

TEXAS ACTIVITY PACKET



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The Alamo

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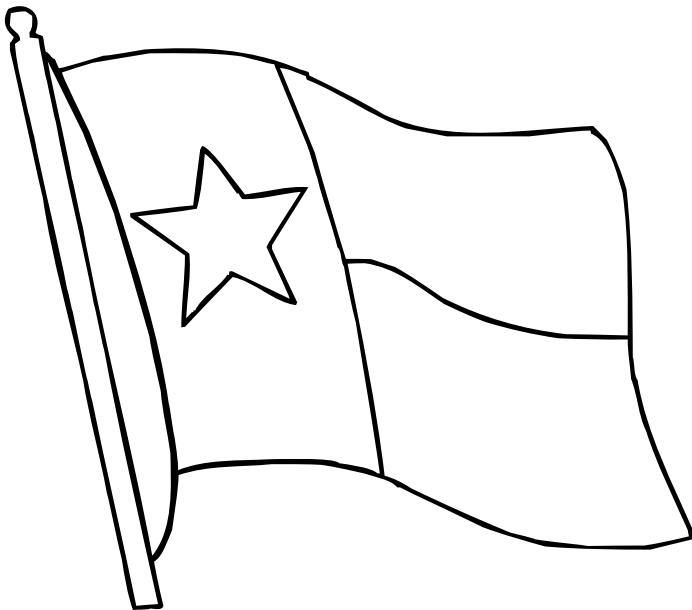
Greetings from TEXAS - **34** cents

