

Grades: 9-12

Future of America's Past, "Lines in the Sand"

In THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S PAST, notable scholar Ed Ayers takes viewers to the sites of complex and evocative chapters in American history. Throughout the series, Ayers meets with public historians working to preserve the past, from National Park Service rangers to curators and community activists. He visits the sites - both familiar and unknown - of monumental events, and brings on guests who offer a range of perspectives.

Texas has long been a place of contentious borders and cross-cultural exchange. Six national flags have flown over Texas since the 1500s, starting with European contests for the land that followed 10,000 years of Native American history there. From Spanish missions, to a French shipwreck, to a former sugarcane plantation, we visit to ask.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- What is the central idea (main claim or thesis) of Future of America's Past "Lines in the Sand"?
- Choose 2-3 unfamiliar words for the program and define them.
- What clues can you point to in the program to explain the author's purpose? What is the intent or purpose of the Future of America's Past "Lines in the Sand"?
- What is your analysis of the program? What evidence did you identify to support your analysis of the TV show?
- What 6 flags have flown over Texas?
- How did Texas become Texas?
- What were the sequence of events that occurred from the 1500's moving forward?

Question Box 2

- What did/do you enjoy about this program?
- Now that it's over, what are my first thoughts about this overall project? Are they mostly positive or negative?
- If positive, what comes to mind specifically? Negative?
- What were some of the most interesting parts to this program? Explain.
- Why was the border of Texas so important?
- If you were to visit Texas, what would you like to see? Why?

- Why is this history important to Texas? The US?

Box 3 (Tasks)

- Research the unearthing of Native American Burial grounds in 1967. What happened? Why? Why did it take 30 years for those remains to be reinterred? How would you feel if your family was treated like that?
- Explore the Alamo. <https://www.thealamo.org/visit/grounds/virtual-tour/alamo-vtour/index.html> Why should we remember it? What did control of the Alamo represent?

Box 4 (Enrichment)

- The Spanish built missions throughout Texas and California. Research the nearest mission to you. How did the Spanish missions alter the lives of the Native Americans in the area near you?
- Martin Varner was one of the first people to build a plantation in Texas and it changed the landscape of Texas. Research the first families of your community. Who were they? What brought them here?

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- Become a Jr. Park Ranger.
- Click this link: <https://www.nps.gov/kids/parks-with-junior-ranger-programs.htm>
- Select and click on the parks from the list.
- Read the instructions and download a Jr Ranger booklet.
 1. Some parks provide books for different age ranges.
 2. If the park you selected does not have a link to a book ,select a different park.
- This link provides Junior. Ranger booklets for special interests.
 1. <https://www.nps.gov/kids/junior-rangers.htm>