

Alamo Lesson Plans  
NEH Conference  
2<sup>nd</sup> Session  
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In my current teaching position at Burbank School District #111, I teach a variety of levels of students that are advanced or gifted, as well as a variety of topics which range from the normal school subjects, to film and video.

With that in mind, it is nearly impossible to come up with ONE lesson plan, so what I chose to do instead was to create 20 possible ideas that can be used when teaching about the Alamo and the history of Texas. This way, I can have a little library of ideas I can use depending on the level of the students and the time of the class.

Listed below, are twenty ideas that I can glean from, thanks to the NEH conference. These ideas are all jumping off points, not complete lessons. Although, many can be expanded greatly depending on the time you have.

1. Design your own Alamo – give students a list of items that might be needed during that time period and give them a cost to each item. Let them make decisions on what they think is needed and what is frivolous based off however much “money” they have.
2. Histopoly – Have the student create a Monopoly board based off of places in history. Discuss which places should be on/off, and where should they go as far as placement on the board/importance of history.
3. Journal Entry – with journal entries, in my class, there is always discussion on the journals as a class afterward. “Pretend you are living in the Alamo January 1836. what do you think is going to happen in the next year to your home, “state”, and country?”
4. Journal Entry – “Pretend you are a Mexican soldier in Santa Ana’s army and you are marching toward the U.S. Write a two day journal entry on what you might be seeing, hearing, and thinking about.”
5. Journal Entry – “Would you rather die a hero or live on for thirty years and be known as a criminal?” This is in reference to Bowie’s lifestyle.
6. Journal Entry – “Pretend you are running the mission and you just had twelve more Indians come to live there. Write down a daily schedule for them to follow over the next few weeks.”
7. Create a film that is a metaphor for the Alamo. What could you possibly make in your school life that could be similar in theme to what happened to the people at the Alamo. (Maybe a test situation they know is hopeless, etc..)
8. Journal Entry – “You are the King of Spain. What is your answer to the “Indian problem?”
9. Create, write, film, or perform an interview from someone that claims to have lived in the Alamo and survived the attack. The interviewer has to try to find fault with the story, while the interviewee has to make sure his story comes off as true as possible.

10. As a teacher, find a few primary resource items in terms of letters and journals and edit some of your own historical mistakes in them. Challenge the students to find the errors.
11. Give students letters from people on both sides of the Alamo and challenge the students to write about it accurately. It can be an accurate story, a textbook chapter, or whatever style of writing you wish to stress.
12. Create a Venn diagram of Texas 1836/Illinois 2009.
13. Have them redesign the state quarter of Texas with an Alamo theme.
14. Have them pretend they are running the National Park Services and their job is to create a Alamo park area. Give them a list of ideas, and the cost for each idea, as well as a budget. This can be expanded greatly, depending on the class.
15. Create a Venn diagram of a Mexican family and a Texas family circa 1800's or 2009.
16. Journal Entry – “How would Texas or the U.S. be different if Texas won at the Alamo? Or, if Texas lost the war?”
17. Journal Entry – Give students a few oral accounts of what people are saying in Gonzalez right after the Alamo. Only give them bits and pieces of information. With that, have them create a journal entry from a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view of someone living in Gonzalez at that time. This would be great to start off on the Alamo.
18. Compare/Contrast a Mexican textbook with a Texas textbook with an Illinois textbook on what is contained about the Alamo. Which is the most accurate?
19. Giving students a handout map on the Alamo and list of resources at their disposal, have them pretend they are Santa Ana and they have to attack the Alamo. How would they do it?
20. Six Flags flew over Texas. Create a new Texas flag that incorporated something from each flag. Be able to explain each part.

So, thanks to the conference, when it come time for Texas history, I have many ideas for many different grade levels for many different types of learners at my disposal.

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