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Welcome to Texas

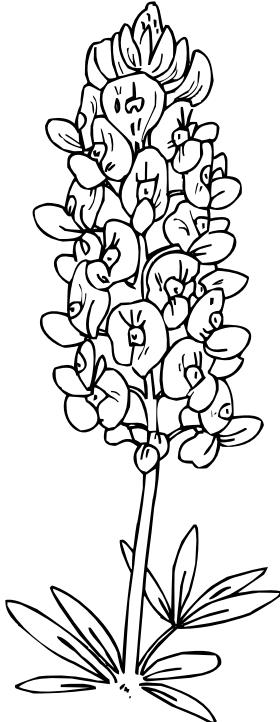


DRIVE FRIENDLY - THE TEXAS WAY

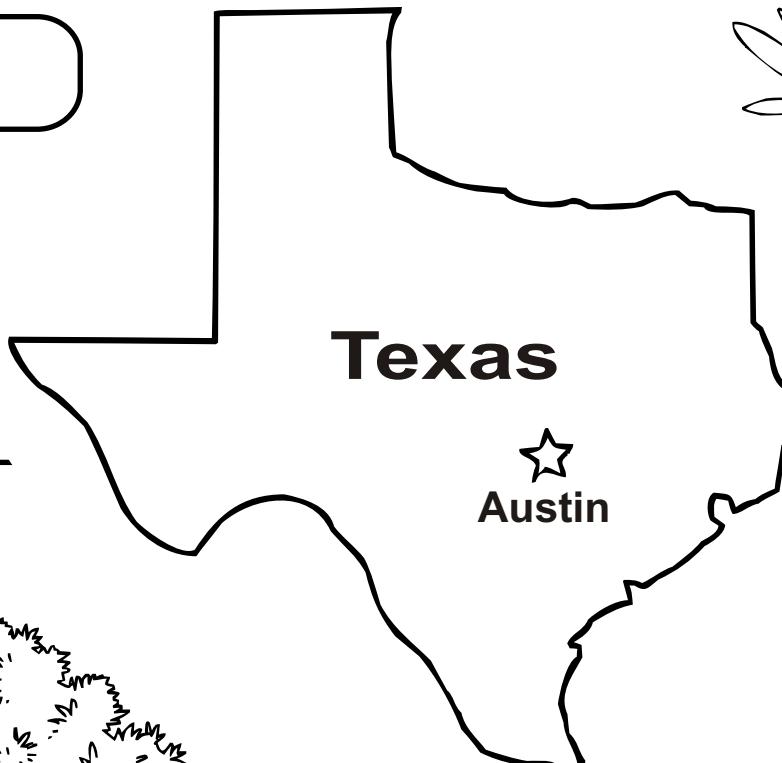
Welcome to Texas



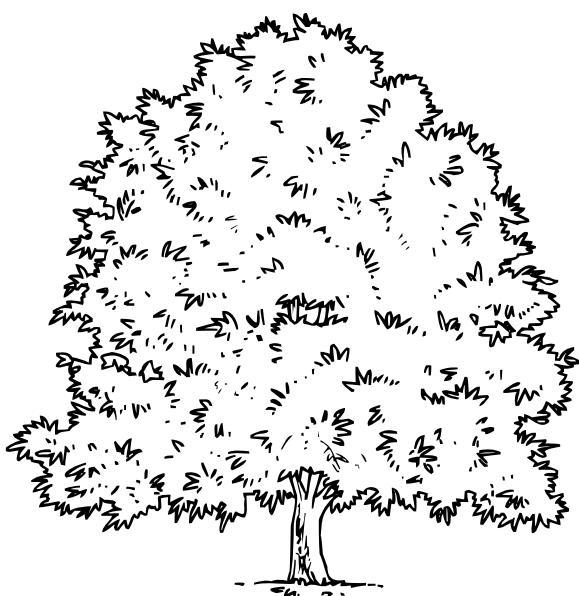
Mockingbird



