

*The State Fair of*  
**TEXAS**  
*Curriculum*

**BIG TEX**  
**GRADE 6 STEAM**

EARTH - ART = EH

HOW ART, THE OBSERVER, AND LANDSCAPE WORK TOGETHER



# TEACHER

# BIG TEX



## earth - art = eh How Art, the Observer, and Landscape Work Together



Sculpture, such as the statue of Big Tex at the State Fair, can bring a whole new life to a space. Outdoor sculpture adds a new level of experience to a place. However, artists must take into consideration not only the sculpture, but also what will surround the artwork. The landscape around a piece of art can be just as important as the artwork itself. They work together to create a visual harmony for the viewer.

### In this lesson students will:

- ★ Analyze landscape architecture and explore examples from various artists.
- ★ Collect data by conducting observations of individuals and groups at the State Fair of Texas.
- ★ Make predictions using their knowledge of number and operation and proportionality.
- ★ Create their own landscape design around the Big Tex Statue at the State Fair.

### Standards

- ★ Social Studies TEKS: 6.10(A), 6.21(C)
- ★ ELAR TEKS: 6.2(B), 6.12(B), 6.23(C)
- ★ Math TEKS: 6.1(D), 6.1(E), 6.3(E)
- ★ Science TEKS: 6.4(A)
- ★ Art TEKS: 6.1(A), 6.1(B), 6.2(B), 6.3(C)
- ★ NOTE: This is an Art-based STEAM project, with elements of Social Studies and English Language Arts as well. Consider making this a co-teaching effort!





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## How Art, the Observer, and Landscape Work Together



### Before You Go

Discussion on Landscape Architecture

- ★ Art goes way beyond painting and drawing and includes an array of careers, including artists who work with the earth and design landscapes.
- ★ The [American Society of Landscape Architects](#) has an amazing website that details careers in landscape architecture, including what the job involves, why that work is so important, and some great examples.
- \* Look through the website with the students and hold a discussion about the need for these artists.

- ★ Ask the students:
  - \* Do you think this type of work is important? Why or why not?
  - \* What types of landscape architecture can you find in your neighborhood, community, or school?
- ★ Look at [examples from some of the most famous landscape architects](#).
- \* With the students, talk about how the designers incorporate rhythm, color, and texture into their work.
- ★ Look at an image of Big Tex from the State Fair. You can find several on the [State Fair of Texas website](#).
- \* Instruct the students to think about what type of landscape design would best work with Big Tex to successfully highlight the statue and provide a visually pleasing area around him.
- \* Be sure to remind them to take their sketchbooks to sketch down their ideas while they are at the Fair.



### Discussion on Landmarks and Observers

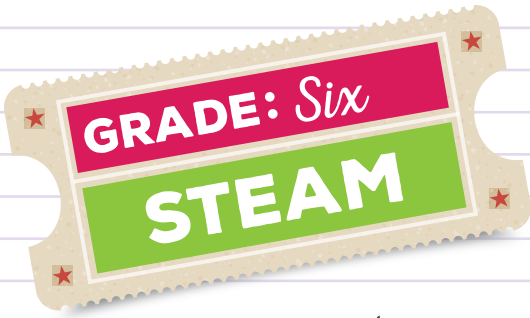
- Discuss how the Observer plays a role in a work of art.
- The observer brings his/her own meaning to a piece of artwork. Each person will experience each piece of art differently, depending on what sorts of backgrounds or experiences the person brings to the table. For example, someone who was born and raised in Texas might experience Big Tex differently from someone who was born in France and moved to Texas only recently.
- NO experience is wrong - each meaning that each observer brings is unique!

- Look at this image of Big Tex Circle.
- Discuss using landmarks to section off an area in which to take a population sample.
- As a class, practice doing a population count in a crowded area such as the cafeteria.
- As a class, come up with a research question you will answer during your observations, such as "Why do people gather around Big Tex?" or "How crowded is the Big Tex Circle at various times?"
- Additionally, craft an art-related question, such as "what role does the observer play, related to Big Tex at the Fair?"



# TEACHER

# BIG TEX

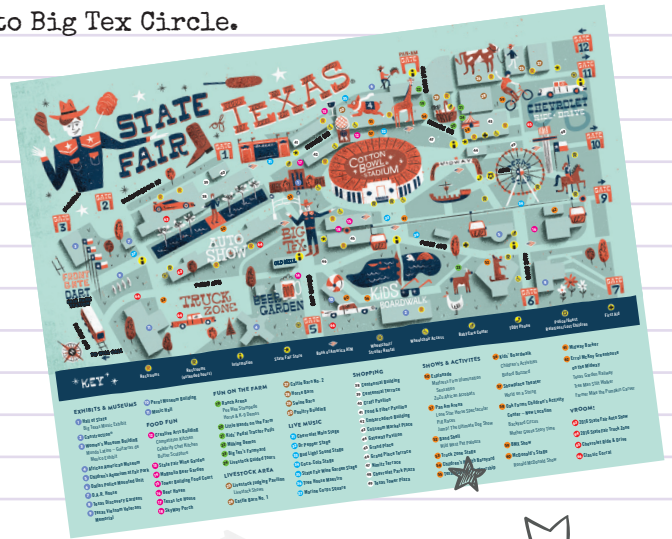
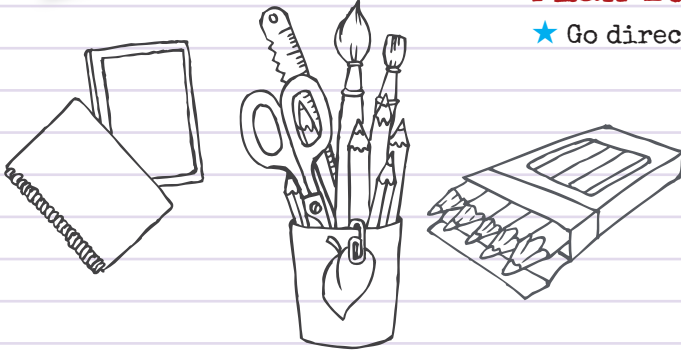


