



The State Fair of
TEXAS
Curriculum

THE MIDWAY & GAMES

GRADE 8 SOCIAL STUDIES

GAMES, RIDES, AND FUN!

THE NEXT BIG THING



STUDENT EDITION

The Midway & Games



Games, Rides, and Fun! The Next Big Thing

Recap

- ★ Go over your notes from class.
- ★ Review the *Mental Floss* article, "[The Origin of 15 Delightful Carnival Rides](#)".
- ★ Visit the [timeline](#) of the Texas State Fair to refresh your memory as to how the rides have changed throughout the decades.
- ★ For today's activity, you will assume the roles of both historians and futurists while visiting the Texas State Fair. You will look back, in order to look forward!



Plan Your Route.

- ★ Make your way into the Fair and head over to the Midway.
- ★ As you walk along the Midway, observe the various rides, games, and prizes.

Optional Materials to Bring

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



While You're There

You will use the information you gather at the State Fair to help you with **two project goals**:

1. Create a visual presentation describing how the Midway has changed over the last century.
2. Design your own game or attraction... The Next Big Thing!

For now, the goal of your visit is to gather information about a carnival atmosphere by playing games and experiencing the thrill of amusement park rides, to help you complete the projects back at school!

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EXPERIENCING THE MIDWAY

- As you walk through the Midway, observe the various rides and games.
- Collect information about historic, traditional, and modern rides offered to fairgoers of various ages.
- Assess the popularity of particular rides.
- Note which lines are the longest and the shortest.
- Take a spin on several different rides.
- How did you decide which rides to experience?
- Did history play a part in your decision?
- Consider how you could replicate, improve, or innovate these rides to appeal to the next generation of fairgoers.
- Jot down a few notes about your experiences.
- Make a list of the rides you rode and games you played.
- Take photographs of traditional and modern rides and games.



BREAKING DOWN YOUR EXPERIENCE

- ★ Find a place to sit where you can ponder the following questions as you continue to observe.
- Which rides and games have remained consistently popular over time? Why?
- What is the appeal of games and thrill rides? Why are Americans drawn to the carnival atmosphere?
- How has technology changed the Midway? Will it continue to evolve?
- Will there always be a place for more traditional rides like Ferris wheels, bumper cars, and carousels?
- As the American way of life continues to change, how will the Texas State Fair change with it?

ARTS CONNECTION

Take a good look at the rides.

- What colors do you see?
- Is there sound on the rides?
- How big are they?
- What are they made of?
- Make some notes, or better yet, sketch a drawing of a couple of them.

Back at School

When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will complete your projects! See your teachers for more information.

