THE ALAMO AND THE TEXAS REVOLUTION
An Annotated Bibliography for Parents and Teachers
Kindergarten through Grade 8

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This bibliography is intended to be a guide for parents and teachers who are teaching the history of the Alamo and the Texas Revolution. Books are the only media contained in the list, and most of them were published between 1995 and 2004. Currently available, in-print books are the focus of the bibliography; out-of-print books are included when a topic is not covered by an in-print equivalent. Features that may be of use to teachers are indicated and points that may distract from the study of history are mentioned.

Fiction


Only three weeks after U.S. soldier Jim Bowie wrote these words, Mexican president and general Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and his six thousand troops arrived at the fort known as the Alamo to assert their control over the Texan colonists who had settled in Mexican territory. About 260 colonists had holed up to fight for independence from Mexico. Author Susan Provost Beller brings the conflict of these to groups to life with first-person accounts and stories that detail what conditions were like at the fort and what happened on March 6, when the Mexicans attacked. These words give us a better understanding of why Remember the Alamo became the rallying cry for all U.S. citizens.


Hannah and Jackie are among the students Mr. Barrington has rewarded with a special field trip to an archeological dig at Presidio La Bahia, a fort in Goliad, Texas. Hannah's father drives the girls and Nick to the fort, where the girls participate in the dig and view museum exhibits. Nick spends time in the museum with girlfriend Zoe, and Mr. Barrington brings the mysterious trunk into the fort. All is well until a disagreement among the friends leads to the opening of the trunk--and readers of Cuate's historical novels have come to relish what that means.

Once again the trunk transports the youngsters back in time to 1836, in the midst of the Texas Revolution. Presidio La Bahia has been renamed Fort Defiance. What will happen in the coming weeks, when the Texians and the Mexican army clash at the famous Battle of Coleto and Texian leader Colonel James Fannin and Mexican General Jose Urrea bravely face each other on the battlefield?

Nick discovers a new friend in fifteen-year-old Benjamin Hughes. While outside the safety of the fort's walls, the boys are watched by Carlos de la Garza, an enemy of the Texians--or are they mistaken? Hannah and Jackie join Francita Alavez, the Angel of Goliad, on a desperate mission to save the lives of Fannin's men from Santa Anna's cruel orders to execute all prisoners.


Shots fired at the Alamo cause Bonita, a mare, to take part in an animal version of the Runaway Scrape. This book is the fourth in a series inspired by the DreamWorks film Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron. The teacher might guide the animal-loving reader to find out why Bonita had to run from the Alamo.


Six types of real and fictional warriors are included in this book. For this bibliography, only the section on the
Alamo is of importance. The battle is portrayed in a ten-page, fictionalized section as having been fought exclusively by American and British settlers against the Mexican army. Weapons used in the battle are mentioned; the Texan defenders are given a rating based on code of honor, ruthlessness, weaponry, tactics, and courage. Samurai and U.S. Special Forces have higher ratings.

Publisher's recommendation: ages 10 and up.

Even though fifteen-year-old Lorenzo Bonifacio lives only in this novel, the young reader will find his life convincing and believable. The author draws from first-hand accounts by Mexican soldiers to write imaginatively about Lorenzo’s village in Mexico, his conscription into the Mexican army, and his experiences in the Texas revolution. Young boys will identify with Lorenzo’s adventures, and young girls will appreciate the drama of the story. A glossary of Spanish words is provided, but no pronunciation guide is given.


Through the eyes of a thirteen-year-old girl, the reader experiences the Runaway Scrape, hears cannon fire from the Alamo, and learns about the outcome of the battle at San Jacinto. Lucinda Lawrence begins her diary on September 9, 1836, in Gonzales, Texas. Each entry portrays early Texas life as a young girl might have lived it, complete with a teenager's crush and the dissolution of her secure life caused by wartime experience. An epilogue describes Lucinda's life in her later years. "Life in America in 1836," beginning on page 181, provides a historical background for Lucinda's story. Ten pages of black and white illustrations resemble a publication that might have appeared during the time frame of the diary. Guides are available online for parents and teachers.


This imaginative, pleasantly illustrated interpretation of Texas history begins with the thoughts of a Payaya maiden in 1500. As time progresses, other people who participated in the making of Texas describe themselves and share their thoughts. A Mexican peasant forced into the army, a settler in Austin's colony, William Barrett Travis, and General Sam Houston are some of those portrayed in this vision. A two-page historical note at the end of the book explains the text for the teacher. There is a pronouncing glossary of 13 words, a selected bibliography of seven books for adult readers, and six suggestions for further reading for juveniles.

Publisher's recommendation: Grade 5, Unit 3.

