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## *Texas* "Firsts"



**The House  
of Tomorrow**

***Dr Pepper***

*Buddy Holly*

**Tilman Fertitta**

**Southwest Airlines**

**The Johnson Space Center**

***Clovis "Builders" at Kincaid Shelter***



*Clovis families gather stone to make a floor inside Kincaid Shelter.  
Painting by Charles Shazu, courtesy www.TexasBeyondHistory.net.*



## First in Texas

### Clovis “Builders” at Kincaid Shelter

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Some 13,000 years ago in the Texas Hill Country, a band of travelers thought to be Clovis people discovered a cave-like shelter in the limestone bluffs above the Sabinal River. Within the shelter’s deep recesses, the group found protection from wind and rain, and refuge from the large carnivores roaming the Edwards Plateau and Sabinal River valley at the end of the last Ice Age. The site seemed so ideal that the inhabitants hauled heavy stones from the river below to carefully pave the shelter, covering the muddy floor and making it more comfortable for long-term use.

These ancient campers may not seem much different from any other group of prehistoric peoples, but they have the distinction of being among the very *first people* in Texas. Archeologists have been able to piece together the evidence tying the stone pavement inside the shelter to the Clovis, a hunting and gathering culture that populated much of North America between 13,000-13,500 years ago (11,000-11,500 B.C.). Archeologists believe this stone pavement is the *oldest known structural feature in North America*, automatically making it a first in Texas as well.

#### Clovis Culture

Some researchers believe that the Clovis people crossed the land bridge over the Bering Strait to Alaska during the period of lowered sea levels during the Ice Age. More recently, archeologists have begun to

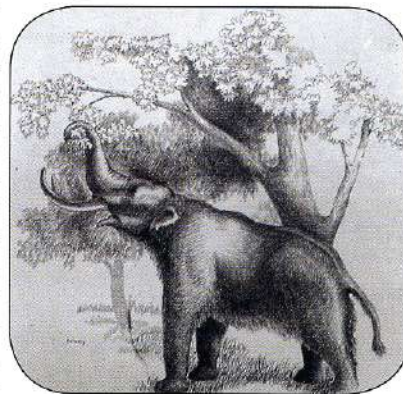
examine the theory that the Clovis people may have come to the Americas by sea in hide-covered boats, hugging the coastlines as they moved southward.

Until Kincaid Shelter was excavated, most archeologists stereotyped the Clovis people as nomadic big-game hunters who followed herds of giant mammoths and bison, living almost exclusively on meat from these animals. But in Kincaid’s different layers, or strata, scientists discovered that the Clovis were a more sedentary people who selected a place to stay for an extended period, improved their accommodations, and took advantage of the area’s natural resources. Some Clovis groups may have stayed at Kincaid Shelter for weeks or months, while others may have merely stopped there overnight during a longer journey. Food resources at Kincaid allowed for a broad-spectrum diet which may have included alligator, turtle, raccoon, fish, deer, nuts, fruits, seeds, and various kinds of megafauna—giant animals, such as mammoth and large bison – as well as camel, horse, and sloth, all of which roamed the region as well.

#### Building the Floor

Carved into a low limestone bluff, Kin-

caid Shelter extends inward to form a semi-circular “room” roughly 32 feet deep by 35 feet wide in size. It was an idyllic spot in many ways except for one problem: water seeping from a spring along the shelter’s back wall made the floor a muddy mess much of the time. One group of early Texans, however, clearly found it worth the effort to make the shelter into a more comfortable home. But doing so was not a simple task. The painstaking process involved hauling heavy stones—some weighing as much as 70 pounds each and totaling more



*Mammoths such as this one could grow to 16 ft. in height. Fragments of mammoth bone, teeth, and tusk were found in Kincaid Shelter. Drawing by Hal Story, courtesy www.TexasBeyondHistory.net.*

than two tons—up from the river bed below and into the shelter to pave the muddy floor. Women and children may have handled the job, carrying the stones in leather pouches or baskets, laying them carefully in a tight pattern, then filling the gaps in between with tiny pebbles. Finally, the workers probably cushioned the hard pavement by adding layers of grass and branches and covering it all over with animal skins. The damp shelter had become a comfortable living places—the first known man-made structural feature in Texas, built by the very first Texans.

