

# TEXAS RANGERS: THE BEGINNING

**Grade Level Focus:** 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Topic:** Texas Rangers: The Beginning

**Compelling Question:** Why were the Texas Rangers created?

**TEKS:** 4.3(D)

**Materials:** Matching game hand out; images for police, army, and Rangers for display

## Background Information:

In 1823, Stephen F. Austin wrote a letter to Mexico City asking for permission to create the first Texas Rangers to provide defense for Austin's new Texas colony. The first Texas Rangers consisted of just ten volunteers and served under Lieutenant Moses Morrison. The Rangers would ride horses along the frontier of Texas and protect the colonists from Native American raids and other banditry as necessary. Early Texas Rangers were responsible for bringing all of their own supplies: including a horse, single shot guns, and a knife. Texas Rangers in the 1820s often did not have clear leadership, were rarely paid, and typically were mustered and disbanded as needed.

Engage	<p>Why do you think the Stephen F. Austin decided to create the Texas Rangers instead of a normal police force or army?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students about their theories.</li> </ul>
Explore	<p>Matching Game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match the problem early Texans had with the solution the Rangers provided. Here are the answers.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The settlements of early Texas were too spread out → Rangers were constantly on the move across the entire Texas Frontier</li> <li>○ There were no big cities in early Texas → Rangers operated spread out, not concentrated in one place like a standard police force</li> <li>○ Native Americans fought from horseback → All Rangers had and used horses</li> <li>○ Austin's colony had no money to pay or supply the Rangers → Rangers provided all of their own supplies and consented to be paid with land</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Explain	<p>The Pros and Cons of a Ranger Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students what other options there were for colonist security in the 1800s (answers should be along the lines of army, police, sheriff, etc.)</li> <li>• Have a discussion to compare and contrast Rangers, Police, and an Army. Look at the pros and cons of each. There are images to help students at the end of this lesson plan.</li> <li>• An Army-             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pros:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Armies were well organized</li> <li>▪ Armies were well disciplined with a clear chain of command</li> <li>▪ Armies had a lot of fighters</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Cons:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Armies only knew how to do battle in the traditional way</li> <li>▪ The bulk of an army is typically fighting on foot</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum Education Resources

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Armies were located at a central location, and it could take an army a long time to travel</li> <li>• Police/Sheriff-       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pros-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Police were well organized</li> <li>▪ Police were well equipped</li> <li>▪ Police had a clear chain of command</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Cons-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Police were meant to keep peace and protect in cities-not go to war or fight in battles</li> <li>▪ Police were not large in number in Texas in the 1800s</li> <li>▪ Police were typically in larger, well populated cities—not on the frontier</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Texas Rangers       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pros-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rangers were created to be very mobile and set up camp wherever they were</li> <li>▪ Rangers were all on horseback</li> <li>▪ Rangers were highly adaptable to new opponents</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Cons-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rangers tended to be unorganized</li> <li>▪ Rangers did not always follow the rules</li> <li>▪ Rangers were not well equipped and had to bring all of their own supplies</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Elaborate/ Evaluate	<p>Independent Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students why they think Stephen F. Austin chose to create the Texas Rangers rather than police or an army. Have them write down their thoughts in a paragraph on the matching game handout.</li> </ul>



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## MATCHING GAME

The early Texans had a lot of problems when they first started their settlements that the Rangers were the answer to. Please write the letter of the Texas Ranger answer in the blank of the colonists' problem.

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|---|--|
| ___ The settlements of early Texas were too spread out        | A) Rangers were constantly on the move across the entire Texas Frontier                    |
| ___ There were no big cities in early Texas                   | B) Rangers provided all of their own supplies and agreed to be paid with land              |
| ___ Native Americans fought from horseback                    | C) Rangers operated spread out, not concentrated in one place like a standard police force |
| ___ Austin's colony had no money to pay or supply the Rangers | D) All Rangers had and used horses   |

Why do you think Stephen F. Austin chose to create the Texas Rangers instead of police or an army?

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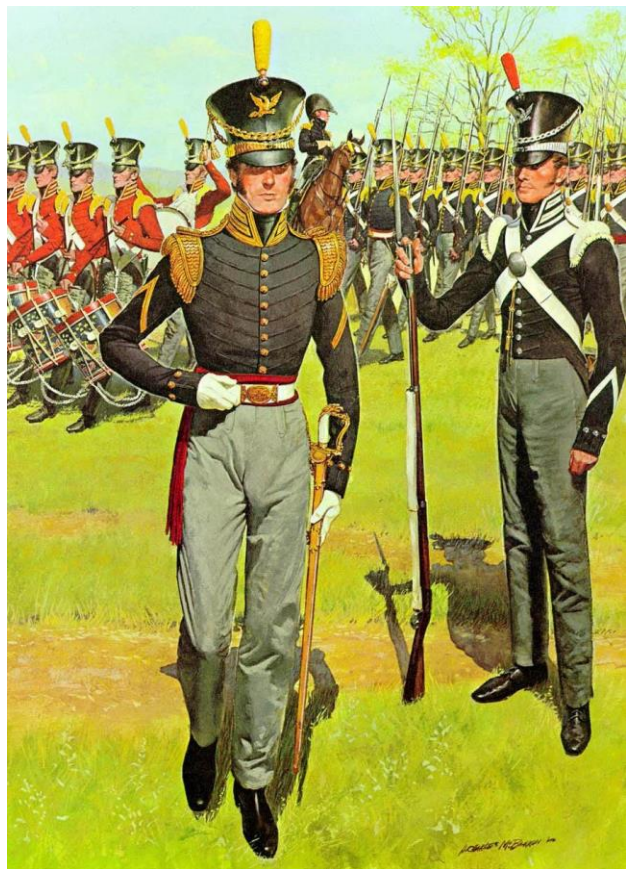
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### Police/Sheriff

Image courtesy of C&G Newspapers



### Army

Image courtesy of <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/ab/1b/3c/ab1b3c4e1744337224123ee9403cb5fa.jpg>



### Texas Rangers

Image courtesy of TRHF

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