

Letters from the Cattle Drive Project

April 11, 2013

Dear Texas History Students,

Using your knowledge and the resources below, you are going to write a letter to "home" from a cattle drive. You are a proud Texan who is going on his/her first cattle drive during your summer break from school. You are twelve or thirteen years old but the trail boss needs trail hands. Girls can be a cowgirl "Joan of Arc" or "Mulan" who joined the drive disguised as a boy. You either go undetected as a female or the trail boss can't send you back when he learns he has been fooled!

Letters should:

- ~ be 300-400 words long
- ~ be NEATLY handwritten in the style of the 1860's including date, the name of the addressee, salutation, closing and your name. (A really old font may work if you get permission!)
- ~ describe the location you are writing from
- ~ explain what your role (job) on the cattle drive is
- ~ explain how you got to be on the cattle drive you are writing about
- ~ tell where you have traveled while on the drive
- ~ tell the story of the drive (what happened)
- ~ include what you are doing on the drive
- ~ include an enclosure with various cattle brands of Texas
- ~ include a hand sketched map of the cattle drive you joined

Possible Resources:

Utilize the info from your textbook, Cattle Drive DB2, "The Cowboys"

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/auc01>

<http://www.tscrabrand.com/design-brand.html> (design your own)

<http://kidscowboy.com/history-of-cattle-brands>

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ranchhc/foursixesedu/burningthebrandlesson.pdf>

<http://www.chisholmtrailmuseum.org/ranchinghistory.php>

<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/agriculture/cattle-drives-started-earnest-after-civil-war>

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/outdoor-learning/resources/keep-texas-wild/raqueros-and-cowboys/texas-cattle-drives>

<http://genealogytrails.com/main/cattletrails/865map.html>

<http://civilwartalk.com/threads/civil-war-writing-styles.75834/>

<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/okerhater/letters/dpo07301881.html>

Please consider that these letters and enclosures will be displayed so you may want to use "aged" paper for a special effect. For color, soak it in dark tea or coffee, for brittleness cook the sheet (wet) in the oven until it dries, for a "dirty" look soak it in powder hot chocolate, for a shine cook egg white on it in the oven, for a fun dark red splatter cook ketchup and A-1 sauce on it in the microwave or drip colored sealing wax on it. Good Luck, your letters are due Friday, April 19th.

Sincerely Yours,
Mr. Ricky Vickers
Texas History Teacher
(Thanks Ms. Bethke!)