Over the millennia, hundreds of people

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*A section of the rock pavement inside Kincaid Shelter. Paleoindian people constructed this pavement over the muddy shelter floor to provide a dry living surface. During Late Pleistocene times, a spring seeped from the rear wall, forming a shallow pond in the center of the shelter. Photo by Glen Evans, courtesy [www.TexasBeyondHistory.net](http://www.TexasBeyondHistory.net).*



*This resharpened point found in Kincaid Shelter has been identified as a Clovis point. Photo by Aaron Norment, courtesy [www.TexasBeyondHistory.net](http://www.TexasBeyondHistory.net).*

## *Kincaid Shelter*

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 stayed in Kincaid Shelter, using the protected locale as a base for hunting animals, gathering plants, nuts, and seeds, making tools, refurbishing gear, and carrying out the ordinary tasks of daily life. Water for drinking, cooking, and washing had to be carried up from the river below. Stone tools such as spear points and knives were created onsite by flint knapping, the age-old process of knocking flakes off of flint or similar rock available nearby. Like their modern counterparts, many of these prehistoric campers left behind a scattering of trash as well as a few more-meaningful

items that perhaps were lost or forgotten in the shelter's recesses. These items would prove to be a treasure trove of evidence for scientists in years to come.

### **Modern Discovery of Kincaid Shelter**

The site was discovered serendipitously in December of 1947. While hunting on the Kincaid Ranch some 60 miles west of San Antonio, young college student Gene Mear and several of his friends spotted a rockshelter in a low, limestone bluff on the Sabinal River. They examined piles of dirt that had been thrown out of a pit dug by looters in the shelter and found several ex-

traordinary flint artifacts and burned bone fragments. They had discovered Kincaid Shelter. Mear showed the artifacts to museum specialists, and scientific investigation of the shelter began. Digging painstakingly through the shelter's deep layers of deposits, geologists uncovered the cobbled stone pavement, along with a handful of stone tools and bones of Late Pleistocene (Ice Age) animals. More than 50 years were to pass before the Kincaid story was fully told. University of Texas archeologists identified the tools and other debris at the shelter as Clovis, solving the mystery of who constructed the pavement.

### **Learn more at Texas Beyond History**

To learn much more about the first Texans at Kincaid Shelter, visit the Texas Beyond History (TBH) exhibit, complete with interactive K-12 learning activities at [www.texasbeyondhistory.net/Kincaid/index.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/Kincaid/index.html).

Activities include a sound and movement Time Travel trip to Kincaid Shelter led by TBH's own Dr. Dirt, the armadillo archeologist, as well as a downloadable lesson plan that incorporates learning about giant Ice Age creatures (megafauna) with the principles of stratigraphy (layering of the earth), and a related interactive Ice Age critters matching game.



*Exterior cave photo. Photo courtesy [www.TexasBeyondHistory.net](http://www.TexasBeyondHistory.net).*





## First in Texas

# Cabeza de Vaca, Explorer and Author

**Subject** Texas history and geography

**Grade level** 7<sup>th</sup>

(Can easily be adapted for 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades)

### Introduction

When Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca left Spain in 1527 as part of an expedition to colonize Florida, he had no idea he would become the first European to explore what is now Texas, as well as the first Texas author.

After being shipwrecked on the Florida coast in 1528, Cabeza de Vaca and survivors of the expedition crossed the Gulf of Mexico on hand built barges. They shipwrecked again at Galveston, which they named "Malhado," or "Bad Luck." For the next nine years, Cabeza de Vaca (whose name means "Head of a Cow") wandered, lost, across South Texas, then down to Mexico City, a journey on foot of close to 3,000 miles. Along the way he survived by acting first as slave, then as respected shaman (or priest), and ultimately, as Spanish hero.

After returning to his native Spain in 1536, Cabeza de Vaca wrote an account of his journey through Texas and Mexico. First published in 1537 as his report to the Spanish king, this extraordinary adventure story has thrilled readers for centuries. An exciting account by any standards, *La Relación* (The Account) is also a work of great anthropological and historical importance. In Texas alone Cabeza de Vaca identified 23 Indian groups, and described in detail their clothing, languages, eating habits, rituals, homes, and migrations.

### Rationale or Purpose

The historical record is immense, containing countless pieces of evidence about the past. In today's world of information overload, students must learn to distinguish between primary sources, such as Cabeza de Vaca's journal, *La Relación*, and secondary sources, such as their history books or the posters they will create in this lesson.

