



Creating a Living Timeline

What is a Timeline?

A timeline is a graphic organizer or picture that depicts the events in a sequential way. Historians use a timeline to illustrate the series of events in sequence and make them easier to understand. To get an overall picture of the history of Fort Davis, you will create a timeline using the following timeline pages.

You and your classmates will research a certain event in Fort Davis or Texas history. Your teacher will guide you with references for the historic events you will research. You will work in groups to complete your section of the timeline. To make this class timeline “come alive,” you will illustrate and place your event on the timeline in the proper time sections. Then with your teacher choose to do one of these projects to complete and share with your class.

1. You can take the role of a person (real or imaginary, such as a soldier or townspeople) who lived at the time of each event. Write a script to narrate the timeline event by introducing this person and telling something about the event. Use your research and reference material to write your script as though you were that person. This is called “first person writing” because you can use the word “I” and you speak as though you are that person. For example, a student might step forward and say, “I am Lieutenant William Whiting of the U.S. Army. I left San Antonio in February, 1849 to find a good military and commercial route to El Paso....” Then you would place a drawing or original picture on the timeline to illustrate the event.
2. Create a costume for your character. Use it when you present your “first person” skit as your class creates a wall-size timeline. Invite other classes or groups to view your presentation.
3. Other groups could research and place various U.S. flags on another timeline at the appropriate year in history. In addition, to show how things have changed, another group could draw and present information and pictures of clothing, fashions, or inventions for each part of timeline. Line up the different timelines to compare the many aspects of that time in history. Does it help you understand the people of that time when you see these aspects of their lives?

Once you have created the timeline, step back and evaluate it. Did it help you understand the sequence of events? Did it make it easier to understand the causes and effects of these events? Could you make timelines to help you understand other time periods in history?