

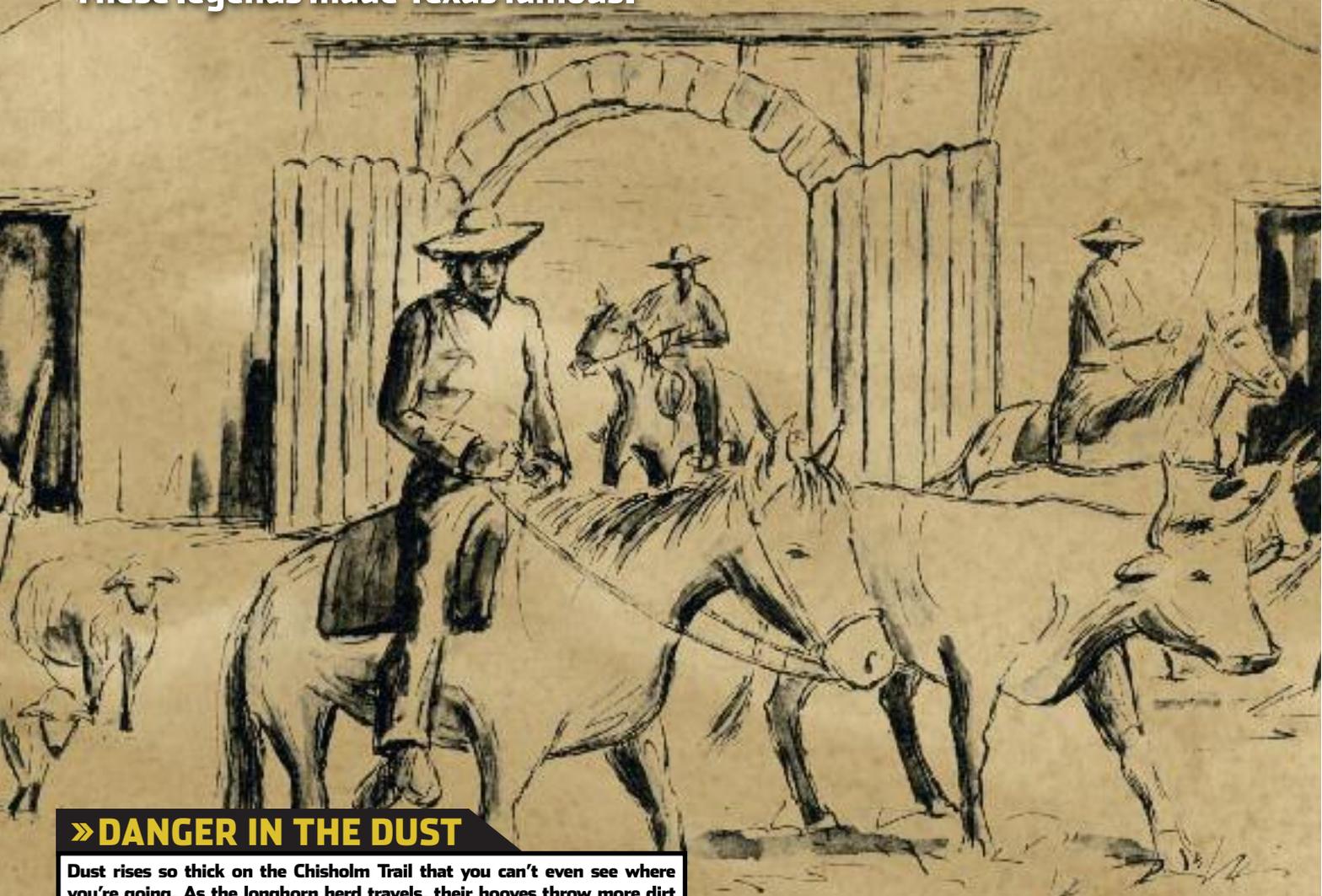
**Keep**

# Texas Wild



## VAQUEROS & COWBOYS

These legends made Texas famous.