### Materials

- Texas history textbooks or access to the Internet, for research purposes
- Texas map student handout (available online at: [www.texasbeyondhistory.net/teachimages/devaca.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/teachimages/devaca.html))
- 6 different readings from Cabeza de Vaca's *La Relación*, (also available online at the above site)
- Posterboard or tagboard
- Drawing and coloring materials

- Scissors
- Glue

### Lesson Duration

Two 45 minute class periods or one 90 minute block

### Objectives

Students will work in cooperative groups to

- label and color a Texas map with the South Texas Plains region that was home to the Coahuiltecan Indians.
- read excerpts from Cabeza de Vaca's 1538 journal, *La Relación*, a primary source document.
- illustrate aspects of Coahuiltecan culture gleaned from de Vaca's journal.
- combine all work to create posters (secondary source documents).

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade TEKS

- Social Studies 113.23 - 1A, 2A, 2B, 9C, 10A, 21A, 21C, 22C, 22D
- Art 117.35 - 1A, 2C

### Activity

**Step 1** – Introduce Cabeza de Vaca as the Spanish explorer who came to America from Spain in 1527 and wandered, lost, across what is now Texas and Mexico for nine years before returning to his native Spain. Explain that during his Texas travels, Cabeza de Vaca encountered several groups of Indians, among them the Coahuiltecan of the South Texas Plains region. Explain that students will work in cooperative groups to create posters illustrating Cabeza de Vaca's experiences among the Coahuiltecan that he chronicled in his journal.

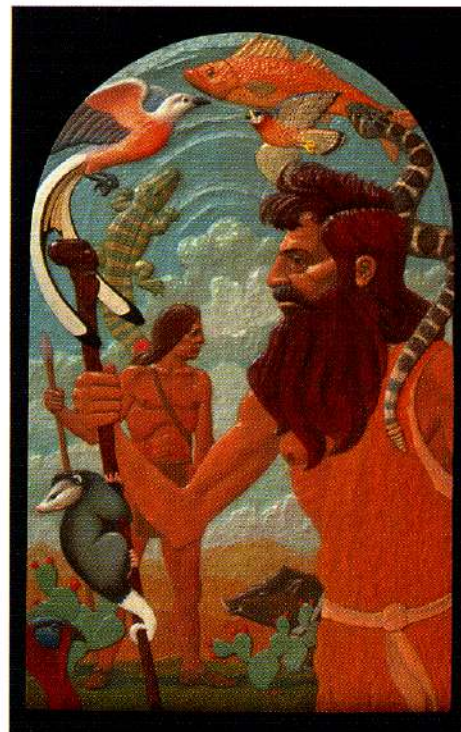
**Step 2** – Distribute the Texas map student handout to all students and explain that in their groups, only one group member's map will be used on that group's poster (the students will choose which map – see step 6). Using information from their textbooks or the Internet, have students label their maps with the following:

- Map title – *Coahuiltecan of the South Texas Plains*
- Rio Grande
- Coahuiltecan Territory (labeled, outlined, and colored on their maps)
- Compass rose

**Step 3** – Have students get into groups of 3 or 4.

**Step 4** – Ask for a volunteer to describe the difference between primary and secondary source documents. Explain that after Cabeza de Vaca finally returned to Spain,

Carol Schlenk, Education Editor, Texas Beyond History



he wrote of his American travels in a book called *La Relación*, which was published in 1538. Ask students whether this journal is a primary or secondary source document. (primary)

**Step 5** – Explain that each student group will illustrate a different section of Cabeza de Vaca's journal for their posters. These posters will be secondary source documents.

**Step 6** – Distribute one posterboard to each group. Instruct groups to decide which of their group member's maps they want to include on their poster and glue it on their posterboard.

**Step 7** – Distribute one *La Relación* reading to each group and have group members work together to illustrate the reading. The illustration can be drawn directly on the poster, or on paper, which can then be glued to the poster. Completed posters should contain:

- An appropriate title for the reading
- A Coahuiltecan territory map
- The *La Relación* reading
- Illustrations of the reading

**Step 8** – Have a representative from each group present his/her group's poster

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## First in Texas

# Cabeza de Vaca, Explorer and Author

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to the class.

### Modification

Highlight portions of the readings for special needs students.

Gifted and talented students can research the Karankawa or Jumano Indian groups, both of which were encountered by Cabeza de Vaca in Texas.

### Student Product

Illustrated poster of Cabeza de Vaca's experience among the Coahuiltecan Indians, including a map of their habitat in Texas.

### Closure

Have students list three things they would miss most about their current lives if they were stranded in a strange country for nine years.