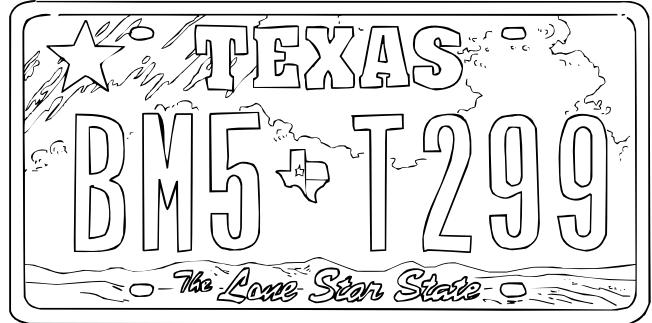
Bluebonnet



The Lone Star State



Pecan Tree

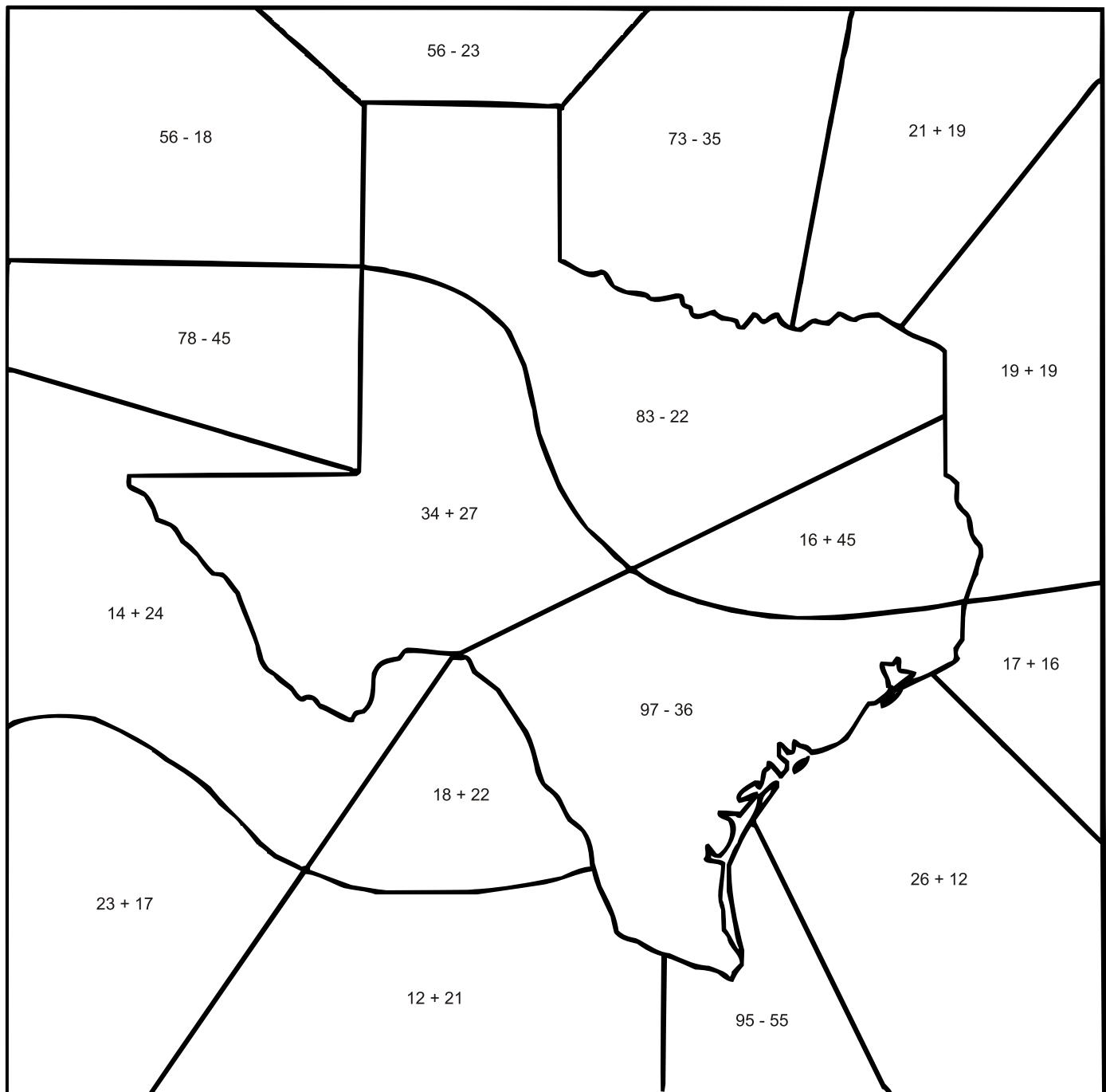


State license plate



Texas State Quarter





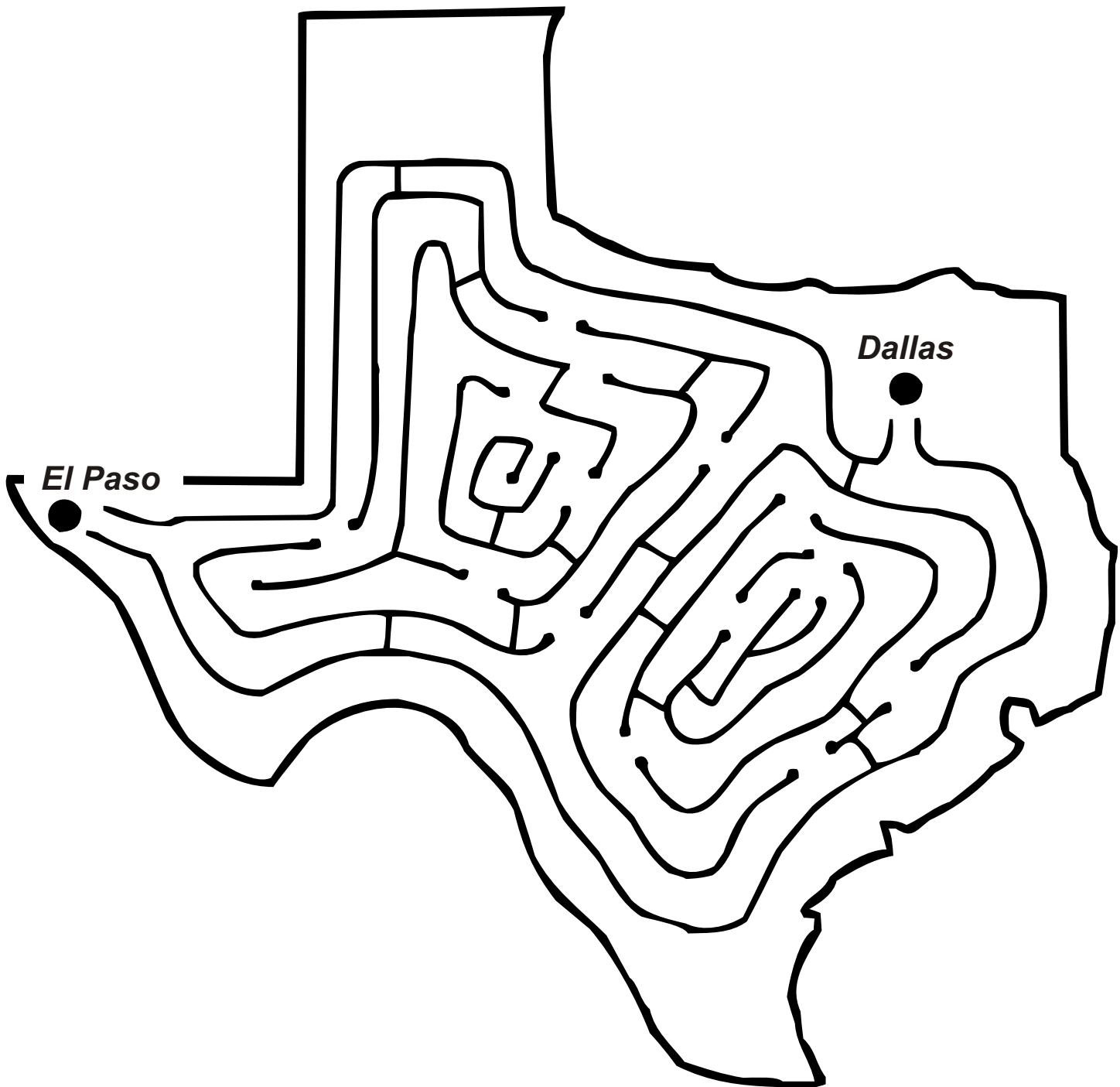
Do you know what state is pictured?

