

Burning the Brand

Objective

TLW identify the purpose of branding and learn to read brands. They will compare and contrast branding practices of the past and today and discuss ways ranches use brands to express a quality or ideal.

TEKS

History 4.4, Social Studies 4.23

Building Background

- Write or draw the following logos on the board or overhead.
- McDonalds, Superman, Batman, Texas Tech.
- Ask students to identify each logo.
- Discuss: Why do organizations use easily identifiable logos? What comes to your mind when you see these logos?

Procedure

- Discuss: In the same way logos identify organizations, brands identify ranches.
- Using the examples on the “Texas Cattle Brand” sheet, write various brands on the board. Show students how to read a brand (top to bottom, left to right, outside to inside.)
- Read the passage from the student activity sheet.
- Students will create their own brand and register it in the “Classroom County Court.”
- Do an Internet search for articles to compare the history of branding with current branding methods.

Examples:

“Cowboy Hieroglyphics,” Clarence Stilwill, *Hearland USA*, July/Aug. 2001.

“Chipping Away at Horse Theft,” Leslie Groves, *The Quarter Horse Racing Journal*, January 1994.

“Branding,” David Dary, *The Handbook of Texas Online*. Jul. 23, 2002.

Extend

Write about it!

If you owned a ranch anywhere in the world, where would it be? Why? Describe your ranch. What does it look like? How many cattle and horses would you own? Would you hire people to help you take care of the animals? What does your brand stand for? Why is it unique?

Texas Cattle Brands

Brands are read from either:

Left to right:



H Bar O
Ellis County
1854



Diamond O
Gonzales County
1865



XIT
Deaf Smith County
1882

Top to bottom:



Bar Ys
Wichita County
1879



T Diamond
Caldwell County
1845



U Bar
Castro County
1886

Outside to inside:



Diamond One
Bowie County
1866



Circle O
Fort Bend County
1839



Circle SK
Bell County
1860

Student Activity Sheet

Burning the Brand

In the days before barbed wire fences, cattle roamed freely on the open range. It was often hard to determine whose cattle belonged to whom. So, ranchers would gather up all the new calves in the spring and brand them with the ranch's official marking.

A ranch's brand is the official mark that usually stays with the ranch from generation to generation. Brands must be registered with the county to ensure that more than one ranch doesn't have the same brand.

When it's branding season, the cowboys gather all the calves and put them in a holding pen or corral. Then they rope them one at a time to give them their shots and brand them. A branding iron is heated in the fire and the mark is seared (burned) onto the calf's shoulder or hip. Although it is not a pleasant experience for the calf, the brand heals over in a few days. Once the brand is applied, it does not wash off or rub off. It stays with the animal forever.

Today, some ranchers choose to mark their cattle by placing a tag in their ear, similar to wearing an earring. Whatever the method, branding is a useful tool for the rancher that is still a part of their work each year.

Brands at the National Ranching Heritage Center



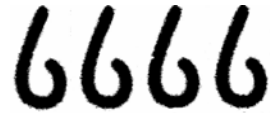
Pitchfork Ranch



XIT Ranch



Lazy S



Four Sixes

Design your own brand and draw it in the space provided. Then register your brand with your "classroom clerk."

Remember:

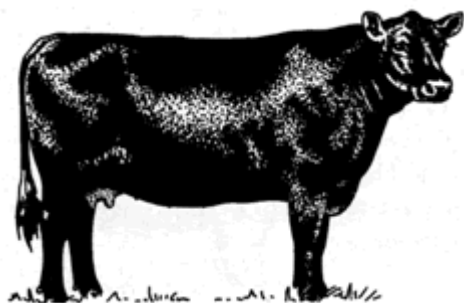
Brands are designed so they are:

- easy to read at a distance
- difficult for rustlers to change

Two rules about brands are:

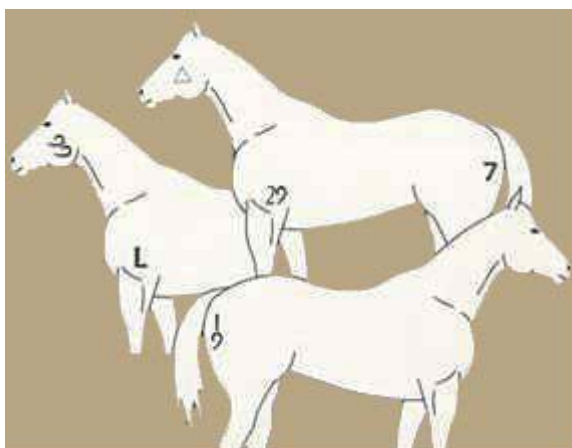
- they must be recorded at the County Clerk's Office
- they cannot be duplicated

Four Sixes cattle are branded with four sixes (6666). As a cow/calf operation, the Four Sixes Ranch now maintains a breeding herd of approximately 7,000 mother cows. The high quality of Four Sixes cattle is well known, and that reputation continues today in making the ranch a forerunner in the cattle industry.



6666

Brand carried by
Four Sixes cattle



L

Brand carried by
Four Sixes horses

Four Sixes horses wear the L brand in honor of Burk Burnett's father-in-law, Captain M.B. Loyd. In 1993, the Four Sixes outfit of the Burnett Ranches was honored with the American Quarter Horse Association's Best Remuda Award in recognition of its outstanding band of working cow horses that tend thousands of the ranch's cattle.

Left Jaw

Designates Triangle Ranch lineage or mare family lineage on 6666 Ranch mares.

Left Shoulder

6666 Ranch horse brand L or mare family lineage on Triangle Ranch mares

Left Buttock

Designated year foaled (born)

Right Buttock

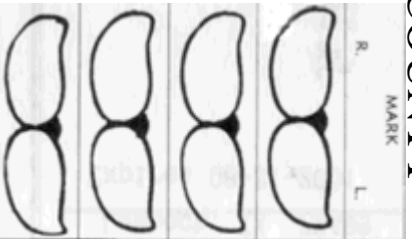
Designates sire (father) of horse

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF MARKS AND BRANDS

Name of Owner	Place of Residence	Mark Right Left	Brand	Location of Brand	Animal	Month	Day	Year

THE STATE OF TEXAS

_____ COUNTY



I, _____, Clerk of the Classroom Court
in and for said County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy
of the Record of the Mark and Brand of _____ (name)
as entered in said County.

Given under my hand and seal of office,
this the _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

Signed, _____