

# PRESERVING THE PAST

History/ Social Studies/ English Language Arts/ Art

Grades: 6-8

## ***Skills:***

- Drawing
- Recording History
- Researching

## ***Materials:***

Pencil, pen and colored pencils or markers  
Tape/ Glue  
Printer (if you need to print the worksheets)

## ***Standards for Teaching / Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:***

Grade 6:

110.18 Social Studies

110.16 English Language Arts and Reading

Grade 7:

110.19 Social Studies

110.16 English Language Arts and Reading

Grade 8

110.20 Social Studies

110.16 English Language Arts and Reading

**Summary:**

This lesson is offered in two parts: Preserving Historic Buildings and Preserving Family Stories.

**Preserving Historic Buildings**

Using the Unit on Preserving the Past, read and learn about how to research and describe a historic building. Then, select a building that you may act like a “preservationist” would by documenting the history of the building. To get started, locate a building that interests you. This could be your home, the public library, city hall, or something else. The worksheets will guide you through your research on the building you choose. If you are visiting the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum you can conduct your research on that building with the worksheets included.

**Preserving Family Stories**

Again you will use the Preserving the Past Unit as a way to become familiar with how preservationists do their work to record history. You will again do some research, this time by talking to your family and gathering photos to save as records of the past. You will then write a letter to yourself in the future. You can record what your life is like, and save it as a record of your own history.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Keeping records of old buildings is a way to document their histories and to help save the historic elements of a community. Architectural Preservationists are people that do this type of work.

Imagine you are an Architectural Preservationist and you are looking to record details of a building. In this case, you will record the details of the historic building that the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum is in. While visiting the building be prepared to look at it from the outside and the inside. Look closely for details. Note things that are unusual or unexpected.

After you are done researching the museum's building select another building you would like to study. This could be your home, your church, library, city hall or something else. This project will be a little harder than researching the museum as you will be on your own to gather whatever information you can.

Use the worksheets to guide your work.



# BUILDING STUDY

What building are you exploring? ***The Republic of the Rio Grande Museum***

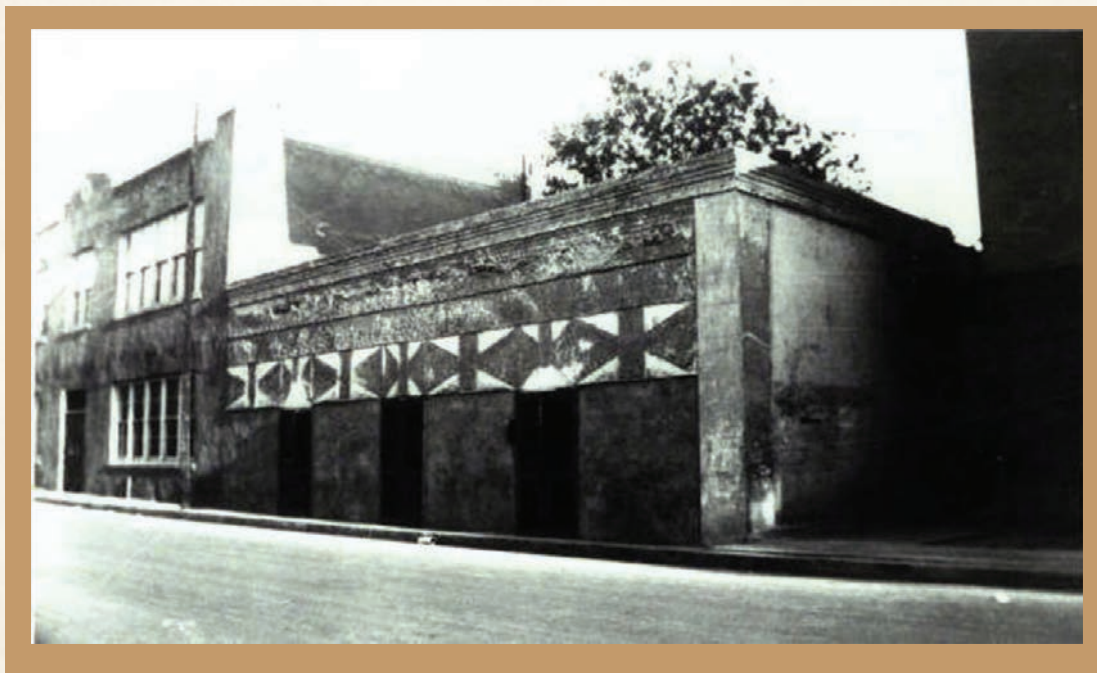
What is the address? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Insert a Photo of the Building Today:

Locate and insert a Photo of the Building in the past.

