



## **“Orange as a Final Frontier” Virtual History Program**

**Grade Level:** 9th - 12th

**Time of Year:** Fall, Spring

**Length:** 1 Class Period

**Location:** Classroom

**TEKS Connections:** §113.41. United States History Studies Since 1877 - 2(A), 3(A)(B), 13(A)(B), 14(A), 15(B), 27(A)

**Required Resources:** Equipment to show the class an online lecture video, worksheets printed from The W.H. Stark House website, and supplies for letter writing exercise.

### **Overview:**

“Orange as a Final Frontier” is designed as an interactive, in-class history program for high school students. It covers western expansion, the industrial revolution, urbanization, and regional Southeast Texas history. It consists of a 20-minute lecture video by W.H. Stark House historian, Joshua Cole, along with a writing exercise incorporating period letters and technology.

### **Summary of Content:**

1. How and why people migrated into the Orange, TX area in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
2. The general history of western expansion in the United States and why the Southeast Texas area remained underdeveloped, stemming from geographic difficulties and Spanish imperial (later Mexican territorial) policy.
3. The perspective of two young people who moved to Orange in their teens and early 20s and how their actions effectively closed the frontier borderland that existed between Texas and Louisiana.
4. Using historic letters, students will explore the challenges and choices William Stark and Miriam Lutchter faced and decide for themselves how they would respond.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Fountain pen for each student.
- Sheet of card stock paper for each student.
- Envelope for each student.
- Copy of Letter Writing Exercise, Your True Friend, and Your Deserted Father worksheets for each student.

## Procedures:

20 minutes

### Watch the “Orange as a Final Frontier” Video

- To access the video, go to <https://whstarkhouse.org>.
- Locate the drop down “Learn” tab on the top right corner of the page.
- Select “Virtual History” - “High School” and Scroll down to “Video.”

5 - 10 minutes

### Discuss the Video

- How did policies from various governments affect settlement in Southeast Texas?
- How does the information provided confirm or contradict your ideas about what the West is?
- How are the challenges faced by teens and young adults at the time relate to challenges faced today? Do they relate at all?

20 minutes

### Letter Writing Exercise

- Pass out the Letter Writing Exercise, Your True Friend, and Your Deserted Father worksheets, along with the paper, envelope, and fountain pen.
- Each student should pick one letter to read and respond to (for full details, please see the *Letter Writing Exercise Instructions Sheet*).
- After the students have finished their responses, we encourage the class to share and discuss their approaches.