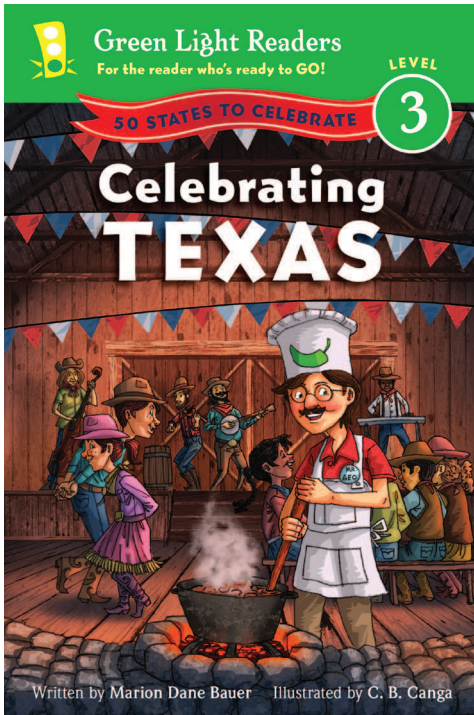


Celebrating Texas by MARION DANE BAUER

Illustrated by C. B. Canga



Book Summary:

From the Houston rodeos to the Galveston ports, from collecting seashells on Padre Island to digging for fossils at Big Bend National Park, we follow Mr. Geo as he leads us across the vast and diverse state of Texas. Incorporating geographical, cultural, and natural landmarks, *Celebrating Texas* is a wonderful introduction to the state for children and adults alike.

Discussion Questions for Read-Aloud

- If you were going to visit Texas, where would you go first? Why?
- Why is Texas called “The Lone Star State”? How is Texas’s history of independence revealed in its culture today?
- Which is your favorite Texas sports team? Why?
- Texas is known for its wide open spaces, like the ranch that Mr. Geo tells us is bigger than the whole state of Rhode Island! Would you like to visit that ranch? Why or why not?
- Texas is a land of many cultures. Can you think of some ways that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans have made Texas what it is today?
- “Texas gets its name from a Caddo (Native American) word meaning “friends.” What are some other ways that Native Americans contributed to Texas’s growth?
- What does it mean when people say “Remember the Alamo”?
- Oil is still big business in Texas. How did oil come to be called “black gold”?
- When you think of Texas, what kind of foods come to mind?

Teaching Ideas

- **Geography and Mapmaking:** Texas is huge—until Alaska became a state in 1959, Texas was the biggest state in the country. It also has some of the most varied terrain. You might ask your students to study different types of maps—topographical maps, road maps, political maps, climate maps, etc.—and then to choose one type of map to use when making their own map of Texas. Encourage students to use other maps as resources, but to make sure that the map they create is their own.
- **Native Americans in Texas:** With your class, study the Caddo tribe. How did they make use of what the Texas land offered to make their homes and feed their families?
- **Fun facts:** Mr. Geo presents many fun facts throughout the book. Ask students to research and collect even more fun facts together, and then collect them into your class’s own “fun fact” book about Texas.
- **A Taste of Texas:** Texas is known for its spicy chili, its barbecue, its enchiladas and tamales, and its chicken fried steak, among other things. Ask students to work together to make some traditional Texas fare, and invite families to come celebrate a taste of Texas!

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- **Wildlife:** With its varied climate Texas is home to a wide variety of animals. Ask students to work in groups to learn more about Texas wildlife. They might write reports, do oral presentations, or find some other way to share what they learn.
- **Music and Dance:** Listen to some country and western music made by Texan musicians, and learn to do the two-step, or try line dancing with your class!

A Lesson: Texas Travel Posters!

Materials Needed:

- At least one copy of *Celebrating Texas*
- Writing and drawing material and paper for student use
- Chart paper and a marker (or your preferred method of recording notes)
- Sample travel magazine or newspaper advertisements

Background Knowledge: Your students will need to be familiar with the book *Celebrating Texas*. It will be helpful if your students are familiar with a variety of Texas cities and attractions.

Set up: Gather your students together in your class meeting area.

Introduction: Tell your students that they will be choosing a place in Texas—it could be a city, or a particular attraction like the rodeo, Big Bend National Park, or the Alamo. They will be creating a page such as one you might see in a newspaper or magazine designed to get people to come enjoy this place. You might want to create a list of important Texas attractions on chart paper with students before they choose and begin working. They will need to include both images and words. The words they choose to include should be informative, clear, and

designed to highlight the wonderful things about whatever landmark students have chosen. You may want to require that students do a bit more research and include a certain number of facts in their sheet. You may also want to spend some time studying real advertisements together so that students have a variety of models to use as they create their own.

Work Time: As students work, circulate and support them as needed. Students may need more than one class period to finish their advertisements.

Share: Students will love sharing their Texas ads with each other. You may simply have students display and discuss their ads in small groups. If you are feeling ambitious, you might create your own class magazine or newspaper all about Texas, and feature these advertisements within it!