Book Description

Old Texas cowboy Zeke is just trying to get home for a bowl of chili, but to do so, he must encourage his newly purchased steer to go into the corral. By enlisting the help of a mesquite stick, a collie, a campfire, a javelina, a burro, a prickly pear cactus, an armadillo, a pretty gal, and a mockingbird, he finally gets his bowl of chili, but not without the threat of more repetitive and rhythmic shenanigans. Featured in Dr. Peggy Sharp's "Resource Handbook" for 2007. (www.peggysharp.com) *Named to the Accelerated Reader List.*

Pre- Reading Activities

- Discuss folktales with your students. Folktales are stories passed down from generation to generation by storytellers. Long ago, since there were no radios, TV's, movies, or computers, storytelling was a large part of life. Some of the stories illustrated a moral or lesson.
- Read a story like "The Fisherman and His Wife." Have students discuss what the moral to the story might be.
- Ask the students to illustrate a scene from a favorite folktale, like "Cinderella."

Discussion Questions

1. *Texas Zeke and the Longhorn* is a re-telling of what folktale?
2. Who are the main characters in *Texas Zeke and the Longhorn*?
3. What does Texas Zeke want?
4. What obstacles does Zeke have to overcome to get home for chili?
5. What does Zeke learn by the end of the story?

Cross Curriculum Activities

Science

- The Texas armadillo is the *nine-banded armadillo*. Did you know that baby armadillos are always born as identical quadruplets? That means they are all exactly alike. Armadillos like water and have two funny ways to cross a river. They walk across on the bottom of the river, or they suck lots of air into their stomachs so they can float and "dog paddle" across. They are very good swimmers!
- Did you know javelinas aren't pigs even though they look like them? They are *peccaries*. The name javelina comes from the word for a sharp spear called a javelin. Javelinas earned that name because they have very sharp teeth. Another name for the Texas javelina is *collared peccary*. You wouldn't want to have dinner with a javelina. Their favorite meal is prickly pear cactus! Ouch!
- Did you know that Longhorn cattle can have horns eight feet across? These wild cattle used to roam free in Texas. They came from a cross between cattle the Spanish brought to the new world and the cattle that settlers brought from England. Longhorns were lean, mean, and could run really fast. They needed little water. Longhorns were tough customers that could live through the hot summers and cold winters in Texas.

History

- **Texas Zeke and the Longhorn** is a re-telling of an old English folktale called “The Old Woman and Her Pig.” Read the old folktale and compare it to **Texas Zeke and the Longhorn**. How are the stories alike? How are they are different?
- The first cowboys were Mexican Vaqueros. American cowboys adopted their manner of dress. Every piece of clothing a cowboy wore helped him with his work:
 - Boots protected his feet from thorns, brush and snakes. Their high heels helped to keep his feet in the stirrups when he rode his horse.
 - His wide brimmed hat protected him from the hot sun and rain.
 - The spurs he wore on his boots helped him control his horse.
 - The leather chaps a cowboy wore when working protected his legs from thorns and brush as he herded cattle through rough country.
 - The long neckerchief he wore around his neck protected him from dust kicked up by a herd of cattle.
- What special clothing does a fireman wear? A policeman? A football player?

Art

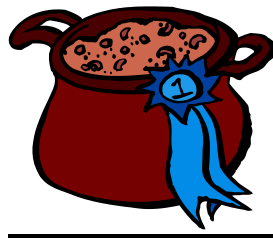
- Draw a picture of Texas Zeke and his longhorn. Draw a picture of some of the other characters in the story. Notice the funny faces the animals make in the story.

Writing

- David Davis used “The Old Woman and Her Pig” to springboard the idea for **Texas Zeke and the Longhorn**. He changed the setting to Texas in the old west. Pick out another folktale, like “Cinderella.” What if she lived in Texas? What if she lived on a ranch? See if you can write “Cinderella” as a Texas story.
- Write your own story using one of the characters in **Texas Zeke and the Longhorn**. Have another student draw the pictures to illustrate it. Can you decide what pictures you'll need to tell the story? This is how Mr. Davis works with the artist to create picture books.

Thematic Connections

- **Teamwork:** Each character has to do his part to get the stubborn Longhorn into the corral.
- **Perseverance:** Texas Zeke doesn't give up until he finds a critter that will help him. He rides his pony along the trail until he finds the help he needs. Zeke overcomes the bad attitudes of the other characters, and triumphs in the end.
- **Responsibility:** Zeke wants to get home for a bowl of chili, but he knows he has to herd the longhorn into the corral first. He won't go home to supper until his work is done.
- **Benevolence:** Zeke's gift of a bluebonnet to the mockingbird sets in motion the chain of events that finally gets the longhorn into the corral. Good deeds toward others can change everything—even in a bad situation.



