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BIOGRAPHIES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE: DAVY CROCKETT

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Grade Level: 5-10

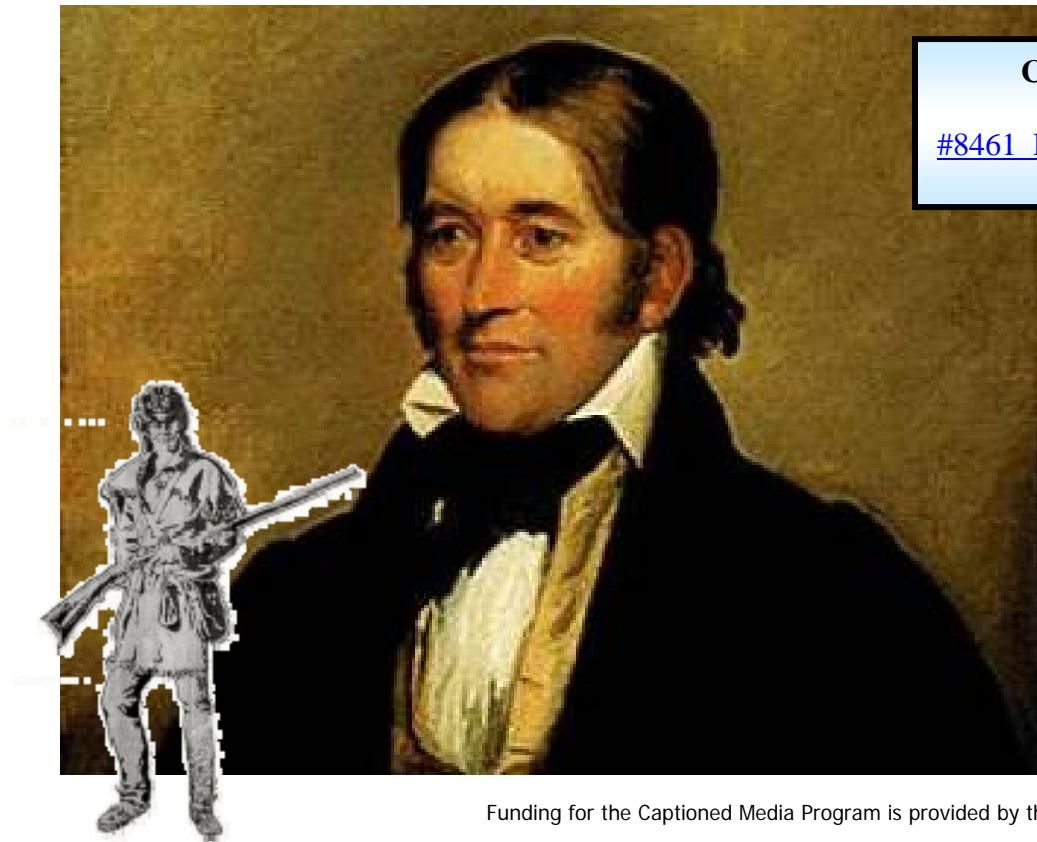
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[#8461 DAVY CROCKETT: AMERICAN FRONTIER LEGEND](#)



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DAVY CROCKETT

Born August 17, 1786 in a small cabin along the banks of Tennessee's scenic Nolichucky River, Davy Crockett soon became one of America's most celebrated heroes, warriors and backwoods statesman. A young Crockett knew the hardships set forth by the American frontier. At age 12, Crockett's father contracted Davy to another farmer to help drive herds of cattle for nearly 300 miles. By age 16, Crockett worked various jobs as a farm hand, wagoneer, and hatmaker. After marriage and fatherhood, Crockett, with only 6 months of formal education, joined the Tennessee Volunteer Militia where he met General Andrew Jackson. His friendship with Jackson along with his reputation as an Indian fighter and frontiersman, proved useful as Crockett eventually launched a political career.