This novel is told from the point of view of Angelina Dickinson, who survived the battle of the Alamo with her mother, Susanna. As the book begins, Angelina says that she, as a fifteen-month old baby, can remember the "nice man who gave me a ring with a cat's eye stone." She relates the rest of the traditional Alamo story in a question and answer discussion with her mother. The book is illustrated with colorful, cartoon-like drawings. The inside back cover has five "Story Questions and Activities," and an assignment for writing an autobiographical paragraph. This simplistic (and probably unrealistic) presentation of the Alamo story is unlikely to hold the attention of the intended Grade 5 audience.

**Hughes, Bill. The Story of the Alamo.** Lone Star Stories, c2003. 18 p.
The "story" of the Alamo is told in comic book form, complete with heroic characters and absolute villains. Readers should keep in mind that this publication is entertainment, not history. Davy Crockett delivers his last words to Santa Anna in an entirely fictitious version of the Alamo story. Readers who might not enjoy a book on the Alamo may be attracted to the comic version, but parents and teachers must remind students that the facts are to be found elsewhere.

Picture Book This is a highly romanticized version of the story of Susanna Dickinson, the wife of one of the Alamo
defenders who survived the siege and battle with her daughter, Angelina. Some of the text follows Susanna’s accounts of her experience; some is the assumption of the author. The end paper maps and the illustrations by Paul Bacon are charming and will appeal to the young reader.

Publishers recommendation: Age Range 6-10

"Remember the Alamo!" is one of the most familiar battle cries in American history, yet few know about the brave woman who inspired it. Susanna Dickinson's story reveals the crucial role she played during that turbulent period in Texas-American history. This story Relates the experiences of the Texas woman who, along with her baby, survived the 1836 massacre at the Alamo.

Kerr, Rita. Rita Kerr, illustrator. The Alamo Cat. Austin, TX; Eakin Press, c1987 64 p; hardcover ISBN 0-8901-5639-5.; $15.00
Publisher's recommendation: Ages 9-12
Recounts the adventures of Ruby, a stray kitten adopted by the patrol rangers at the Alamo as their mascot.

Publisher's recommendation: Ages 6-10.
A retelling of six legends about the Texas Missions based on Adina de Zavala's History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Missions In and Around San Antonio (1996). The stories date back Spain's colonial rule in Texas, the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and offer a benign view of the Spanish missionaries sent to do "God's work." In his introduction, however, Kimmel briefly addresses the resistance of the Kiowas and Comanches European colonialism and the violent conflicts that resulted. The timeline of Texas mission history and an author's note cited the written source of the legends place the stories within the broader mission history. Winner of the 2006 June Naylor Award for the Best Book for Children on Texas History, sponsored by the DRT Library.

Publisher's recommendation: Reading level 5.0.
Liberty, Sam Houston's dog and the female dog hero of the Republic, tells the story of her life with Sam Houston. The original manuscript of her story was retrieved from the grounds of the Alamo by her descendent, Lady, and it now resides in the "Dogs of the Republic of Texas Headquarters." According to Liberty's diary, Jim Bowie's dog Justice becomes her mate, and Sam Houston names their pup Frall. Houston takes Justice for his own dog when Bowie dies at the Alamo.

School Library Journal recommendation: Grade 4-7.
This novel reads easily and will appeal to girls in primary grades. Teachers and parents should point out the problem areas of the book that might lead to misunderstanding in studying Texas history. Most of the characters in this novel are completely fictitious, including the main character, eleven-year-old Jessie McCann. She reluctantly arrives in Texas accompanying her impulsive father and unlucky family. Some aspects of the racial and ethnic problems arising from a friendship between Jessie and the Tejana girl Angelina may be anachronistic. When Jessie, her younger brother, and her mother take refuge in the Alamo, Crockett says it is "the safest place in all of Texas." It seems unlikely that anyone unattached to one of the Alamo defenders would have taken refuge in the Alamo, since all the other residents of San Antonio were fleeing from the advancing Mexican troops.

Mexican soldiers looking for recruits refuse to believe that Victor Lopez is only fourteen years old, so he is
forced to join the Mexican army. This novel depicts life as a Mexican soldier to be difficult; many succumb to cold and starvation on the way to San Antonio. Even though the story is a little melodramatic, the reader is interested in knowing what becomes of Victor. Boys will be interested because the hero is a boy, but girls will also find the story interesting. The casual, expressive line drawings by the author enliven the story. Spanish words are mixed into the English conversation, just as they might be today, but there is no glossary to explain unusual Spanish words. A historical explanation of events would have been a welcome appendix, as would a bibliography of other age-appropriate books on the Texas revolution.

Picture Book.
Publisher's recommendation: Reading Level 3.1.