### Assessment or evaluation

Ask students how Cabeza de Vaca's ex-

perience would have differed had he been stranded in the East Texas Pineywoods, the Panhandle, or the Trans-Pecos regions of Texas.

### Extension

- For interactive, bilingual Cabeza de Vaca learning activities online, visit the Texas Beyond History exhibit, *Through the Eyes of the Explorer: Cabeza de Vaca on the South Texas Plains* ([http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/st-plains/kids/cabeza-south/cdv\\_mainpage.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/st-plains/kids/cabeza-south/cdv_mainpage.html))
  - o Introduction - an interactive map details Cabeza de Vaca's route from Spain to North America
  - o Lost in Texas - illustrated excerpts from *La Relación*
  - o Journal Translation - English words are highlighted and illustrated as students translate them from

Spanish.

- o Crossword - a companion activity to the Journal Translation, the clues are in Spanish, but the answers are in English.
- o A Coat of Arms - An interactive magnifying glass inspects a 1555 engraving of King Charles V of Spain's coat of arms.
- The full text of Cabeza de Vaca's journal, *La Relación*, can be viewed at [www.library.txstate.edu/swwc/cdv](http://www.library.txstate.edu/swwc/cdv).
- This lesson can be adapted to teach about the Jumano Indians encountered by Cabeza de Vaca near Junta de los Rios in the Trans-Pecos region (aka Mountains and Basins region) of Texas and the Karankawas he encountered in the Coastal Plains region.

## STORYTELLER

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rier island beaches off the coast of South Carolina. The seniors rented the cottages and furnished the beer and hotdogs. It was here that most companies recognized their freshmen. The B Company party, however, was quite different. We had been Citadel Men for an entire week and knew all officers - sergeants, and corporals by their first names. More than that, no one called us "Mister." We felt that we were truly superior beings.

Everyone got sunburned, drank too much beer, and had the time of their lives. One of the memorable highlights in the afternoon was a softball game with A Company. The ranking officers picked their own players. I felt proud to have been chosen by Lawrence Lamar Hester, Jr., the captain of B Company. I could only hope that I wouldn't embarrass myself by striking out or doing something equally stupid. As I came to bat, we had men on first and third. There were two outs, and we needed just one more run.

I swung wildly at the first pitch and missed the ball by a country mile. With that start, I thought I ought to hope for a walk, so I watched the new pitch sail by. The umpire yelled, "Strike two!" I was in serious trouble. I took a deep breath and stepped back into

the batter's box. The next pitch was perfect - a lazy floater that seemed to be as big as the moon, begged me to hit it. I swung and nailed the ball. The whole company was yelling for me as the ball sailed over the head of the first baseman and landed safely in the surf. It was probably the longest hit of the day. All the upper classmen in my company patted me on the back and I felt, for a few minutes, like a genuine hero. That evening, on our way back to Charleston from Folly Beach, I felt as though the events of the week, climaxed by the ballgame, had somehow transformed me from a boy to a man.

Finally our freshman year was over. Grades were posted and mine were no different than in high school. I did well in history and poorly in mathematics and chemistry. My only real claim to distinction came in Military Science and Tactics where I made an "A." I wish I could say that this achievement was a result of my brilliance as a military strategist, but truthfully, it was unbelievable luck. The evening before the exam, Fuzzy and I were sitting at our desks waiting for "Taps" to sound so we could go to bed. While sitting and talking, I was idly turning the pages of our ROTC textbook. I stopped at a page that showed a diagram containing the breakdown of an infantry regiment.

The chart showed the organization from

regimental headquarters to a squad in the last platoon. Because it seemed interesting to me, I looked at it a little more closely than I had probably looked at anything else in preparing for exam week. Low and behold, the next day the question on our final military examination called for the student to draw a diagram and label the entire organization of an infantry regiment from colonel to buck private.

My saving grace all the way through school was having a good memory. I could hardly believe my eyes when the examination question was distributed. I knew the answer cold. I was finished in just a few minutes, long before anyone else, and turned in my paper. The officer in charge looked at my paper and said, "Son, if you keep this up, you're going to be the youngest general in the United States Army." The next day the promotion list was posted and my name was there. Come September, I would be one of those dreaded sophomore corporals. But that is another story.

**Note:** Readers may be interested to note that Dr. Bacon's class (1944) at The Citadel is known as "The Class That Never Was." The entire class, to its last man, marched off to war a year before graduation. It was the only class since the War Between the States to have not one graduate.