In 1822, at age 35, Crockett was elected to the Tennessee state legislature. After serving 5 years in local government, Crockett decided to run for the United States House of Representatives. During his first term as a U.S. representative Crockett vehemently supported the squatters during the land deal debate. This stance would eventually hinder Crockett's chance for re-election in 1831 as his former friend and now U.S. President Andrew Jackson opposed the squatters position. But two years later in 1833, after parting with the Democratic Party, which Andrew Jackson was a member, Crockett joined the Whig Party and recaptured his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

However, Crockett and President Jackson again opposed each other during the "Indian Removal Act", a policy designed to provide land for new American settlers by relocating Indians into present-day Oklahoma. President Andrew Jackson supported the policy while Crockett argued against it. This position caused Crockett to lose re-election in 1835. After his second defeat, Crockett moved to Texas where he was elected to be a legislative member to form a constitution for the newly developed republic. But, in 1836, tension between Texas and Mexico grew and Crockett decided to once again volunteer his military services. During 11 days of siege against 2,000 Mexican soldiers, Crockett along with 189 other Texans courageously died while helping to defend a mission now known as the Alamo.

VOCABULARY of *Davy Crockett*

ALAMO: Originally a Spanish mission located in San Antonio where 189 Texan rebels including Davy Crockett defended the city against the invasion of 2,000 Mexican troops. During the 11 day siege all 189 Texans along with 500 Mexican troops died. About one month after this brutal battle Texas won the war (Texas Revolution 1835) and became an independent country which was then known as the Republic of Texas.

ANDREW JACKSON: A fellow Tennessean who commanded the Tennessee Volunteer Militia which Davy Crockett joined in 1811. Jackson was elected the 7th president of the U.S. in 1829.

DAVY CROCKETT: A celebrated hero, warrior and backwoods statesman, Crockett symbolized the adventurous spirit of the American frontier. He was elected to the Tennessee state legislature in 1821 and later to the U.S. Congress in 1826. Ten years later in 1836 Crockett died a hero's death during the war for Texas's independence from Mexico, at the Battle of the Alamo.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY: A major political association which evolved in the early 19th century. Andrew Jackson was the first president elected from this political group. Crockett was a member of this political establishment until his relationship with Jackson deteriorated. Upon leaving the Democratic Party Crockett joined the Whig Party during the election in 1833.

GENERAL ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA: A Mexican general who commanded 2,000 Mexican soldiers during the famous 1836 battle for a Spanish mission known as the Alamo.

KING OF THE WILD FRONTIER: A three part made for TV series about Davy Crockett produced by Walt Disney in 1955.

LAND BILL: Congressional legislation which addressed America's western migration. As the population of the new country grew settlers known as "squatters" moving into new territories in the west frequently found unoccupied land and claimed it as their own. During this national debate Crockett argued on the side of the "squatters" while President Andrew Jackson supported the individual states who wanted to sell the land to the highest bidder and use the money to fund education. (SEE Also Squatters)

PATRIOT MILITIA: Military volunteers who fought the British during the Revolutionary War. Davy Crockett's father John and his two brothers joined this group to help the American colonists fight the British in the Battle of Kings Mountain, North Carolina.

SQUATTERS: Settlers who migrated west and arrived in areas before an official state or county government existed. Upon their arrival these migrating settlers claimed these territories for themselves. This western migration caused a national debate and prompted Congress to issue legislation known as the Land Bill. (SEE Also Land Bill)

TENNESSEE VOLUNTEER MILITIA: A group of military volunteers who were commanded by Andrew Jackson to fight the Creek Indians. Crockett joined this group in 1811 because the Creek Indians killed his grandparents.

TRAIL OF TEARS: The journey remembered by Indians which was designed to remove them from their occupied land. During the 1830's the United States government, to provide land for new American settlers, began relocating Indian tribes into what is now present day Oklahoma. As a member of the U.S. House of Representatives Crockett opposed the "Indian Removal Act" a policy signed by President Andrew Jackson. Crockett's opposition tainted him as an Indian sympathizer. This reputation further eroded his relationship with President Jackson and eventually ended Crockett's political career.