Of all the books written about the Alamo, this one must have the most unusual main character. Grandpa, a green snake, participated in the battle and lived to tell the tale to his grandchildren. Grandpa tells his story in verse, and the book demands to be read out loud, with or without an audience. The style of the black and white drawings may tempt young children to color in the white spaces of the illustrations.

Publisher's recommendation: Age range 9-11.

These lively and colorful books tell the stories of important places and monuments across the United States that have shaped American history and that symbolize American democracy and freedom. In 1836, a small group of defenders at the Alamo fought to the death against thousands of Mexican soldiers during the Texas Revolution. Today, Americans still remember the Alamo as a Symbol of the sacrifices people make fighting for freedom.

Publisher's recommendation: Grades 3-6.
The author proves herself to be a master storyteller in this interesting book. The main character, Andrea Castañon de Flores, grows up to be Madam Candelaria. San Antonio remembers Doña Candelaria because she liked to sit outside the Alamo and tell stories. Undoubtedly she was a good storyteller, but no one can be sure what she said was true. Therefore, readers must accept the content of this book as a charming story, but only partial truth. The author also inserts her own bits of pure fiction, such as the letter from Sam Houston to Andrea telling her to “Go and take care of Bowie, my brother, in the Alamo.” Adults will appreciate the illustrations, done in an interesting primitive style, as art, but children may find them unappealing. Appendices include the illustrator's hand-drawn map of Texas in 1836, a list of dates in Texas history, and an index.

Publisher's recommendation: Middle readers.
The size and design of this book makes it convincing as a diary of a thirteen-year-old girl. The diary begins on Saturday, October 10, 1835, as the diarist relates that she may have been “messing with a ghost.” From this point on, the book is difficult to put down. Belle's family, part of Stephen F. Austin's colony, is caught up in the fight for independence. In her diary, Belle records the colony's escape from the advancing Mexican troops. It is difficult for the reader to keep in mind the fact that Bell is a fictitious character. A historical appendix explains Belle's experiences within the context of the time. Black and white illustrations, taken from nineteenth century sources, add interest to the appendix.

The Arlington Family drives from Washington, Michigan to visit the Alamo in San Antonio. Because he is in a hurry to return to Mexico, a very old man sells Adam Arlington a worn leather holster that he claims belonged to one of the Mexican soldiers at the Alamo. Adam and Ashley, his sister, involve themselves in Texas history while their parents enjoy the Riverwalk. Before the Arlingtons can say "Sam Houston," the holster takes the family deeper into Texas history than they could have ever imagined. This book makes for a good read. It includes an appendix of Texas facts, books, and web sites.

Written in a narrative style, this well-researched account of the Alamo siege and attack will appeal to students interested in history. Students who wish to follow the battle in detail might have appreciated having the illustration of the compound and its defenses placed before rather than after the narrative. The enthusiasm of the narrator and the paintings by David Craig may also inspire new historical interest in some who merely read the book to enjoy the story. The story is made richer by the author's inclusion of material provided by Mexican soldiers and civilians. Sidebars offering brief biographies of Santa Anna, Travis, Bowie, and Crockett personalize the account. An epilogue presents the accounts of four Alamo survivors, discusses some of the legends attached to the battle and its aftermath, and pictures the fate of the Alamo building. There is a half-page glossary, a one and one-half page index, and a brief but well chosen recommended reading list.

Publisher's recommendation: Age levels 7-12, grades 2-7.

The author of the famous Boxcar Children series intended for her books to be interesting and enjoyable to read. A book like this one might appeal to the reluctant reader, while inspiring some curiosity about Alamo history. The Boxcar Children learn a smattering of Alamo history and San Antonio culture while finding a ring stolen from the Alamo. Unfortunately, the cat's eye ring belonging to Travis is described as one given to Angelina Dickinson by her father, rather than by Travis.

Publisher's recommendation: Age levels 4-8. Picture Book.
This delightfully illustrated book can be read to very young children. School-age children will enjoy reading it to themselves. The author's simple, pleasant writing style is appropriate for the design of the book. An author's note and a list of important dates follow the text.

Publisher's recommendation: Reading level grade 3, interest level grades 3-5.
This biography makes Crockett's boyhood past interesting to young readers and captures the appeal of his personality. Illustrations by Tim Parlin are interspersed with pictures from archival sources. Five sidebars draw attention to points that other books for this age group do not make. There is a one-page timeline, two websites for research, a list of fiction and non-fiction books for further reading, a select bibliography and an index.

