

Sam Houston's Story

Sam Houston was one of the most important people in Texas history. He was born in Virginia on March 2, 1793. When he was 13 years old his family moved to Tennessee. Sam was more interested in reading Greek Epics and Roman histories than working on the family farm or the family store. Sam wanted adventure, so he ran away from home to live with the Cherokee Indians. While living there he was given the nickname “Colonneh” which means “the Raven.” After three years, Sam returned to his family and opened a school where he could teach.

Sam became a soldier and a lawyer in Tennessee. He was also elected governor of Tennessee and married a woman named Eliza Allen. When his marriage failed, Sam returned to live with his friends, the Cherokee. While he lived with the Cherokee, Sam married another woman named Tiana Rogers, but this marriage didn't last either. Then Sam was asked to travel to Texas by one of his important friends, Andrew Jackson, the President of the United States.

Sam liked Texas a great deal and he decided to make it his home. At that time Texas was part of Mexico. The people of Texas did not feel they were treated fairly, so to defend their rights many Texans and Tejanos, including Sam, fought to make Texas independent. Sam Houston was made the general in charge of the Texas army. He was also active in politics and signed the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. That day was also Sam's 43rd birthday!

When Santa Anna heard of the Texans' plans, he led Mexican troops and took over the Alamo. Many men were killed, and but the Texans were determined to keep fighting. Sam Houston decided to fight Santa Anna's army at a place called San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. Sam's army won the battle in just 18 minutes, and Texas gained its freedom: the Republic of Texas was born! Who do you think was voted to be its first president? Sam, of course!

Nine years later Texas became the 28th state in the United States. Sam Houston was elected as one of the first Senators from Texas, and later he became Governor of the state. That makes Sam the only person in United States history to be governor of two different states!

When Sam was governor, Texas decided to leave the United States and become part of the Confederacy. Sam felt in his heart that this was wrong. He refused to take a pledge of allegiance to the Confederacy and was removed from his office. Sam moved to Huntsville, Texas, with his wife, Margaret, and their 8 children. Sam died in Huntsville on July 26, 1863 from pneumonia. Today you can visit his homes at the Sam Houston Memorial Museum and Republic of Texas Presidential Library in Huntsville, Texas.

Sam Houston is a great hero and founding father to the people of Texas. He loved Texas and was very proud to live here. Although Sam Houston is gone, we can remember him for all the important things he did for Texas.

(Can you find the boldface words from Sam Houston's Story in the word maze under the educational resources page? You will find words in all different directions. Good luck!)