WHIG PARTY: An American political party whose members or supporters were in opposition to Andrew Jackson's democrats. Crockett left the Democratic Party to join the Whig Party prior to the 1833 election.

WILLIAM B. TRAVIS: Commanded 189 Texans during the famous Battle of the Alamo.

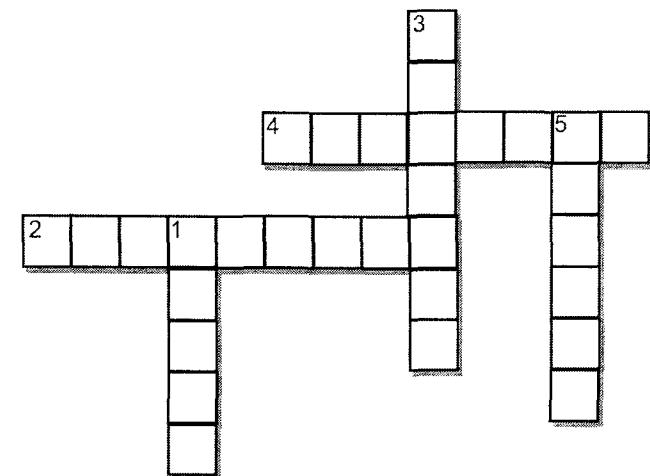
CHRONOLOGY of Davy Crockett

- 1780: Davy Crockett's father John and his two brothers join the patriot militia to help fight the British during the Battle of Kings Mountain, North Carolina.
- 1786: Birth of Davy Crockett.
- 1806: Davy Crockett marries Mary Polly Finley.
- 1811: Crockett joins the Tennessee Volunteer Militia to help fight the Creek Indians who killed Crockett's grandparents.
- 1815: Davy Crockett's first wife Mary Polly dies.
- 1816: Crockett marries again to Elizabeth Patton.
- 1818: Crockett wins his first election to head up the local militia.
- 1821: Crockett at age 35 is elected to his first term in the Tennessee Legislature.
- 1822: A flood destroys the grist and powder mills causing the Crockett family to go bankrupt.
- 1823: Crockett wins a second term in the Tennessee State Legislature.
- 1827: Crockett is elected to represent Tennessee in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- 1829: Andrew Jackson elected 7th president of the United States.
- 1830: "Indian Removal Act" U.S. government begins to relocate Indians into Oklahoma. Indians remember this journey as the "Trail of Tears".
- 1831: Jackson's democrats defeat Crockett.
- 1833: Crockett leaves the Democratic Party to join the Whig Party and wins back his former house seat.
- 1835: Crockett is again defeated by the Jackson democrats.
- 1836: Crockett moves to Texas and is killed by the Mexican Army while defending the Alamo .
- 1860: Crockett's second wife Elizabeth dies.

Q & A for Davy Crockett

1. Describe Crockett's early childhood upbringing and how he became familiar with the American frontier.
2. Davy Crockett is described as an American hero, pioneer, soldier and statesman. Explain how Crockett fulfilled each of these character traits?
3. Explain how the relationship between Davy Crockett and Andrew Jackson changed over time. How did they first meet?
4. In 1827 Crockett decided to run for the U.S. House of Representatives. The land bill became a main issue during this campaign. What is the land bill and how did it effect the relationship between Crockett and Andrew Jackson? Who were the "squatters"?
5. What political party did Davy Crockett join in 1833 after leaving the Democratic Party? Why did Crockett change political parties?
6. Where did Crockett go after his second defeat in 1835?
7. Where is the Alamo located and why did 189 Texans battle nearly 2,000 Mexican soldiers to defend it?
8. Name the Mexican Army General who commanded nearly 2,000 Mexican soldiers during the battle of the Alamo. Name the commander of the 189 Texas rebels.