Publisher's recommendation: reading level grades 5-6, interest level grades 4-8; School Library Journal recommendation: grades 5-8.
The plate before the first chapter in this biography of Santa Anna is the famous portrait of Davy Crockett dressed as a frontiersman. "Remember the Alamo," (Chapter One) presents a Santa Anna who "could be brutal, cunning, and immoral." The five chapters that follow are brief, and Santa Anna seems to have begun his life as the kind of man he was at the Alamo. The final chapter, "Into Exile and into History" covers the last forty years of his life in three pages. The School Library Journal review of February 1, 2004, said this biography is one of "misleading oversimplification." Appendices include a chronology, a historical timeline, a list for further reading and "works consulted," a list of four web sites, a glossary, and an appendix.

School Library Journal recommendation: Grades 5 through 8.
The first chapter of this small volume describes the Alamo battle in three and a half pages. Nothing new is presented here; the strength of the book lies elsewhere. Perhaps the book's subtitle would have been a more
accurate title for the entire work, since the subject is actually the Texas Revolution from its earliest roots in sixteenth century Mexico. Subsequent chapters present a history of Mexico, the colonization of Texas, the “Texas Revolt” leading to the Alamo siege and battle, the Texans’ retreat from the Mexican army, and the final battle at San Jacinto. Eighteen illustrations, some of them not seen in other juvenile books, illuminate the text. Particularly unusual in books for this age group is an epilogue describing what happened to places and people after Texas became an independent nation and a state. A one and one-half page chronology outlines the basic events in Texas history. The author discusses sources used in creating the work and includes six books in a list of suggested readings. A two and one-half page index completes the book.


Presents information on the history of the Alamo, including the famous battle of 1836 that took place there, some of the men involved in that battle, and its significance in the struggle for Texas's independence from Mexico.


This book is a basic introduction to the siege and battle of the Alamo, but it is also an excellent primer for the political situation surrounding the Texas Revolution. While most of the histories for this age group concentrate on the famous personalities of the Revolution, this one offers simple descriptions of negotiations before and during the siege. Approximately thirty well-chosen illustrations follow the text. Unfortunately, the illustration of the Alamo on page 23 is misleading, in that it does not reflect the appearance of the building at the time being discussed. This façade for the building was not added until well after statehood. Appendices include a one-page glossary, a "Did You Know" page, a timeline, a list of important people, a "Want to Know More" bibliography, and a one-page index.


This is an unusual book, one that offers students an opportunity to think for themselves. The backgrounds of four conflicts are presented, and students work in groups to find a solution that might have avoided conflict. One of the situations presented is The Alamo (1821-1836). Even though Gregorio Esparza is one of the participants in the scenario, the description of the conflict is presented as “American” vs. Mexican. The background for both sides is skimpy; success of this project depends upon the skill and training of the teacher. The material in this publication is "reproducible," allowing a single teacher the authority to copy pages for use in a class project.


The complex personality of James Bowie emerges from this straightforward biography. Young readers are not protected from Bowie's flaws. However, they will be able to see the contributions his strong character traits make to a developing young country. Illustrations are striking and abundant; numerous sidebars add interest to the text. Appendices include a timeline, a glossary including pronunciation, a page of additional resources, a short bibliography, and a two-page index.


This brief biography describes Crockett's life for the very young reader. Each of nine chapters has an illustration on the left-hand page, with a single page of large-print text on the right. Appendices include “fast facts” and dates in Crockett's life, a glossary, two books for further reading, addresses of museums, internet sites, and an index.


This large-print book is best for very young readers. Davy Crockett appears here as the legend he became, with a chapter included about the television series devoted to him. There is a timeline (“Davy's Path of Life”), which does not include Crockett's second wife and family. “Behind the Legend" includes two books and two web sites, both
of which may be somewhat advanced for this reading level. Other appendices include a set of questions taken from
the book, a list of words to know, and a brief index.

Publisher's recommendation: Grade level 6 and up.

In a factual, but thorough style, this book describes Bowie's life as a frontiersman who left Louisiana to seek a
new life in Texas. Bowie's early years in San Antonio are described in greater detail than in most books for this age
group, and the conflicts leading to the Alamo are discussed thoroughly. The recommended reading level may be low
for the average student; grade 7 or 8 might be more appropriate for this text. Sidebars are challenging enough to be
used for class discussions. The maps are outstanding, but the other black and white illustrations do not live up to
expectations. Appendices include a chronology, extensive chapter notes, a page for further reading, and an index.

Publisher's recommendation: reading level grade 5, interest level grades 3-8.

This well-written book consists of only four chapters. The first two are devoted to history leading up to the
Texas Revolution; the second two describe the Revolution, the Alamo, and its aftermath. Illustrations are not
plentiful, but they are appropriate to the subject. Appendices include an annotated timeline, a glossary, a page for
further reading (including a list of sources), and an index.

