

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

**THE MIDWAY & GAMES**  
**GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES**

SAVING FERRIS

GEORGE...GEORGE...GEORGE FERRIS...?



# TEACHER

## The Midway & Games



## Saving Ferris George...George...George Ferris...?

### In this lesson students will:

- ★ Analyze the similarities and differences among various world societies.
- ★ Create a working definition of the term institution and identify institutions that are basic to all societies.
- ★ Evaluate the efforts and activities of institutions through the examination of monumental architecture.
- ★ Create a design for a structure that reflects the values of their school or neighborhood.

Human beings jump at the chance to get a birds-eye view of their surroundings, and amusement park rides are the perfect venue to achieve this goal. As you explore the Midway, you will learn about various rides, including The Texas Star, which stood proudly as the tallest Ferris wheel in the western hemisphere until 2014 when it lost its standing to The High Roller in Las Vegas, NV. Monumental architecture helps us identify institutions and can also provide endless hours of entertainment!

NOTE: Suggest to the students that they attempt to do this activity at night for the best experience!



### Before You Go

- ★ Show this brief [informative video about George Ferris](#), the inventor of the first Ferris wheel.
  - \* Ask the students to think about how monumental architecture represents various institutions within a society.
- ★ Provide background information about the Texas Star.
- ★ Explain that societies erect large structures like these to represent institutions and their ideals.
- ★ In groups of three or four, give students adequate time to research Ferris wheels around the world.
  - \* As they gather information through exploration, note taking, and website perusing, instruct the students to compare and contrast both the structures and the institutions they represent.



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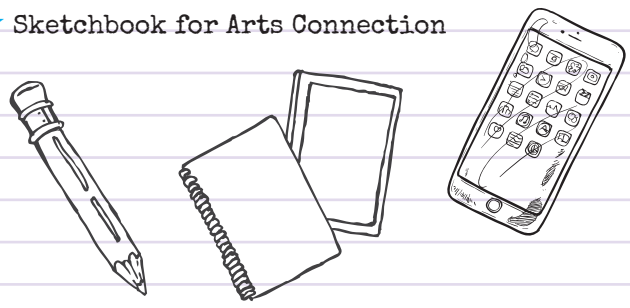
### Saving Ferris George...George...George Ferris...?

#### Plan Your Route.

- ★ Head to the Midway in the center of the fairgrounds.
- ★ You will see the illuminated Texas Star in the distance, at the far south end of the Midway.

#### Optional Materials to Bring

- ★ Smart Phone or Tablet
- ★ Pencil & Notepad
- ★ Sketchbook for Arts Connection



#### While you're There

The objective of your visit is to enjoy a memorable ride on the Texas Star while observing how monumental structures define and shape institutions.

#### UP ABOVE

- ★ Get a birds-eye view of the fair grounds 20 stories above the Earth.
- Purchase the required number of tickets, locate the line for Texas Star, load the gondola, and begin your 12-minute ride.
- Take photographs with a digital camera or smartphone.
- Observe other monumental structures around Fair Park and sketch them on a notepad.

#### DOWN BELOW

- ★ Ponder the following questions as you observe and explore.
- Which monumental structures best represent the State Fair of Texas?
- Do other rides on the Midway have the same kind of appeal that the Texas Star does?
- How is an institution defined by the architecture it constructs?
- Is the State Fair of Texas an institution?
- Does an institution require a building or some type of monumental structure?

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### ARTS CONNECTION

- See if you can locate other monumental structures in the park that you spotted while you were on the Texas Star.
- Looking at the structure, what does it seem to represent?
- Are people, animals, or a hero represented?
- What colors do you see? Do you think they have special significance?
- Does the structure represent the values of the people of Texas? If so, what values are represented, and how so?
- Keep these things in mind, to reference for your art lesson.

### After the Fair

- ★ When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will:
- ★ Read the article, [Wheeling & Dealing](#), to learn a little more about the history of the Texas Star.
- ★ Consider the impact of removing monumental structures that define an institution.
  - \* Do you think the State Fair of Texas would be the same without the Texas Star?
- ★ If the Texas Star is ever sold, what should take its place?
  - \* Using graphic design software, create a new type of monumental structure that represents our great state.
  - \* If graphic design software is unavailable, use art supplies to draw by hand, or alternatively, build it!
- ★ Write a brief explanation describing how this new monument represents the ideas and values of Texas.





# TEACHER

## The Midway & Games



## Saving Ferris George...George...George Ferris...?

Now, think back to what you learned in class about the Ferris wheel, and the importance of large structures that help to define and shape institutions.

- ★ Imagine that you have been commissioned to create a large structure for your school or neighborhood.
- ★ Think about the following questions:
  - \* What is important to my school/neighborhood?
  - \* What values do we hold dear?
  - \* What do we have in common?
  - \* Is there a common revolutionary, or hero, that we look up to?
  - \* It would be a good idea to interview some of your classmates, teachers, and neighbors to get their feedback on those questions, as well.
- ★ When you have gathered all of your information, begin sketching your ideas for a design.
  - \* Think about proportion, balance, and form.
- ★ Once you have created your preliminary sketches, start on your final design.
  - \* This can be done in any medium that you choose, but remember, you want your viewer to be able to see any details that you include.
- ★ Have fun with this, and be as creative as possible!

### Arts Connection

Sculptors and designers are often hired to create large artwork or structures for outdoor spaces that reflect the values or history of that specific place.

★ The artist, Juame Plensa, is well known for his beautiful outdoor sculptures that hold special meaning to the spaces where they are placed.

- \* One of his most famous designs is the Crown Fountain in Chicago's Millennium Park. It consists of two 50-foot towers that stand over a reflecting pool. On the towers, the images of 1000 randomly chosen citizens from Chicago shine on an LED screen where water appears to flow from their mouths, similar to other types of sculptural fountains more commonly seen. The artist not only brings the citizens together visually, but people can get in and splash around in the fountain, making it even more important to the community in bringing its citizens together.

In his design, the artist paid homage to the citizens of Chicago, therefore making the artwork more meaningful to that space.



Imagine that same fountain in Dallas.

- ★ Would it hold the same meaning that it does in Chicago?
- ★ What if the faces on the fountain were of Dallas citizens?