Use the words described in this guide on pgs.. 2, 3 & 5 to complete the crossword.



DOWN:

- 1) Spanish mission defended by Crockett along with 189 Texans
- 3) 7th U.S. president
- 5) Commander of 189 Texans at the Alamo.

ACROSS:

- 2) Settlers migrating west to claim unoccupied land.
- 4) A celebrated hero, warrior and backwoods statesman.

Answers:
Across - 1) Alamo, 3) Jackson, 5) Travis
Down - 2) Squatters, 4) Crockett

Discussion Points /Activities

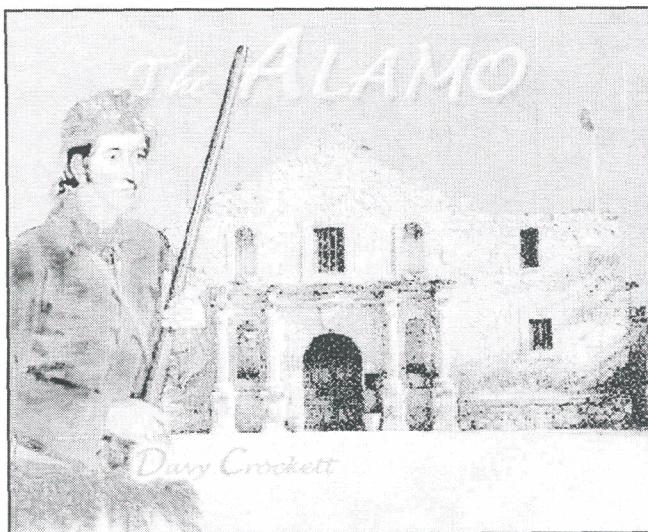
1. During Crockett's political career he opposed President Andrew Jackson during two main national debates. The first main debate known as the "land bill" happened during the 1827 election. The second main debate was the "Indian Removal Act" remembered by Indians as the "Trail of Tears". Discuss and define these two main issues and the positions Crockett and Jackson supported. Then assign students to different groups and have them debate these two issues. Perhaps have the students debate other controversial issues concerning your local school or community?
2. The time period Davy Crockett lived was very different from the technological world we experience today. Discuss the differences and perhaps some similarities between Davy Crockett's world and the world we live today?
3. If possible visit a museum or educational center which features the life of Davy Crockett. Use the internet to research the life of Crockett.
4. Overcoming adversity became a source of strength for Crockett. Write a brief description about a time during your own life when you overcame great odds to achieve a desired goal.
5. The Alamo was originally a Spanish mission. Assign the students to research the Alamo and then have them create a replica. Perhaps the replica could be designed on a computer, or with clay, plaster or some other safe material.
6. The Alamo was a fight for Texas freedom and Independence from Mexico. Throughout its history the United States has defended the principles of freedom. Discuss other historic events when the United States, like Davy Crockett and the 189 Texas rebels at the Alamo, has courageously defended its founding principles of freedom.

Study the vocabulary list on pgs. 2 & 3. Then fill in the blank by selecting the words from the answers list.

ANSWERS LIST :

Whig Party • Migration Amendment • United Rebels
Republican Party • Santa Anna • Tennessee Volunteer Militia
Trail of Tears • Land Bill • Fernando Sanchez • Trail Cry

- 9. A)** Congressional legislation known as the _____ addressed America's western migration.
- B)** A group known as the _____ were commanded by Andrew Jackson to fight the Creek Indians.
- C)** Crockett left the Democratic Party to join the _____ prior to the 1833 election.
- D)** Mexican General _____ commanded 1,200 mexican troops during the famous 1836 battle for a Spanish mission known as the Alamo.
- E)** The journey remembered by Indians as the _____ began when the U.S. government provided land for new American settlers by relocating Indian Tribes into Oklahoma.



NOTES:

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