Harmon, Daniel E. Davy Crockett. Famous Figures of the American Frontier Series. Philadelphia [Pa.]: Chelsea
$49.80.
Publisher's recommendation: Grade level 4-8.

This factual biography of Davy Crockett uses occasional quotations from Crockett's autobiography to reveal
his personality. Crockett's role at the Alamo is not the emphasis of the book; rather, his participation in the Texas
Revolution is viewed as a natural outgrowth of his personal life and decisions. This book is part of a Chelsea House
series, designed for grades 4 through 8, on frontiersmen. Nineteen illustrations are carefully chosen from archival
sources. Additional aids are a chronology of Crockett's life, a glossary of thirteen words highlighted in the book and
defined in the appendix, a bibliography of eight additional books appropriate for the grade level, and a one-page
index.

Isaacs, Sally Senzell. Life at the Alamo. Picture the Past Series. Chicago: Heinemann Library, c2003. 32 p.;
Publisher's recommendation: Grades 2-4.

This small volume presents the history of Texas from 1780 to 1840. A single page at the end of the text
describes the Alamo as it is today. The book's best feature is the inclusion of many well-reproduced
illustrations. The numerous topics discussed are historically accurate, but the breadth of material covered may be
confusing and overwhelming for younger readers. Perhaps a better reading level might be grades 3 through 5. A
one-page glossary, a recommended book about Davy Crockett, and a one-page index complete the book.

Publisher's recommendation: Reading level 3.

Young readers will enjoy the pages that follow the story of Texas from "The Earliest Texans" to the present
day page entitled "Texas is a Place Where Things are Happening." The pages devoted to the Texas Revolution are
simple and appropriate for very young readers. The clever illustrations are the most enjoyable part of the book, and
children will appreciate the comic quality of the drawings. A border of black and white line drawings at the bottom of
the page silently follows the individuals in color illustrations at the top. Don't miss the spear-holding character, at the
bottom of the page, who travels the entire length of Texas history, aging as he goes. A little turtle accompanies him
through the pages of history.

Publisher's recommendation: Interest level K-5, reading level 3.

This simple biography would appeal to very young readers; the publisher's stated reading level of grade three
may be high for the content of the book. It describes Crockett's life in ten single-page chapters. Illustrations include
four modern photographs, a map featuring the United States in 1803 with Tennessee and Virginia highlighted, two
archival drawings, and two portraits of Crockett. Also appended are a twelve-word glossary with a pronunciation guide, a simple index, and a bibliography of two web sites.

Publisher's recommendation: Interest Level: K-5, Reading Level: 3.0.
This brief, simply written biography of Jim Bowie consists of ten one-page chapters describing Jim Bowie's early life, his involvement with the pirate Lafitte, his search for a fabled lost silver mine, his move to Texas and participation in its politics, and his death at the Alamo. Some of the less savory aspects to Bowie's life, such as his involvement with slavery, are presented in a manner appropriate for the reading/interest level. The rough and tumble descriptions of Bowie's early life may make the book appealing to boys. Illustrations include a portrait of Bowie, a map of the Louisiana Purchase, archival illustrations of a bayou and other sites from Bowie's life, a painting of the pirate Lafitte, and two modern photographs. A single page glossary includes a pronunciation guide. Appended to the one-page index are two recommended web sites for further information on Bowie.

Publishers recommendation: Ages 10-11
This is the story of the only Anglo-American woman who was at the Alamo during that heroic battle. Susanna lived those 13 terrible days and saw all the Texans die. Her husband, Almeron, was among the Texan heroes. Her story is one of courage and strength.

Publisher's recommendation: Interest Level: 5-8, Reading Level: 5-8.
The most interesting and unusual feature of this volume is contained in its subtitle. Primary sources relating to Texas history, including letters, paintings, watercolors, maps and important Texas documents are photographically reproduced. Well-written text boxes accompany each illustration. In fact, the reading level of the text boxes is higher than that of the general large-print text contained in the rest of the book. The primary title of "The Alamo" is perhaps too narrow for the material included, since it begins with the first Spanish explorations and includes early Texas settlement. Transcriptions of the letters and documents follow the text in an appendix. Other appendices include a one-page glossary, a list for further reading (This list could be considered a rather high reading level, perhaps level 8 to adult.), a bibliography of web sites, and a one-page index. A thorough list of the primary sources and their locations concludes the publication.

Booklist recommendation: Grades 6-10.
Even though this book covers the entire history of Texas from the Paleolithic age to the present day, it has to be included in this bibliography because its description of Texas during its Revolutionary period is unusually fresh and entertaining. The era of Texas under Mexico does not have a separate chapter; it is considered in the section entitled "Texas and Spain." Young people will find the writing style lively and the illustrations fascinating. A chronology of Texas history is included as an appendix. Museums and historic sites are annotated in a list of five pages; further reading is broken down into subject areas. There is a three-page index.