33 = Blue

38 = Red

40 = White

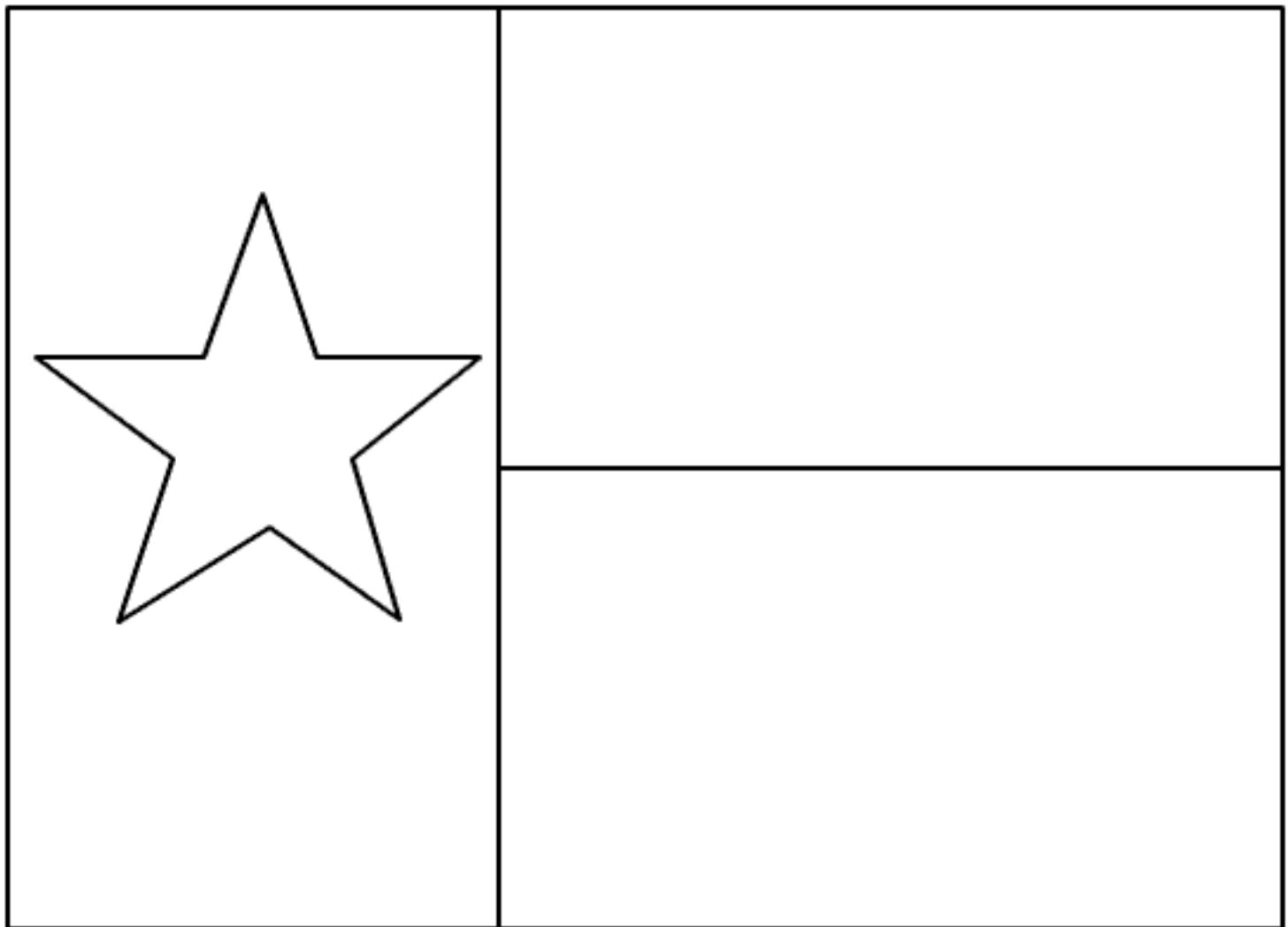
61 = Olive Green



Texas - The Lone Star State



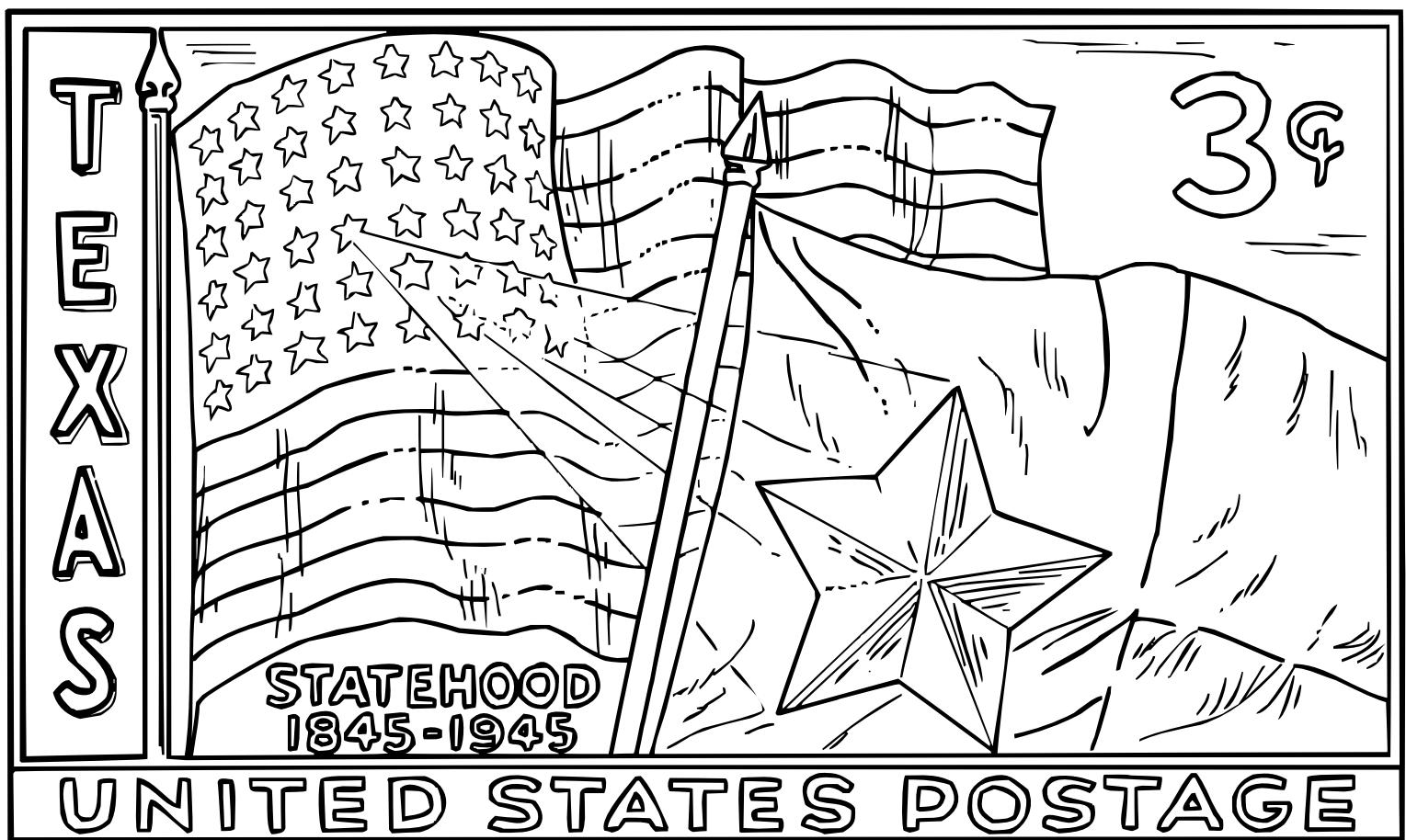
Texas Flag Outline



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Texas stamp - 3 cents

The Great Plains

The Great Plains is a huge, mostly treeless area of prairie and grasslands in the middle of the United States. It includes parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Texas, Oklahoma, and all of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Its industries include farming, ranching and manufacturing. Huge rivers such as the Missouri, Arkansas, and Platte, flow through the heart of the Great Plains. These rivers and their wetlands are important habitats for many kinds of migrating birds such as ducks, geese, cranes, and gulls.

The Great Plains area is the native home of the American bison. Millions once roamed the plains before they were settled in the 1800s. The number of bison, however, fell drastically by 1900 until there were only a few hundred left. Prairie dogs, badgers, coyotes, and burrowing owls are among the wildlife that live in the Great Plains. The area is sometimes called "Tornado Alley" because most of the nation's tornadoes occur here.

1. What would I NOT expect to see much of in the Great Plains?

- A. Grasslands
- B. Forests
- C. Farms
- D. Wildlife

2. What is NOT true about the American bison?

- A. They roamed Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas before the Great Plains were settled
- B. There were more bison before settlement of the Great Plains than in 1900
- C. Prairie dogs and coyotes could be found in the same places as bison
- D. By 1900, the number of bison went up

3. What does “drastically” mean as used below?

The number of bison, however, fell drastically by 1900 until there were only a few hundred left.

- A. The number of bison fell a lot
- B. The number of bison fell a little bit
- C. The number of bison stayed about the same
- D. The number of bison fell to none

4. The Great Plains...

- A. has small rivers.
- B. includes parts of Kansas and Nebraska.
- C. includes all of Wyoming and Colorado.
- D. often gets tornadoes.

Sam Houston Reading Comprehension

Name _____

Sam Houston was an American military general and politician who was born in Virginia in 1793. At a young age, Houston ran away from home and spent time with a Cherokee Indian tribe nearby, familiarizing himself with their ways and culture. These experiences in his youth informed his later decisions as a politician.

Houston served in the military during the war of 1812, and caught the attention of then-general Andrew Jackson. Jackson took Houston under his wing, causing Houston to adopt many Jacksonian policies. Houston represented Tennessee in Congress for two terms before being elected its governor. He resigned in 1829 after a divorce and spent a few years in the Cherokee Indians' territory once more.