Record the date: ***about 1920***



**Record 3-4 things that look the same on the building now as it did in the past:**

**Record 3-4 things that look different on the building now as it did in the past:**

**Go inside the building.  
Sketch a floor plan.**

***A floor plan is what  
the spaces in the  
building look like  
as if you were  
looking down and  
into the space from  
the ceiling:***

**Sample:**

A large rectangular area filled with a light blue grid pattern, intended for sketching a floor plan. The grid is composed of small squares and is enclosed by a thick black border.

**Draw an example of a doorway and a window inside the building.**



**Details to record and consider:**

**Is there a bathroom? Explain your answer. Has this changed since the building was originally built? If so, how do you think it changed?**

**Is there a kitchen? Explain your answer. Has this changed since the building was originally built? If so, how do you think it changed?**

**Is there a bedroom? Explain your answer. Has this changed since the building was originally built? If so, how do you think it changed?**



**What does the building seem to be made out of? (Hint: use the website Unit to get information to this question)**

**Describe the building in general. Carefully select words that are descriptive. Think of mentioning colors, materials, and how spaces in the building may have once functioned. Your writing should give the reader a visual impression of the building.**

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What is the address? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

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Locate and insert a Photo of the Building in the past.

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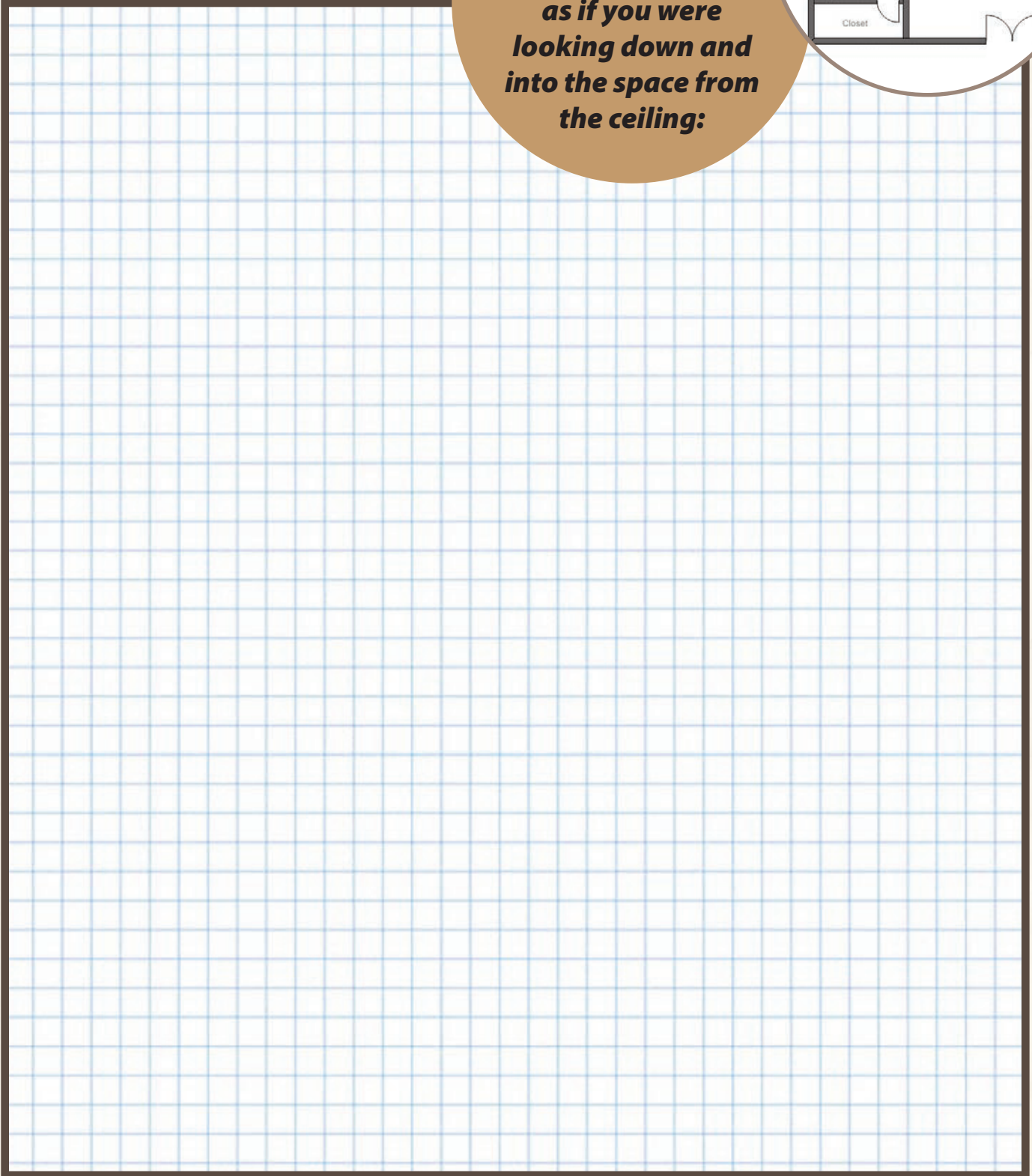
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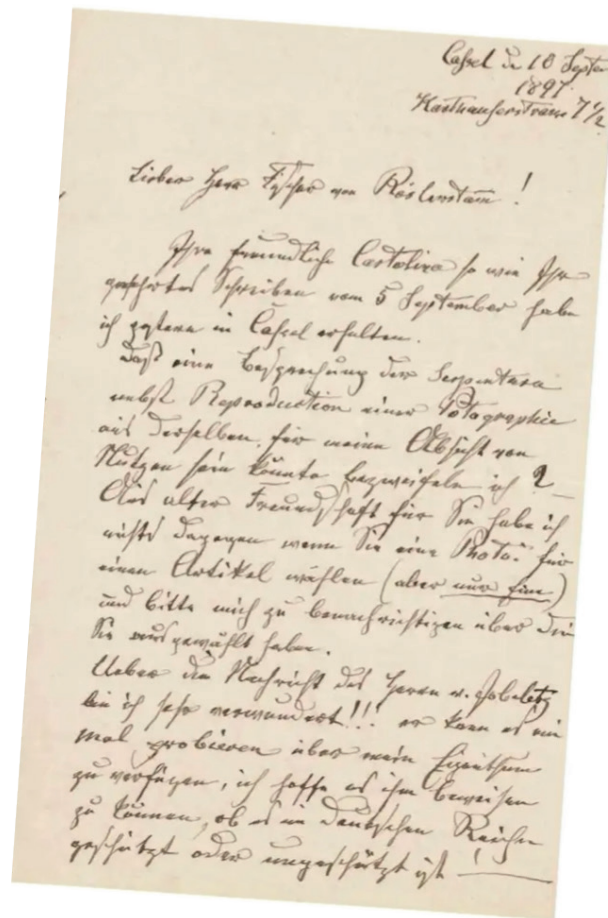
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESERVING FAMILY STORIES

**Imagine** you were a child living in Laredo during the Republic of the Rio Grande. You probably did not get a lot of schooling but your mother likely encouraged you to learn to read and write. You may have received and written letters. Wouldn't it be wonderful if someone saved these letters? Maybe they were put in a Family History Trunk.

Your Family History Trunk is a great place to **save** your family letters. **Ask** your family if they have any. You might be surprised what you find! **Gather** those your family might be willing to give you. **Place** them flat, safe, and **in the trunk**. Keep them cool and dry. Don't let anything spill on them and handle them with care.



**PONY EXPRESS**  
St. JOSEPH, MISSOURI to CALIFORNIA  
in 10 days or less.

**WANTED**

**YOUNG, SKINNY, WIRY FELLOWS**  
not over eighteen. Must be expert  
riders, willing to risk death daily.  
Orphans preferred.  
Wages \$25 per week.

APPLY, **PONY EXPRESS STABLES**  
St. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

Now, **write a letter** to yourself to read in the future. Describe what is happening in your life. What is the weather like? What is your family doing? Who are your friends? Be creative and have fun, but capture the truth of what your life is like and then place it in your **Family History Trunk!**

Print the notepaper and get writing!

**Discussion: What was the Pony Express?**



