Texas Indians

Comanche Tepee Village
The Gulf Culture

- **Karankawa** - hunters and gatherers who lived in the area of Galveston to Corpus Christi. They were nomads. They used dug-out canoes to fish, hunt turtles and collect shells. They also hunted deer and small animals. They lived in wigwams.
The Karankawa did not need much clothing. Their clothes were made out of deerskin or grass or moss. Men would pierce pieces of sharpened bone through their lips and chest to show how macho they were. To keep the insects away they rubbed alligator fat and dirt into their skin. The Karankawa treated their children with kindness. Some reports say they were cannibals.

Taller Indians so they carried bows that were up to 6 feet tall.
**Coahuiltecan** - hunted and gathered food in south Texas. They were nomadic and covered long distances following buffalo, deer and small animals. They also fished, and ate seeds, berries, roots, plants, nuts, insects, lizards, snakes, spiders and worms. They did not build permanent homes. They worked hard, but they liked to gather for feasting and dancing.

Scavengers of the desert...ate anything that wiggled or crawled.
The Southeastern Culture Area

- **Caddo**-moved into Eastern Texas from Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. They built permanent villages and became expert farmers. They practiced crop rotation. The **Caddo** grew beans, corn, squash, melons and tobacco. They organized their tribes into three confederacies. The **Caddo** built mounds and temples for religious events. In addition to a religious and political structure the **Caddo** had healers and craftspeople.
The **Caddo** was a matrilineal society. This means they traced their families through their mother’s side. Their houses were wooden poles covered with grass. Some may have plastered the outside walls with mud. Both men and women tattooed and painted their bodies.
The **Wichitas** were called the raccoon-eyed Indian because of their eye tattoos. They settled along the Red River. They grew beans, corn, melons and squash. The **Wichita** used horses to hunt buffalo and deer. They lived in permanent villages, some building houses like the **Caddo**.
- **Atakapan** - between the **Caddo** and the Gulf of Mexico lived the **Atakapan** people. They were farmers, and corn was their main crop. Not only did they farm, but they hunted wild game and alligator. Little is known about their houses, but it is thought they lived in huts made from brush.
Jumano-lived in permanent houses made of adobe along the Rio Grande. They were able to grow corn and other crops because they settled near the river. They also hunted buffalo and gathered wild plants for food. The Jumano lived in large villages. They used bows and arrows and carried heavy clubs into battles.
The Great Plains stretch from Canada into southern Texas. When the Spanish arrived in the 1500s, they brought back the horse. Many plains Indians became excellent horsemen. Most lived in tepees.

Most tepees were made of 18 buffalo hides, and 20-30 poles.
Buffalo-some weighed up to 1,600 pounds and were 6 feet tall at the shoulder and 10 feet long. Indians used a variety of techniques to hunt buffalo.
It would usually take several arrows to bring down one buffalo because of their large size.
The Tonkawa

- Lived on the north and central plains and on the southeastern edge of the Edwards Plateau. They depended on the buffalo for food, clothing and shelter. They were considered hunters-gatherers. The **Tonkawa** were driven from their hunting grounds by the **Apache**.

**Tonkawa children**
The Apache

- The Apache culture originated in Canada, but migrated to the Great Plains. Two Apache groups settled in Texas. These are the Lipan and Mescalero. Apaches were organized into bands that traveled, hunted and fought together. The Apaches were skilled horsemen and often teamed up when hunting buffalo. Lipan Apaches were also farmers which was very unusual for Apaches.
Apache men tied feathers and other decorations to their hair. The men had no facial hair and the women wore earrings. **Apaches** were feared throughout Texas. The Comanches took control of the Apache’s territory so they were mortal enemies.

**Apache chief**

**Apache girl about 12 years old**
The Comanche originally lived in the western United States. They eventually moved into the Great Plains once they acquired horses. The Comanche lived in bands headed by a peace chief. If you were the best fighter and rider you were the war chief. The Comanche were skilled buffalo hunters. Because of their skills they soon controlled much of the plains including west and northern Texas.

Quanah Parker—last Comanche chief. Mother was Cynthia Ann Parker.
The Kiowa were the last plains group to arrive in Texas. They hunted buffalo, and gathered berries, fruits and nuts. They traded with other groups for what they did not have. The hair of the Kiowa men was long but over the right ear it was short. The Kiowa and the Comanche were allies.