

# FORT MCKAVETT

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

*Fort McKavett, Texas*

## Post-Visit Guide

Grade 4

### Overview: The Sturdiest Post in the West

In this lesson, students will discuss the use of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources at Fort McKavett. Students will also learn about the rigorous life of a soldier at Fort McKavett in the 1850s.

### Social Studies TEKS

(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to:

(A) identify and explain clusters and patterns of settlement in Texas at different time periods such as prior to the Texas Revolution, after the building of the railroads, and following World War II.

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States and Texas;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(C) organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;

(D) identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event.

### Science TEKS

(7) Earth and space. The students know that Earth consists of useful resources and its surface is constantly changing. The student is expected to:

(C) identify and classify Earth's renewable resources, including air, plants, water, and animals; and nonrenewable resources, including coal, oil, and natural gas; and the importance of conservation.

### Materials

- Historical images for display/distribution
- *Fort Fact Brick* activity resource
- *A Day in the Life of a Frontier Soldier* activity resources

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## Vocabulary

- **natural resource:** something (like a mineral, water source, forest, or animal) that is found in nature and can be used by humans
- **nonrenewable resource:** something that can't be replaced once it is used up. Examples: fossil fuels, coal, natural gas, stone, and minerals
- **renewable resource:** something that is able to be replaced by nature or by good management of resources. Examples: water, wind, wildlife, forests, and grasslands

## Activity: Fort McKavett Visit

*10 minutes*

Ask students to reflect on their visit to Fort McKavett by completing all columns of their **KWL chart**. Have students share their experiences including any new questions raised by the visit.

## Activity: Natural Resources

*10 minutes*

The U.S. Army chose the locations for its forts strategically. A nearby water source, such as the springs of San Saba for Fort McKavett, was a necessity. The abundance of limestone at McKavett was especially valuable, as the soldiers could build permanent structures from the beginning. Other troops stationed at forts in areas with fewer resources suitable for construction were forced to live in temporary, portable buildings issued by the army.

“The buildings are put up of stone which is found immediately at hand in great abundance and of a quality easily dressed.”

Bvt. Lt. Col. W.G. Freeman,  
August 19, 1853.

Troops stationed at McKavett had quarried enough limestone by hand and chopped enough wood for shingles and posts that they were able to build fourteen buildings in a year and a half. When the fort was inspected in August 1853, Fort McKavett had fourteen complete buildings to house troops, but it would be another three years before those buildings had windows, doors, and flooring.

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Fort McKavett was abandoned by U.S. troops for ten years (1858-1868). When troops returned, all of the buildings were in disrepair. The mortar between the limestone had washed away, leaving many of the buildings toppled into piles of stone and timber. During the next decade, the African American Buffalo Soldiers stationed at Fort McKavett worked to rebuild and expand the fort.



Display or distribute the Land Resources Map of Texas, 1999. Point out Menard County (where Fort McKavett is located), marked by a white star. Ask students to identify four resources located in or near the county. [L1, L2, L3, L4]

## **Activity: A Day in the Life**

*20 minutes*

Display or distribute **A Day in the Life of a Frontier Soldier Activity schedule** and **An 1850s Soldier's Life for Me? graphic organizer**. Review the schedule, asking students to draw conclusions about a Fort McKavett soldier's life in 1850. Then have them complete the graphic organizer and share responses.

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## Activity: Fort McKavett Wall of Facts

10 minutes

Distribute Fort McKavett **Fact Brick** resource. Have students write at least three facts they learned about the fort, the fort system, or westward settlement. Select an area for students to make a “wall” of their bricks as a display.

## Assessment

Evaluate students’ final KWL charts for completeness and understanding.

## Language Arts Extension

Design a simple children’s book with your class:

1. As a class, brainstorm the topic of a children’s book inspired by the students’ knowledge of Fort McKavett (the people, activities, and/or the place).
2. Discuss the parts of the story: introduction, middle, and conclusion. Consider dividing the class into groups and assigning each group a specific section of the story.
3. Encourage students to write simple sentences and include colorful illustrations to go along with their sentences.
4. Put group sections together to form a story.
5. Edit the draft story as a class.
6. Bind and laminate the book. Make plans to share it with a younger class.