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## Plan Your Route.

★ Go directly to Big Tex Circle.



## Optional Materials to Bring

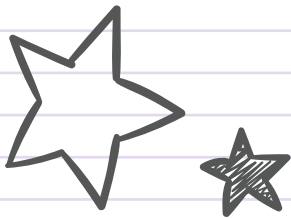
- ★ Pen or Pencil
- ★ Sketchbook
- ★ Science Notebook or Paper
- ★ Smartphone or Tablet

## While you're there

The objectives for your visit are to analyze the landscape around Big Tex, discover what people are doing around Big Tex for a given time period, and observe the role people play with the Big Tex sculpture.

## LANDSCAPE

- Walking to Big Tex: As you travel to the statue of Big Tex, pay attention to the landscape around you.
- When you get to Big Tex: notice the landscape design surrounding Big Tex.
- Is it different from other landscapes at the Fair? If so, how?
- Walk around the statue and take notes about the landscape design around Big Tex.
- Pay attention to color, texture, and movement.
- Are there plants? If so, what kind?
- Is it plain, or are there lots of things going on in the landscape?
- Are people able to get very close to the statue?
- Be sure to include even the smallest of details!



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### OBSERVERS AND THEIR ROLE

- Use landmarks to choose a section of Big Tex Circle to focus on. Note your landmarks in your science journal or take pictures with your phone or other device.
- Record information about populations around the base of Big Tex.
- Find a location to sit or stand in Big Tex Circle where you can observe people.
- For 5 minutes, record the activities people appear to be doing and the number of people doing each activity.



- How do the people observing Big Tex interact with him?
- Do any of the people talk back to Big Tex?
- What emotions do they display, upon seeing him?
- What is the observer's role with Big Tex? Are observers expected to be passive or active? Are people expected to interact with Big Tex?
- If possible, return for a second time after touring the rest of the Fair, and repeat your observations.

### EXAMPLE

Activity	Number of People
Eating	
Talking to Friends	
Taking Pictures	

### After the Fair

When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will:

- ★ Construct a way to represent your data through graphs or tables.
- ★ Design a new landscape for Big Tex, using your data to help you!



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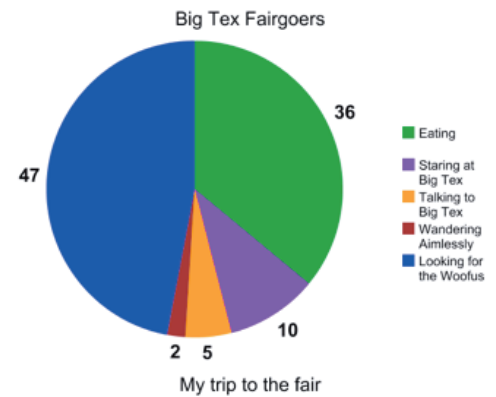
## How Art, the Observer, and Landscape Work Together



### Data Processing

Take out your sketches and notes from the fair, regarding the landscape design surrounding Big Tex, and the people at the Fair.

- ★ With a team, construct a way to represent your data through graphs or tables.
  - \* One way to do this could be through the [KidZone Create a Graph website](#).
  - \* Compare your graphs with other groups from different sections of Big Tex Circle to determine whether your results were typical or if there were anomalies.
  - \* **TEACHABLE MOMENT:** What is an anomaly?
- ★ Come up with a working answer to our class research question.
- ★ What fraction of the people you observed at Big Tex Circle participated in each activity?
- ★ What variables could have influenced your observation?
- ★ **Making Predictions:** Using the data you collected, about how many people would you expect to participate in these activities each hour? Each day? During the month the Fair is in town?
- ★ Do you think the fraction of people participating in each activity will change with time? Why or why not?
- ★ Do you think the landscape design influenced the activities of the people around Big Tex?
  - \* If yes, in what way(s)?
  - \* How might you change the landscape design to influence the activities of fairgoers?



### Landscape Design

Now it's time to think about how you might change Big Tex's surroundings!

- ★ Think back to the examples you saw in class, as well as the role of a landscape architect. Pretend that you have just been hired as the new landscape architect for the area around Big Tex.
  - \* What will you do differently?
  - \* How will you create a design that works with the statue to create a visually pleasing work?
- ★ Like a designer, create some rough sketches to begin with.
  - \* Think about color, texture, and movement in your design.
- ★ Then, refine your drawing for your final draft.
  - \* Remember, have fun with this!