No reading level available.
Unusual illustrations and good design make this book visually attractive. A diagram of the Alamo compound places it in perspective to present-day San Antonio; pictures of early-day San Antonio and portraits of the participants in the Mexican and Texas Revolutions are especially well chosen. Brief commentaries in the margins hold readers’ attention. Appendices include an eleven-word glossary, an illustrated timeline, a "To Find Out More" page, and an index.

Publisher's recommendation: Grades 6-12.
This is an excellent book for the serious student of history. The author assumes some maturity on his reader's part, and he does not gloss over material that may be difficult to accept. For example, in the sidebar on
Bowie’s knife, he describes Bowie killing two men in the famous duel that became a bloody brawl. There are twenty-three illustrations, some in full color and some in black and white. The approximately half dozen sidebars are particularly well done. Appendices include a chronology, two pages of notes, a four-page index, a bibliography, and a page of suggested readings. Students who need lighter reading could rely on the suggested readings; more advanced students will appreciate the bibliography.

Publisher’s recommendation: Ages 9 and up.

This book places the Alamo within a framework of American national identity. The author is a journalist rather than a historian, and he is not as careful of the accuracy of his statements as he might be. For example, on page 27 the statement is made that the Frenchman Louis Rose, who left before the battle of the Alamo, "was never seen again." In fact Louis "Moses" Rose later lived in Nacogdoches and talked about his experiences at the Alamo. The design of the book is appealing, and the color photographs and maps are well done. Appendices include a chronology, a glossary, suggestions for more information, and an index.

Publisher’s recommendation: Reading level 5.6.

This book is remarkable in that it includes first-hand testimony of the siege and battle at the Alamo. Gregorio Esparza, a boy aged eight to twelve years old when the Alamo fell, survived to relate his version of the battle. In a thirteen-page chapter “The Battle of the Alamo,” the author combines details from several interviews that Esparza gave some seventy years later. The rest of the book describes the life of the Esparza family, both before and after the Texas Revolution. Black and white illustrations include photographs. The design of the book, harking back to the 1950's, may seem outdated to students. Appendices include a glossary and a two-page bibliography.

School Library Journal recommendation: Grade 6 and up,
Booklist recommendation: Grades 4-8.

The goal of this book is to provide a comprehensive study of the causes and consequences of the battle at the Alamo. Sidebars of one or two sentences alert the reader to the importance of the action on the accompanying page or pages. Survivors from both sides are quoted; information from the Mexican side is also used as source material. Abundant black and white illustrations enliven the text. Students who enjoyed the book will appreciate the guide to further reading supplied in four pages of annotated bibliography. Another appendix lists the people known to have been inside the Alamo and classifies them as survivors, couriers, and children. Readers may be surprised to learn that three children are counted among the dead.

Publisher’s recommendation for the World History Series: Grade level 4-12, reading level 5-8.

For the student who wants a concise history of the Mexican-American War, this is the place to start. A foreword, introduction, and seven well-written chapters introduce the reader to the larger war that encompassed the Texas Revolution. Numerous maps, photographs, drawings, and paintings illustrate the text. The quality of the black and white illustrations may be disappointing. Appendices include three pages of notes, a page for further reading with annotations, two annotated bibliography pages, a page of additional works consulted, and a five-page index.

Publisher’s recommendation: reading level grade 2, interest level grades K-2.

This small book, perfect for little hands, has wonderful illustrations taken from archival sources. Anyone using it to teach history should be forewarned that even the youngest readers will be misled by serious errors in the text; for example, "A few weeks after the battle, the United States army fought Santa Anna and the Mexican army." Even the teacher may overlook more subtle errors. Eight words presented in bold type are defined in a glossary.


This is a much-needed biography of the Mexican dictator who played a significant role in the history of
Texas. The account of his life is thorough and well balanced; it adds depth to the events surrounding the Alamo battle and its aftermath. The many black and white illustrations portray people, places, and events not seen in other books described in this bibliography. Reading level should probably be revised to grade 8 and above. Unfortunately, Chelsea House has discontinued the publication, but it can still be found in libraries. Appendices include a chronology, a bibliography, and an index.

Publisher’s recommendation: Grades 5 and up, interest level 10 and up.
Five chapters describe Spanish settlement in Texas, the events leading up to the battle at the Alamo, the siege and battle, and the events following the battle. There are sidebars about the famous participants on both sides (including the Bowie knife), with an unusual one on Juan Seguin. Appendices include a timeline, a glossary, a page indicating sources for further information, and a two-page index.