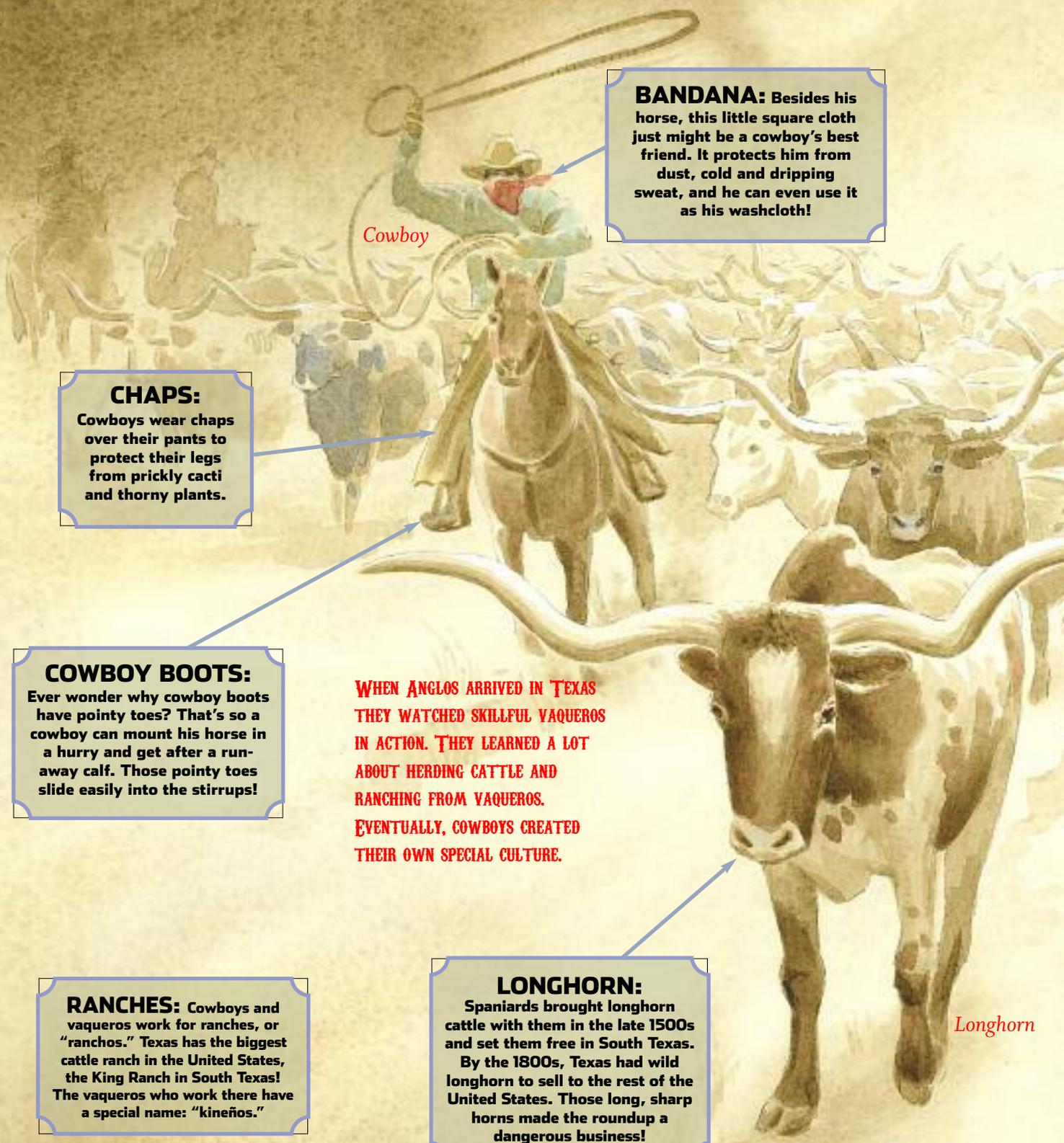
### » DANGER IN THE DUST

Dust rises so thick on the Chisholm Trail that you can't even see where you're going. As the longhorn herd travels, their hooves throw more dirt into the air. Suddenly, you feel the ground vibrating. Oh, no! Something spooked the cattle. A stampede begins! Crazy cows toss their sharp horns about. You dodge them, hoping you don't get speared. Unexpectedly, a group of vaqueros from a nearby rancho comes to help. Together, you surround the longhorns, sealing off their escape. By the time the animals calm down, you're exhausted. However, you can't rest; there are still 10 more miles to ride before sundown. What a difficult job it is being a cowboy! But later, you smile as you drift off under the stars, recalling the adventures of the day, while the music of howling coyotes sings you to sleep.