Discussion Question Answers

1. “The Old Woman and Her Pig,” an old English folktale.
2. The stubborn longhorn and hungry Texas Zeke.
3. He wants to get home for a bowl of chili.
4. Zeke has to get the Longhorn into the corral, and he has to get help from a long string of ornery Texas critters.
5. He learns that it takes cooperation to get a job done. He also learns that sometimes one small good deed (like giving a bluebonnet to the mockingbird) can set in motion a chain of events that solves his problem.

Internet Resources:

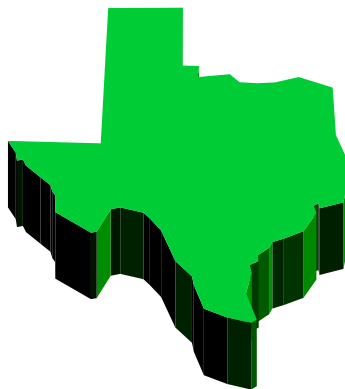
Handbook of Texas Online

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/index.html>

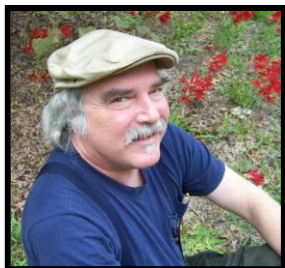
What Others Are Saying:

From School Library Journal

“A gentle version of The Old Woman and Her Pig, set in Texas. Old Zeke buys an ornery longhorn steer that balks at being corralled, and the frustrated cowboy won’t get home for chili until the job is done. When he requests help from a collie and is refused, he asks a mesquite stick to poke the dog, and so it goes....the colorful cartoon illustrations cleverly convey the action and are filled with humor. The keen combination of art and story is further enhanced by endpapers that map out the events in simple line drawings that will encourage retellings. Altogether, this softer interpretation of the folktale will fit in with current sensibilities.” –Nancy Call, Santa Cruz Public Libraries, Aptos, CA



About the Author



David Davis is a humorist, cartoonist, writer, and speaker. He grew up in San Antonio, Texas. Most of his stories draw on his Texas roots, and his “baby-boomer” love of music.

Davis is the author of *Jazz Cats* and *Ten Redneck Babies*, both of which were named to the Children’s Choice Top 100 list. *Jazz Cats* was a finalist for the Texas Golden Spur Award, as well. His satirical *Night Before Christmas* books are perennial comedy best-sellers.

In addition to his books, David has published pen-and-ink artwork, cartoons, poems, humor, and short stories in various magazines and newspapers, including *Travels with Grandpaw*, a popular internet comic strip about old time Texas, featured at a genealogy website. He won an award from the Mississippi Press Association for his political cartooning some years ago.

Davis is a member of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. He is an active speaker and presenter at educational conferences and schools, and he has been a featured author at the Texas Book Festival. David Davis lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

David’s Picture Books

(Pelican Publishing Co.)

- ❖ *Texas Mother Goose*, ISBN 978-1-58980-369-5
- ❖ *Rock ‘n’ Roll Dogs*, ISBN 978-1-58980-349-7
- ❖ *Librarian’s Night Before Christmas*, ISBN 978-1-58980-336-7
- ❖ *Texas Zeke and the Longhorn*, ISBN 978-1-58980-348-0
- ❖ *Ten Redneck Babies: A Southern Counting Book*, ISBN 1-58980-232-2
- ❖ *The Nurse’s Night Before Christmas*, ISBN 1-58980-152-0
- ❖ *Jazz Cats*, ISBN 1-56554-859-0
- ❖ *Redneck Night Before Christmas*, ISBN 1-56554-293-2
- ❖ *Trucker’s Night Before Christmas*, ISBN 1-56554-656-3

School Appearances

All programs are *interactive*, flexible, and tailored to the specified age groups. His comic skit and reading featuring his picture book *Jazz Cats* (with a mock impromptu jazz band featuring kids) will delight young and old alike.

David encourages children to hold on to writing, drawing, and musical dreams using easy-going humor, and short bits of his own life story. His talks and skits show children that reading is fun—and so is writing. Mr. Davis’s *Tips for Taking the TAKS Test--and Writing in General* entertains and teaches at the same time. Kids won’t be just sitting on their bottoms when Mr. Davis shows up. All skits feature the *children themselves* as players. **Get ready for fun!**

Books: Pelican Publishing Company offers a 40 percent discount on all books for a special event. For information about ordering books, call the School Sales Manager at Pelican Publishing Company, 1-800-843-1724 Ext.319.

Awards and Honors:

Jazz Cats: Named to the 2002 Children’s Choice Award Top 100 List, Finalist for the Texas Golden Spur Award for Children’s Literature 2005, Accelerated Reader Program Selection.

Ten Redneck Babies: Named to the 2005 Children’s Choice Award Top 100 List.

Texas Zeke and the Longhorn and *Rock ‘n’ Roll Dogs:* Accelerated Reader Program Selection