In 1832, Houston moved to Texas during a time period when tensions were high between Texans and the Mexican government. When conflict arose between the Texans seeking independence and the Mexicans tightening their control, Houston became commander of the local Texan army. When war broke out, and the Texans suffered a massive defeat at the Battle of the Alamo, Houston ordered that his forces retreat—a controversial decision, but one that allowed him to train the army for a battle that would later result in a Texan victory. In 1836, Houston and 800 men camped out on the banks of the San Jacinto river and defeated the much larger forces of Mexican general Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna in a mere 18 minutes. Santa Anna's defeat was what resulted in an armistice and won the Texans their independence, and Houston's quick thinking was a factor in that victory.

After Texas became independent, Houston was voted its president for two terms in 1836 and 1841. As president, Houston tried to avoid future wars with Mexico and tried to halt wars on the native Indians—a decision potentially motivated by his close relationships with the Cherokee in his youth. He then served as a senator when the United States annexed Texas, and fought for preservation of the Union when tensions over slavery threatened to split the country in half. Eventually, Houston's ideals lost out amongst his fellow politicians and he was deposed from a secession convention in Texas. He retired from politics and died in Huntsville, Texas in 1863. Houston was the only American elected governor of two states—Tennessee and Texas—and today, the city of Houston is named after him, honoring his legacy as a driving force in the fight for Texan independence.

- 1. In which of the following positions did Sam Houston not serve?**
 - a. Governor of Tennessee
 - b. Commander of the Texan Army
 - c. Governor of Houston
 - d. President of Texas

- 2. What was the effect of Houston being well-versed in native American culture and customs?**
 - a. His peace treaty brokered with the Indians during the Mexican-American War
 - b. His sympathy towards native Americans when elected president
 - c. His choice to slaughter them mercilessly once elected president of Texas
 - d. His decision to abandon politics and live with the Cherokee in his old age

3. Which motto do you think Sam Houston would agree with, given his decision to retreat after the Battle of the Alamo?

- a. Lose the battle, but win the war.
- b. Life is like a box of chocolates: you never know what you're gonna get.
- c. Happy nations have no history.
- d. United we stand, divided we fall.

4. Which of the following events did not result in success for Houston?

- a. Andrew Jackson takes Houston under his wing.
- b. Houston surprises Santa Anna's troops at San Jacinto.
- c. Houston runs for president of Texas.
- d. Houston fights for preservation of the Union.

5. Put the following events from Sam Houston's life in order.

- I. Houston serves as senator of Texas.
- II. Houston is deposed at a secession convention.
- III. Houston gets a divorce.
- IV. Houston defeats Santa Anna.

- a. I, II, III, IV
- b. IV, II, III, I
- c. III, IV, I, II
- d. IV, III, I, II

6. With which statement would Houston disagree with?

- a. Native tribes should be listened to and protected whenever possible.
- b. It's important for armed forces to be well-trained before a big battle.
- c. If states don't agree with the country's views, they should form their own country.
- d. One war with Mexico is more than enough.

7. Which best describes Houston's contributions to Texas?

- a. An independence fighter turned politician
- b. A reckless commander turned resigned governor
- c. A strategic senator turned belligerent freedom fighter
- d. A Cherokee native turned dedicated protestor

Comparing and Contrasting Louisiana and Texas

Name: _____

Louisiana

Louisiana, nicknamed the Pelican State, is located in Southeastern United States, along the Gulf of Mexico. Not surprisingly, its state bird is the brown pelican. Louisiana is bordered by Texas, Mississippi, and Arkansas. The Mississippi River forms much of the eastern border of the state and flows out through the Louisiana to the Gulf of Mexico. Louisiana is well known for its many bayous, swampy outlet nears lake and rivers filled with trees.

Louisiana became America's 18th state on April 30, 1812. It was part of a huge parcel of land known as the Louisiana Territory, which was purchased from France in 1803. Its capital is Baton Rouge and its largest city is New Orleans. The historic city of New Orleans is famous for its Mardi Gras celebrations and French atmosphere. It is also considered the birthplace of jazz in America.

Texas

Texas, nicknamed the Lone Star State, was an independent country from 1836 until 1845, when it became America's 28th state. Texas borders Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. The Rio Grande forms the long border between Texas and Mexico, and the Gulf of Mexico washes upon the shores of southeastern Texas. Texas is the second largest state by area in America and also is its second most populous state; only California has more people. Its capital is Austin, named after Stephen F. Austin, the founder of Texas. Its largest city, Houston, is named after Sam Houston, who led the Texans to victory over the Mexican Army following the Battle of the Alamo in 1836. While much of the state is plains and grasslands, Texas has deserts and high mountains in the west, hills in the south, beaches on its Gulf Coast, and wetlands in the east. Its state bird is the mockingbird and its state flower is the famous bluebonnet. Texas is hit with more tornadoes than any other state.