ILLUSTRATION BY TPWMD

WWW.TPWMAGAZINE.COM

# THE GREAT TEXAS



**BANDANA:** Besides his horse, this little square cloth just might be a cowboy's best friend. It protects him from dust, cold and dripping sweat, and he can even use it as his washcloth!

Cowboy

**CHAPS:** Cowboys wear chaps over their pants to protect their legs from prickly cacti and thorny plants.

**COWBOY BOOTS:** Ever wonder why cowboy boots have pointy toes? That's so a cowboy can mount his horse in a hurry and get after a runaway calf. Those pointy toes slide easily into the stirrups!

WHEN ANGLOS ARRIVED IN TEXAS THEY WATCHED SKILLFUL VAQUEROS IN ACTION. THEY LEARNED A LOT ABOUT HERDING CATTLE AND RANCHING FROM VAQUEROS. EVENTUALLY, COWBOYS CREATED THEIR OWN SPECIAL CULTURE.

**RANCHES:** Cowboys and vaqueros work for ranches, or "ranchos." Texas has the biggest cattle ranch in the United States, the King Ranch in South Texas! The vaqueros who work there have a special name: "kineños."

**LONGHORN:** Spaniards brought longhorn cattle with them in the late 1500s and set them free in South Texas. By the 1800s, Texas had wild longhorn to sell to the rest of the United States. Those long, sharp horns made the roundup a dangerous business!

Longhorn

# AS CATTLE DRIVES

THE GREAT TEXAS CATTLE DRIVES STARTED IN THE 1860S. WE HAD LOTS OF LONGHORNS, AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY WANTED BEEF. FROM ABOUT 1865 TO 1890, COWBOYS AND VAQUEROS HERDED ABOUT 5 MILLION CATTLE TO MARKETS UP NORTH. THEY BECAME THE FAMOUS LEGENDS THAT MADE TEXAS PROUD.

## SOMBRERO:

In Spanish, "sombra" means shade. A vaquero's hat gave him shade in the harsh South Texas sun.

*Vaquero*

**SERAPE:** Vaqueros used these to keep warm, but serapes also helped with herding cattle. They waved serapes to steer wandering cattle back to the herd.

**BRAND:** Cattle roamed the range to eat, so how could ranchers tell which ones belonged to them? By using a branding iron to put a special mark or "brand" on each cow. Each ranch has its own unique brand.

## A VAQUERO'S (OR COWBOY'S) HORSE:

Without this important tool, he can't do his job. To ride the range, vaqueros and cowboys need to be expert horsemen with horses that won't panic in the middle of scary stampedes of longhorns!

VAQUEROS WERE THE ORIGINAL COWBOYS AND STARTED HERDING CATTLE IN NORTHERN MEXICO IN THE 1590S. THEY LIVED IN TEXAS A LONG TIME BEFORE AMERICAN COWBOYS DID BECAUSE TEXAS USED TO BE PART OF MEXICO.



# Spike's Activity Page



## >> KEEPING IT WILD

**Grab your bandana, Buckaroo! For vaqueros and cowboys, bandanas have many uses.**

- **Wrap your bandana around:**
  - your head to keep sweat from dripping into your eyes.
  - your ears to keep them warm.
  - your face to keep your nose and cheeks warm.
- **Tie your bandana around:**
  - your face to keep the dust from choking you.
  - your neck so it's there when you need to wipe sweat or dirt off your face.
- **Use your bandana to wash up for supper and bedtime.**

**Now you know...bandanas, not cowboy hats, rule on the range!**



This map shows the main trails of the great Texas cattle drives. Use it to answer these questions:

## >> WILD GEOGRAPHY

- 1) Which trail started the farthest west?
- 2) Which three trails stretched from Texas to Kansas?
- 3) Which trail went through Fort Worth?
- 4) Which trail started in San Antonio?
- 5) All trails eventually headed in which direction?



## >> WILD WORDS

Many cowboy words we use today come from Spanish words used by vaqueros. Match the Spanish words with the English ones created from them:

### SPANISH

rancho  
chaparreras  
corral  
lazo  
rodeo  
reata  
estampida

### ENGLISH

chaps  
corral  
lariat  
lasso  
stampede  
rodeo  
ranch



**NEXT MONTH:  
Animal conservation**

### TEACHER RESOURCE

Visit [www.tpwmagazine.com](http://www.tpwmagazine.com) to download a printable PDF, access lesson plans, find additional resources or order copies.

PHOTO BY TPWD