No reading level available.
This book offers a one-page summary of the battle of the Alamo. Ten Alamo-related jokes and puns follow. The primary purpose of this book is to offer extremely short histories (accompanied by jokes and riddles) based on various subjects from the American West. The purpose of including this book in this bibliography is to offer teachers some incentives to attract the attention of reluctant students. Suggestions for further (serious) reading follow the jokes.

Publisher’s recommendation: Grade level 4-10.
This lively narrative biography tells, as the author declares, the “true” story of Davy Crockett. Chapter one describes Crockett’s fall at the Alamo following the version given in the de la Pena diaries. The text is dotted with quotations from Crockett’s diaries, adding to the colorful flavor of the biography. Black and white illustrations include etchings and photographs, and are appropriate for the text; only the cover is disappointing as a lead-in for this unusual book. Students and teachers would enjoy reading this often-humorous account out loud in class. There are numerous endnotes for each chapter, giving sources for the stories quoted. A glossary, an index, and a list of further reading follow the text.

Publisher’s recommendation: Reading level 4, interest level 3-6.
This narrative relates the basic story of the Alamo siege and battle, as it traditionally has been presented. The first ten pages offer a description of Texas history leading to the beginning of the Texas Revolution. Black and white and color illustrations follow the text. A glossary, a timeline, and an index comprise the appendices.

This book is the Spanish language version of the book that follows.

Publisher’s recommendation: Grades 1-3.
This simplest account of Alamo history presents both the Texan and Mexican points of view. Twelve illustrations include photographs of present-day Goliad, Coleto, and the Alamo. There is a seven-word pronouncing glossary and an index.

Publisher’s recommendation: Grades 5 and above.
This unusually thorough history for the middle grades is especially useful for its inclusion of the role that Mexican history plays in the Texas Revolution. Three sidebars contain “Source Documents,” including William Barret
Travis’ famous letter, Santa Anna’s letter to the people of Texas, and Mrs. Terrell’s description of Santa Anna being taken prisoner. Poorly reproduced black and white illustrations are disappointing, with the exception of the maps depicting the defenders’ positions and Santa Anna’s battle plan. Presented as an appendix, a timeline begins with the Mexican War for Independence from Spain and ends with the exit of American troops from Mexico in 1848. Endnotes provide the sources for information in each chapter; five books are offered for further reading. The index consists of three pages.

No reading level available.

This is a thorough history of the Texas Revolution, even though the title would indicate that the text does not extend beyond the Battle of the Alamo. The author uses sources from both sides of the conflict, and he touches upon the complexity of the political situation in Texas preceding the Revolution. His excellent presentation of the many factors involved would have been stronger without the beginning chapter “Which Alamo to Remember?” By spelling out prejudices too clearly, he denies his young readers the experience of sorting through bias and misrepresentation of the facts. Such a process can lead to a revelation for young people that may stay with them for the rest of their lives. Nevertheless, this book is a welcome addition to the collective works on the Alamo. Appendices include a list of important dates in the Texas Revolution, a list for further reading divided between young readers and young-adult readers, and an index.

Publisher’s recommendation for A Day That Changed America Series: Reading level 8-12.

Written in a narrative style, this well-researched account of the Alamo siege and attack will appeal to students interested in history. Students who wish to follow the battle in detail might have appreciated having the illustration of the compound and its defenses placed before rather than after the narrative. The enthusiasm of the narrator and the paintings by David Craig may also inspire new historical interest in some who merely read the book to enjoy the story. The story is made richer by the author’s inclusion of material provided by Mexican soldiers and civilians. Sidebars offering brief biographies of Santa Anna, Travis, Bowie, and Crockett personalize the account. An epilogue presents the accounts of four Alamo survivors, discusses some of the legends attached to the battle and its aftermath, and pictures the fate of the Alamo building. There is a half-page glossary, a one and one-half page index, and a brief but well chosen recommended reading list.

No reading level available.

Eight chapters, five of which describe the settlement of Texas and the Texas Revolution, are clearly written and printed in large type. The Chapter 4, “The Battle of the Alamo,” is presented as a diary of the siege days. The last three chapters, approximately one-third of the book, describe present-day San Antonio. Illustrations are numerous. Historical people and events are illustrated in black and white; present day San Antonio scenes are in color. There is a one-page index.

No reading level available.