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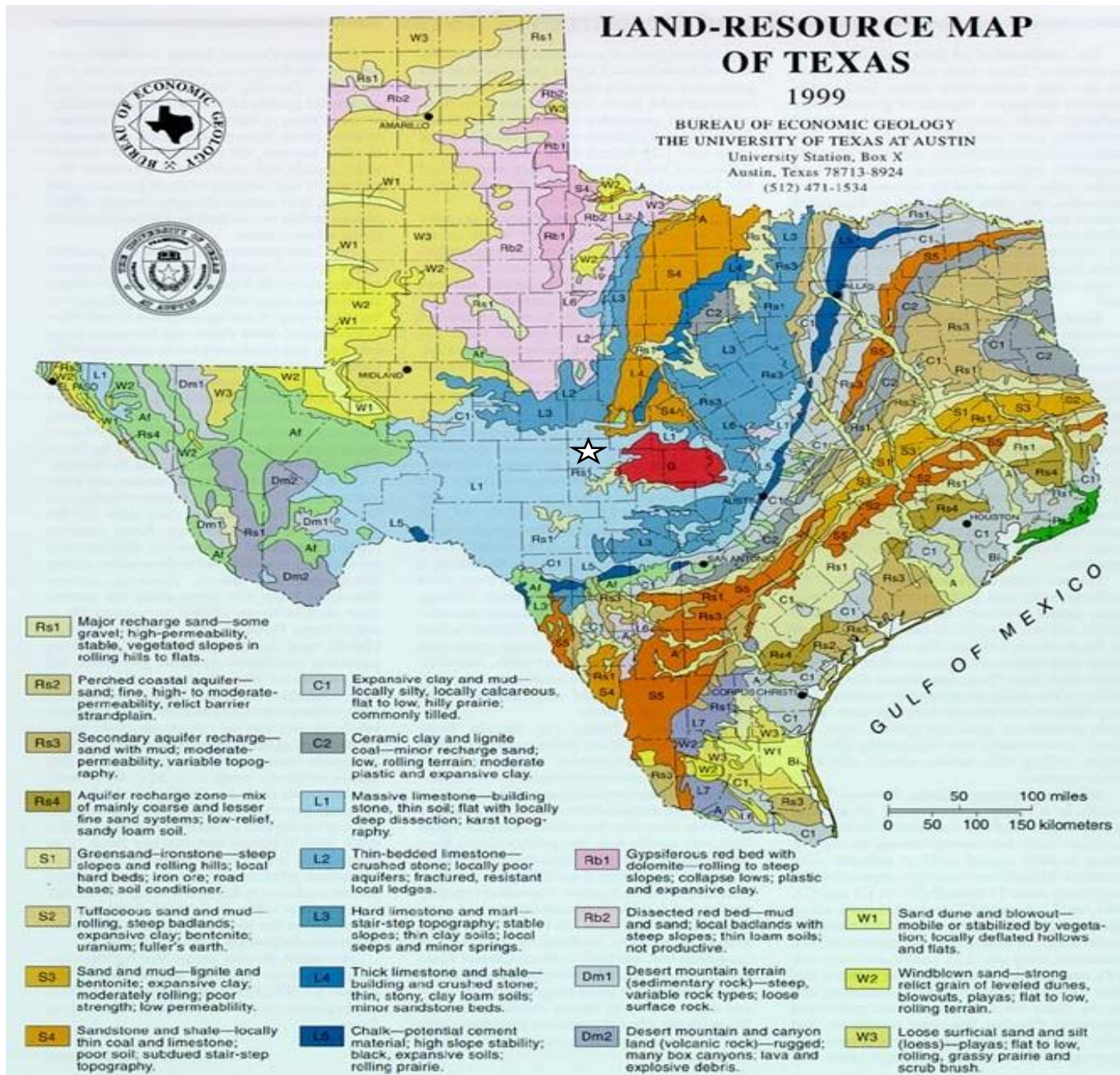


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## Activity Map: Natural Resources



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## Activity Schedule: A Day in the Life of a Frontier Soldier

Fort McKavett soldiers followed the commands of the bugle.

Time	Bugle Call	Soldier Activity
6:40am	Assembly of Trumpeters	Wake up
6:50am	Reveille	Out of bed
7:00am	Assembly	Line up for roll call
8:00am	Mess Call	Eat breakfast
8:45am	Fatigue Call	Report for work: building or repairing fort buildings, hauling water, gardening, patrol, etc.
10:00am	Adjutant's Call	Change 24-hour guard duty
12:30pm	Recall	Stop morning work
1:00pm	Mess Call	Dinner
1:30pm	Fatigue Call	Report for work
2:00pm	Drill Call	Call for drill
3:30pm	Recall from Drill	End drill
5:15pm	Recall from Fatigue	Stop afternoon work
Sunset	Retreat	Lower flag and evening parade
	School Call	Enlisted soldier goes reports for school
9:30pm	Tattoo	Prepare for bed, in bunk
10:00pm	Taps	Lights out

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## Graphic Organizer: An 1850s Soldier's Life for Me?

One thing I like about this soldier's schedule is...

One thing that would be hard for me would be...

I would ask to do these work duties:

If I were a frontier soldier, I would have...

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## Fort McKavett Fact Brick

Write at least **three facts** you learned about the fort, the fort system, or westward settlement on this brick. Cut out the brick shape and add it to the Fort McKavett fact wall.



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