Which facts belong in each category?

Baton Rouge is the capital city
Famous as the birthplace of Jazz
Borders Arkansas
Became a state first
Has more people
Borders another country
The Mississippi River flows through
Borders more states
Largest city is Houston
Located along the Gulf of Mexico

Louisiana

Both

Texas

Neither

Answers:

Louisiana

**Baton Rouge is the capital city
Famous as the birthplace of jazz
Became a state first
The Mississippi River flows through**

Both

**Borders Arkansas
Located along the Gulf of Mexico**

Texas

**Has more people
Largest city is Houston
Borders another country
Borders more states**

Neither

Mockingbird



If you live anywhere in the southern two-thirds of the United States, the mockingbird is likely a familiar sight. While the mockingbird is certainly a handsome bird, it's not its looks that make it remarkable, but rather, its incredible vocal repertoire. The mockingbird is one of the most prolific songsters in the avian world. It can "sing" for hours on end from conspicuous perches on rooftops, telephone wires, or exposed branches. A clue to what really makes it unique among birds, however, is embedded in its name! Not only can it imitate the songs of other birds such as blue jays, killdeer, cardinals, and robins, but it can make "expert" imitations of car alarms, whistles, dogs barking, cats meowing, or any other range of everyday sounds. Often times, the mockingbird mixes in everyday sounds with its own warbles and calls, producing a bizarre chain of auditory wonders.

The mockingbird has actually played a role in American history. America's third president, Thomas Jefferson kept a mockingbird he named "Dick" as a pet. "Dick" was thought to be the first pet to live in the White House. Jefferson was known to be extremely fond of his pet, which he considered to be a superior to other birds. In the quote below, Jefferson congratulates a friend who had identified a mockingbird in her yard.

I sincerely congratulate you on the arrival of the Mocking bird. Learn all the children to venerate it as a superior being in the form of a bird, or as a being which will haunt them if any harm is done to itself or its eggs. I shall hope that the multiplication of the cedar in the neighborhood, and of trees and shrubs round the house, will attract more of them: for they like to be in the neighborhood of our habitations, if they furnish cover."

In addition to Jefferson's admiration of the mockingbird, five southern states (Texas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Florida) claim the mockingbird as state bird.

As for the mockingbird itself, it is mostly gray with a long tail. It has bold white wing patches that flash while it is in flight. Mockingbirds often live in suburban neighborhoods but usually avoid deep forests. They can be aggressive near their nests and will regularly dive-bomb cats, dogs, and even humans who approach to closely.

1. Which of the following would be an unusual observation?

- A. A mockingbird imitating a car horn
- B. A mockingbird singing within a thick forest
- C. A mockingbird singing for hours
- D. A mockingbird singing from an exposed branch

2. Which of the words in the following two sentences means “easily seen”?

The mockingbird is one of the most prolific songsters in the avian world. It can “sing” for hours on end from conspicuous perches on rooftops, telephone wires, or exposed branches.

- A. perches
- B. songsters
- C. prolific
- D. conspicuous

3. According to the author, what makes the mockingbird remarkable?

- A. Its appearance
- B. The fact that it can imitate a car alarm
- C. The incredible range of sounds it can make
- D. The fact that it is common in the southern two-thirds of the United States

4. What “warning” does Thomas Jefferson offer in his quote?

- A. Make sure your children learn about the mockingbird or else they might be haunted
- B. Do not plant cedar trees near a mockingbird’s nest
- C. Planting the wrong kinds of trees can hurt mockingbirds
- D. Harming a mockingbird or its eggs carries consequences

5. Which of the following supports the idea that the mockingbird is a popular bird?

- A. It is the state bird for five different states
- B. It lives in suburban neighborhoods
- C. It was the first pet to live in the White House
- D. Thomas Jefferson considered the mockingbird superior to other birds

6. Which is NOT true about mockingbirds?

- A. They have white wing patches
- B. Mockingbirds have long tails
- C. The mockingbird is the state bird of Arkansas
- D. Mockingbirds avoid places that humans live

7. According to Thomas Jefferson, what are the ways to attract mockingbirds to yards? Circle all that apply

- A. Plant trees and shrubs around the house
- B. Plant cedar trees in the neighborhood
- C. Provide cover
- D. Set up nesting boxes

TORNADO Reading Comprehension

A tornado is born from a powerful storm called a supercell. Tornadoes have been reported in all states, but most tornadoes happen in the central parts of America called “Tornado Alley.” In some supercells, warm, moist air rises quickly into the atmosphere. Winds blowing at different speeds at different parts of the supercell produce wind shear and cause a horizontal, rotating column of air. A funnel cloud will form as the air column rotates faster and more tightly within the supercell. The rain and hail within the storm cause the funnel cloud to touch the ground, resulting in a tornado. The strength of a tornado is measured by what’s called the Fujita scale. The weakest tornadoes (F0) feature winds of 40–78 miles per hour, while the strongest tornadoes (F5) have winds of up to 318 miles per hour. All tornadoes can be devastating, especially if they touch down in areas with lots of people.