The author of this book obviously admires Stephen F. Austin a great deal. For the first third of the book, Moses Austin is shown to play an important part in his son’s life. After the death of his father, Stephen accepts the destiny of becoming the empresario of a new colony in Texas. This book is written in a very simple style and printed in large print. Drawings by Pat Finney are reproduced using only one color, blue, combined with black and white. A two-page afterword presents a short review of Austin’s legacy in Texas. The index consists of two pages. Ms. Wade’s company, Colophon House, produces its own publications. The book can be found at the following web site: [http://www.wadeco.com/books.htm](http://www.wadeco.com/books.htm)

Publisher’s recommendation: K-6, at the discretion of the teacher.

A biography of a strong Texas woman is welcome among the many biographies of the male founders of Texas. Girls will be especially pleased to learn that a single woman managed to find a place among the early
revolutionaries in Texas. Jane Long joined Austin’s colony after her husband was killed and became an influential Texan in her own right. The relationship that Jane Long had with her slave, Kian, and Kian’s descendants, is presented without judgment for the student to evaluate. The illustrations by Virginia Marsh Roeder are endearing. An oval containing a small line drawing resides within a border at the bottom of each page; each drawing represents the action being described on the page above. The main difficulty teachers will find with the book is placing it appropriately for a particular class or age group. The style of the book is rather simple, but the events, as described, are complicated. The appeal of the pictures is appropriate for very young readers, but the message is aimed more toward 4th to 5th graders. Perhaps issues such as feminism, slavery, and revolutionary politics could be discussed with older readers. The teacher might tell the story to younger readers, while using the illustrations as guidelines. Colophon House, a venture of the author, produces and sells Jane’s Long Journey.


Remember the Alamo presents a fresh look at one of the most famous battles in American history. The story has been told countless times in everything from comic books to feature films. Always it is the brave Americans—Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, William Travis, and others—fighting the overwhelming forces of a cruel dictator for the right to live in a Texas independent of Mexican rule. Too often, little mention is made of the Tejanos—Mexican Texans—who put their lives on the line to fight alongside the other defenders at the Alamo. And what about Santa Anna? Was he so wrong in trying to keep Americans from taking over his country? Clearly there is more to the story.

Paul Robert Walker has studied the evidence—messages sent out from the Alamo before the battle, reports written by Tejano and Texian leaders, eyewitness accounts from a slave and the handful of women and children who were spared by Santa Anna, and stories told by Mexican officers and soldiers. He has consulted with experts, examined the historic sites, and read the most recent scholarly theories to present the story of the Alamo through the eyes of Texians, Tejanos, and Mexicans as you’ve never heard it before.

Weber, Valerie; Riehecky, Janet. The Siege of the Alamo. Events that Shaped America Series. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Gareth Stevens Publications, c2002. 32 p.; hardcover library binding ISBN 0-8368-3226-4: $23.93. Publisher’s recommendation: reading level grades 3 and up, interest level ages 8 and up. Janet Riehecky is the co-author of another book by the same title. This book is comparable to it, but it is intended for a lower reading level: grades 3 and up, rather than grades 5 and up. The design of the book is appealing to young readers. Illustrations are well placed and attractive; sidebars are unusual, especially one quoting an anonymous Mexican soldier. Appendices include a timeline, suggested activities, a glossary, a page for further study, and an index.


Wilson, Mike. The Battle of the Alamo. The American West Series. Broomall, Pennsylvania: Mason Crest Publishers, c2003. 64 p.; ISBN 1-5908-4062-3: $15.10. No other book for this age group is as thorough in its coverage of the events surrounding the battle at the Alamo. It stands alone in discussing the political situation that gave rise to Santa Anna, the unrest in Mexico over his new-found power, and the revolt in Zapatecas. The narrative style of the author never succumbs to the temptation to become melodramatic. The cover of the book is somewhat garish, as are the purple and orange sidebars; however, the reader must not let the appearance detract from the solid, though brief, presentation of the facts. Appendices include a glossary, a timeline, a list of further reading (which varies widely among reading levels), a list of internet resources, and an index.

Publisher's recommendation: Interest level 4-8, reading level 5.

The author of this well-written book just happens to be historian/curator at the Alamo, so the reader can be confident that the author is accountable for its accuracy. Moreover, the quality of writing is refreshing in books intended for young people. Numerous and unusual maps, combined with illustrations not seen in other Crockett biographies, will entice visually oriented readers. Appendices include a timeline, a four-page glossary including pronunciation, a page of additional resources, a one-page bibliography, and a two-page index.


Capturing the complex personality and life of Sam Houston in a short biography is no easy task. Not only was Houston instrumental in creating Texas, but he was also a major actor in the history of the United States as a whole. The author of this biography knows his subject so well that he clearly summarizes Houston's role in the intricate negotiations surrounding the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the eventual dissolution of the Union. Colorful and unusual maps and illustrations add interest and clarity to the text. Appendices include a timeline, a glossary with pronunciation, additional resources for research, a bibliography, and an index.