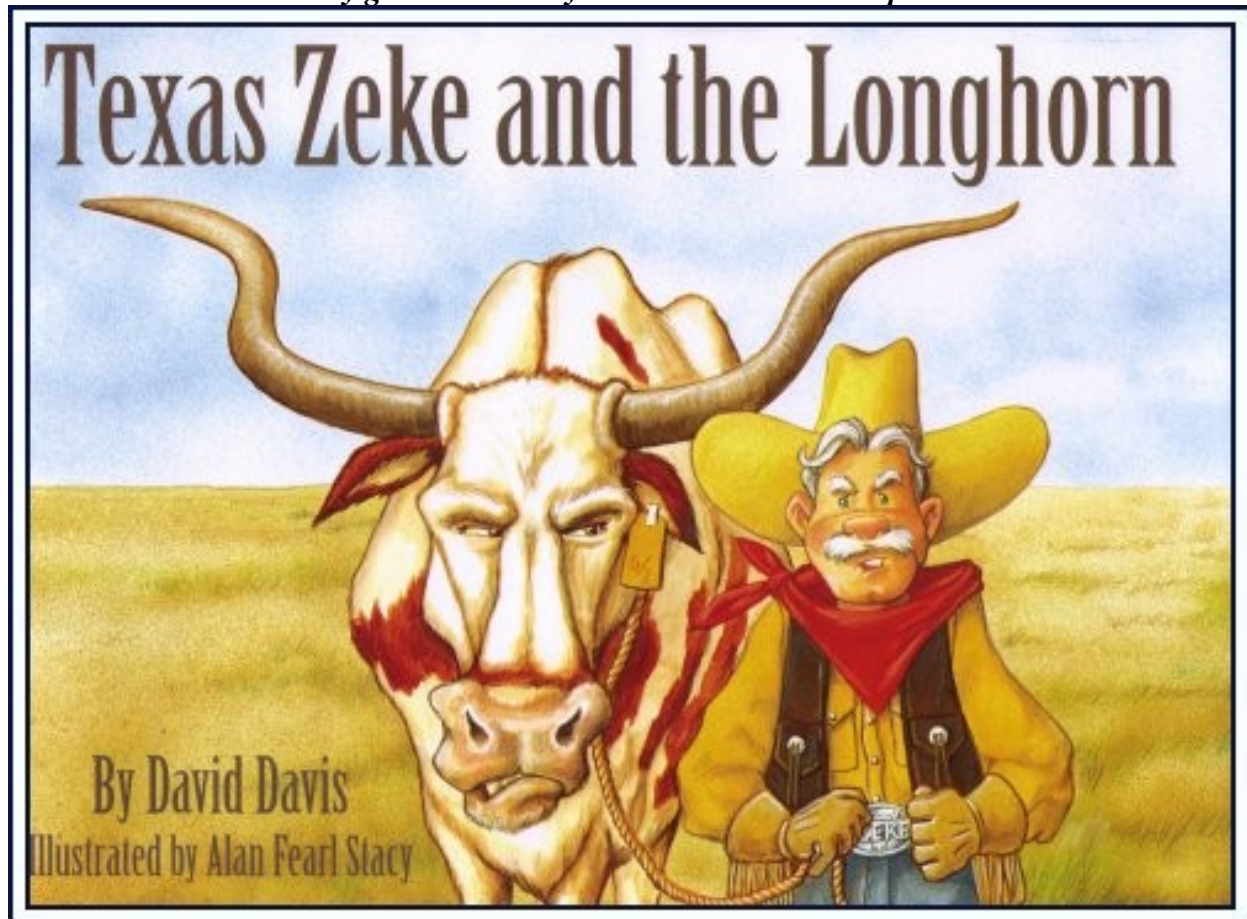


CURRICULUM GUIDE
TEXAS ZEKE
AND THE
LONGHORN

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



By Award Winning Writer David Davis
Illustrated by Alan Stacy

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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

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. Example: 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

- *Texas Zeke and the Longhorn* is a re-telling of what folktale? *The Old Woman and Her Pig*, an old English folktale.
- Who are the main characters in *Texas Zeke and the Longhorn*? The stubborn Longhorn and hungry Texas Zeke.
- What does Texas Zeke want? He wants to get home for a bowl of chili.
- What obstacles does Zeke have to overcome to get home for chili? Zeke has to get the Longhorn into the corral, and he has to get help from a long string of ornery Texas critters.
- What does Zeke learn by the end of the story? 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.

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 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 the 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 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.

Internet Resources:

Handbook of Texas Online

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

What Others Are Saying:

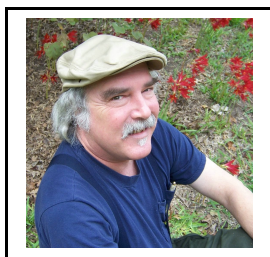
From School Library Journal

“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.)

A Southern Child’s Garden of Verses, ISBN 978-1-58980-764-8

Texas Aesop’s Fables, ISBN 978-1-58980-569-9

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

Your mom or dad might enjoy making some “Texas Zeke” Chili (make it mild or hot-to taste). You can add beans if you wish, but traditional chili did not have beans.

Old Texas family recipe:

TEXAS ZEKE CHILE

Ingredients:

- 4 pounds of chili meat, hamburger, deer meat, or turkey hamburger
- 2 onions
- 1 bell pepper
- 2 12oz. cans of diced tomatoes
- 1 8oz. can of tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon of chili powder per pound of meat

Cooking oil

Salt

Red pepper

Directions:

1. Cover the bottom of the pot with oil.
2. Brown the meat, chopped onions, and chopped bell pepper in pot.
3. Add 1 tablespoon of chili powder per pound of meat.
4. Add water (cover the meat in pot.)

5. Add cans of diced tomatoes and can of tomato sauce.

Add salt and red pepper to taste.

6. Simmer to taste.

7. Thicken with Masa Harina if desired

YEE-HA! TEXAS ZEKE LOVES IT!



David Davis and Jan Peck teamed up five years ago to present a program to reach every student. "Our goal is to put on the most entertaining, inspiring, motivating school program you've ever had!"

Our highly interactive presentation includes:

*An impromptu Jazz Band (with shades, mock musical instruments, and hats) using Davis's Children's Choice Award winning book: *Jazz Cats* and starring your students and teachers. An interactive skit featuring Texas Zeke and the Longhorn.*

*A GIANT 6'6" CARROT and a dramatic play of *The Giant Carrot* starring your students as the actors. You'll take a dive *Way Down Deep in the Deep Blue Sea* and go on a *Pirate Treasure Hunt, me maties!**

Inspiration for writing, reading, and drawing. Encouragement, inspiration and help with taking the (TAKS) creative writing test for Texas 4th Graders! Special surprises and gifts for all students and teachers! For ages PreK-6th; large and small groups.

Please see our website at www.davidrdavis.com for details,

or write to lastditchus@yahoo.com