

## TEXAS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The story of Texas in the twentieth century is one of great growth and urbanization. In 1900, the state's population was just 3 million—83% worked on farms. Lumber in east Texas was the biggest organized industry, but cotton, cattle, and shipping were also important. In 1901 the massive oil strike at Spindletop, near Beaumont, added a huge industry to Texas.

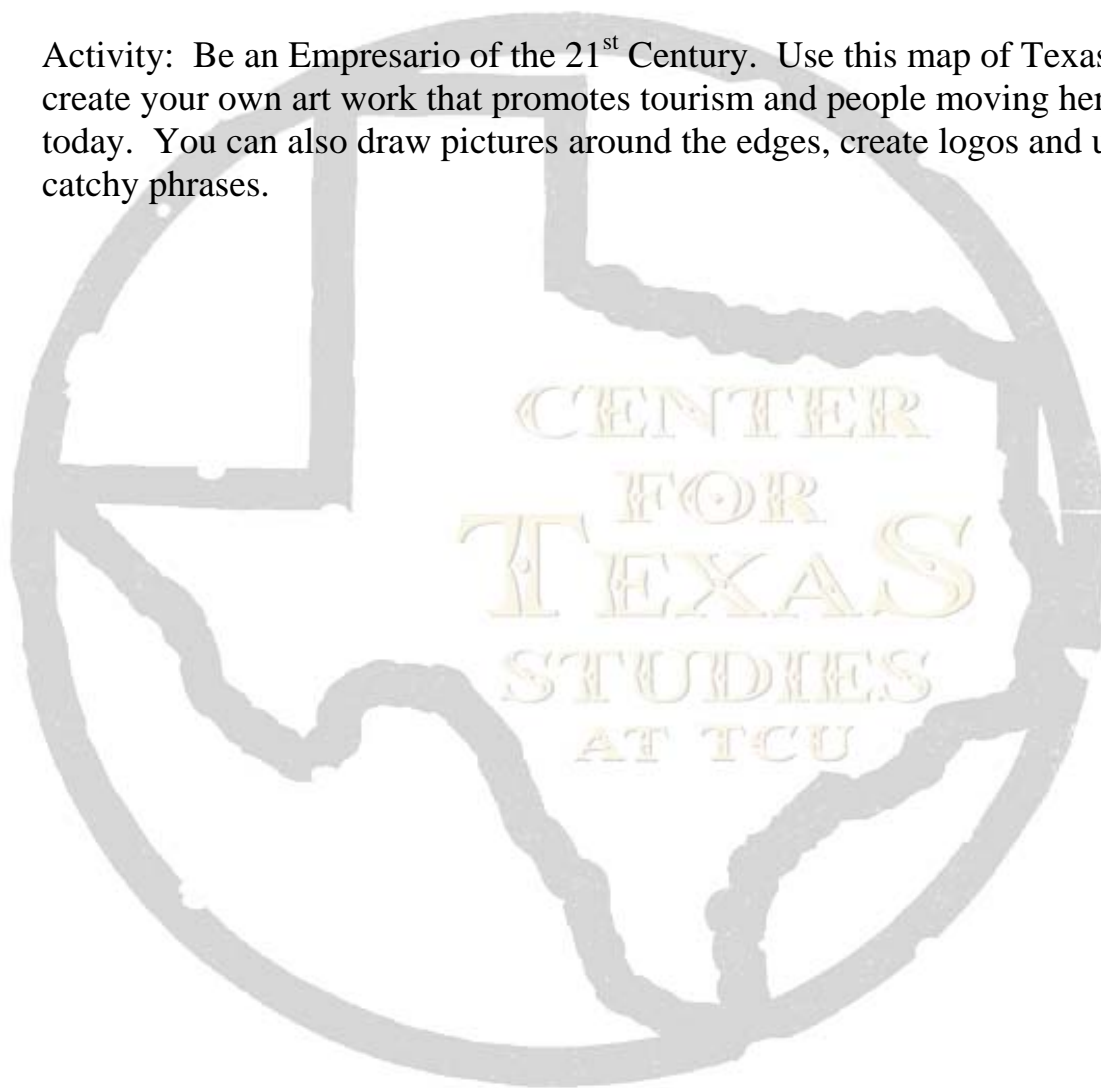
From 1900 to 1929, living conditions improved. Transportation by train and automobile helped get products to market. Irrigation aided farmers, especially in dry west Texas. However, hard times loomed as agricultural prices began to slide downward, especially after World War I. In 1929 the United States and Texas experienced the beginnings of the Great Depression. Unemployment increased greatly, and during the mid-1930s a severe drought spread across the Panhandle.

Relief came from the federal government's employment and public works programs, an immense oil field strike in east Texas in 1930 and the Texas Centennial celebration in 1936. As in the rest of the United States, World War II really ended the Great Depression. Military spending imported millions of dollars into the economy as the state hosted 15 army bases, 40 air bases and 30 prisoner-of-war camps. The state's manufacturing sector increased dramatically with steel mills, tin smelters, pulpwood producers and aircraft manufacturing. The area near Houston became the world's largest petrochemical industrial site.

After World War II most Texans never returned to their rural homes as industrialization continued. Ordinary people took to the skies, eventually creating demand for major international airports which are essential for developing business traffic. The airline industry is important in Texas, with Southwest and American Airlines calling Texas home. The economy during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century rose and fell with the "boom-and-bust" cycles of the oil industry. The computer industry holds an important place as Texas Instruments in Dallas invented the silicon transistor. By 2001, 1 in 4, or 25% of new manufacturing jobs in the state were in the computer industry, with Dell and Compaq being based in Texas.

Large cities with sprawling suburbs dominate the Texas population. By 2006, Houston, San Antonio and Dallas ranked among the ten most populous cities in the United States. Austin, Fort Worth, and El Paso also ranked among the top twenty-five most populous cities. Between 1960 and 2000, the state's population more than doubled. As you can see from these maps, Texas in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century bears little resemblance to the state 100 years before.

Activity: Be an Empresario of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Use this map of Texas and create your own art work that promotes tourism and people moving here today. You can also draw pictures around the edges, create logos and use catchy phrases.



# *Going to Texas: Five Centuries of Texas Maps*