Tornado Outbreak

A tornado outbreak occurs when one storm system produces multiple tornadoes. Some tornado outbreaks can result in the formation of dozens of tornadoes over several states. One particularly powerful tornado outbreak occurred between April 25 and April 28 of 2011, where a record 355 tornadoes in 21 states and Canada were recorded, including an F5 tornado that completely destroyed parts of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Much of the destruction was caught on camera and broadcast across the country and internet. The same weather system produced hailstones that measured 4.5 inches across in southern Virginia. 328 people were killed as a result of the outbreak, which totaled over \$11 billion in damages.

1.) Which is NOT true about tornadoes?

- a.) They are born from supercells.
- b.) They only occur in some states.
- c.) Tornado strength is measured on the Fujita scale.
- d.) Most tornadoes occur in North America in Tornado Alley.

2.) What states have never had tornadoes?

- a.) Alaska and Hawaii
- b.) The passage doesn't say.
- c.) States outside of Tornado Alley
- d.) All states have had tornadoes.

3.) What causes the supercell to tilt downward toward the ground?

- a.) wind
- b.) warm air
- c.) rain and hail
- d.) lightning

4.) When are tornadoes most devastating?

- a.) When they hit in Tornado Alley
- b.) When wind shear occurs
- c.) When they register on the Fujita Scale
- d.) When they hit areas with lots of people

5.) Which of the following would complete the analogy:

Supercell : Tornado ::

- a.) Cloud : Lightning
- b.) Moon : Stars
- c.) Hurricane : Ocean
- d.) Thunder : Rain

6.) What is the theme of the first paragraph?

- a.) Historic Tornadoes
- b.) Wind Speed
- c.) The Fujita Scale
- d.) Birth and Strength of a Tornado

7.) Why does the author refer to the hailstones that hit Virginia as part of the tornado outbreak of April 2011?

- a.) To show that much of the damage was caught on camera
- b.) To show how long the storm lasted
- c.) To show that tornado outbreaks often happen in the spring
- d.) To show how powerful and destructive the storms were

8.) In a tornado outbreak... (select all that are true)

- a.) A single storm system can produce multiple tornadoes.
- b.) Only F5 tornadoes occur.
- c.) Storms that produce damaging hail can occur as well.
- d.) Dozens of tornadoes can form in distant locations.

9.) What did paragraph two include that paragraph one did not include?

- a.) information about the Fujita scale
- b.) information on when tornadoes become very destructive
- c.) information about how tornadoes form
- d.) a specific instance

10.) Select all that are true about the tornado outbreak of 2011.

- a.) It produced a violent hailstorm in Virginia.
- b.) It devastated Tuscaloosa, Alabama.
- c.) It spanned two nations.
- d.) It was both deadly and costly

Kansas Cloze Reading for Grades 1-3

Name _____

Directions: Fill in the correct blanks

Tornado Alley is a _____ of the central United States that _____ Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas. The area gets its name because it is the place tornadoes are most

_____ to occur in America. It's also where the most _____ tornadoes hit. Texas gets the most tornadoes, _____ by Kansas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. As a whole, Tornado Alley _____ 421 tornadoes _____ year.

Words:

averages

likely

includes

followed

per

portion

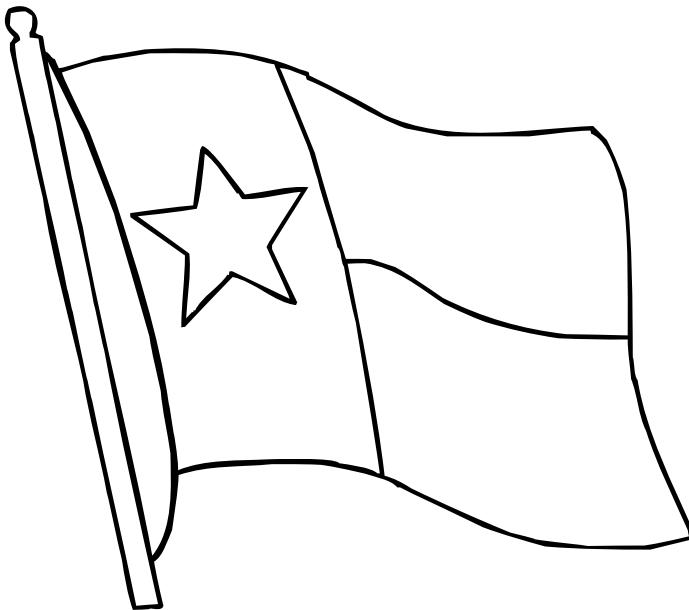
powerful

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