Now Presenting...

**Davy Crockett: Fact or Legend?**

Davy Crockett was a frontiersman, hunter, soldier, businessman, and a lawmaker. His actual deeds, as well as legends about him, have made him an American hero.

### Setting the Stage

#### Background

David “Davy” Crockett lived from 1786 to 1836. He had several careers including businessman, hunter, state legislator, and congressman from Kentucky. Crockett enjoyed telling stories about his adventures and often exaggerated for effect. His tales brought him wide recognition. During his lifetime, a play and several books about him became popular. These were loosely based on Crockett's real accomplishments, and it became hard to separate the facts from the legends. After his death at the Battle of the Alamo, the legends continued to grow.

#### Staging

You may choose to have readers set up in front of the board. Draw a large television set on the board behind them. Write the title of the play at the top of the “television screen.”

#### Encore

Davy Crockett’s autobiography is called *The Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of the State of Tennessee*. It can be accessed online (http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/railton/projects/price/crockett.htm). You may wish to use this site to show students how to use original source documents. Read passages aloud, and then have students discuss and summarize the information.

Students can also use the Internet to find more legends about Davy Crockett. Encourage them to each write a short summary of one legend, and then compile the summaries into a class book.

### Vocabulary

**Introduce and discuss the following words before reading the script.**

- **Encourage students to give examples of a “fact” and a “legend.” Have them identify the words that relate to government.**

  - **Congress**: the law-making part of the U.S. government, made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate
  - **descendant**: a person who is the son or daughter of a particular relative or ancestor
  - **escape**: to break free or get away
  - **fact**: a thing that has actually happened
  - **legend**: a story that is handed down for generations and is believed to have been based on actual events
  - **legislature**: a group of people who are given the power and responsibility to make laws for a nation
  - **swamp**: a piece of wet land that is always or often covered with water
Now Presenting...

Davy Crockett: Fact or Legend?

Contestants on a game show identify information about American hero Davy Crockett as either fact or legend.

Characters

D. V. Crockett

Wanda Know (emcee)

Player #1

Player #2

Factito Chorus

Legendaire Chorus

Announcer
Davy Crockett: Fact or Legend?

Characters

D. V. Crockett  Factito Chorus
Wanda Know    Legendaire Chorus
Player #1      Announcer
Player #2

Announcer: Welcome to Famous Person: Fact or Legend? Our famous person for today’s show is Davy Crockett. Born in Tennessee in 1786, Davy Crockett is the subject of many tall tales and legends. Many of his real-life adventures were just as amazing as the legends told about him. Today our two contestants will try to figure out which events from his life are facts, and which are legends. And now here’s our hostess, Ms. Wanda Know.

Wanda Know: Hello, everyone. It’s great to be here! And now let’s meet our experts. They will make the final judgment about our contestants’ answers. First, meet the Factitos.

Factito Chorus: (chanting) It’s a fact; it’s a fact. We know it to be true—it’s something we can prove.

Wanda Know: The Factitos look for facts in encyclopedias and other books, and also on Internet sources. And now please welcome our other panel of experts—the Legendaires.

Legendaire Chorus: (chanting) It’s a legend; it’s a story. It may be partly true, but we don’t know for sure.
Wanda Know: The Legendaires like stories. They don’t worry about the truth. They don’t check sources either.

Announcer: We also have a special guest with us today. Mr. D. V. Crockett, a descendant of Davy Crockett, is here with us. He will tell us the true story behind the legends. Now let’s get started!

Wanda Know: Contestants, are you ready? Here is the first piece of information. Davy Crockett had a pet parrot. He tried to teach the bird to say his name but the bird could only say “Davy.” That’s how he got his nickname.

Player #1: That sounds true to me. I don’t think parrots are too smart, even if they can speak.

Player #2: I never heard about him having a parrot. I think it’s a legend.

Legendaire Chorus: (chanting) It’s a legend; it’s a story. It may be partly true, but we don’t know for sure.

Announcer: There you have it! Our experts have ruled that Player #2 is correct—that information is a legend! Let’s give Player #2 the first point. And now, perhaps Mr. D. V. Crockett can tell us the true story behind the legend.

D. V. Crockett: You bet! Actually, my ancestor used the name “David.” A writer gave him the nickname “Davy.” After that, other writers used the name “Davy” when they told stories about him.
**Wanda Know:** All right then—on to our next piece of information. When he was 12, David walked seven miles in two hours in deep snow. He was escaping from a man who wanted to keep him on his ranch.

**Player #1:** That must be a legend. I know I could never do anything like that!

**Player #2:** Kids back then did all kinds of things that we don’t do now. And Davy Crockett was an extraordinary guy. I bet it’s true.

**Factito Chorus:** *(chanting)* It’s a fact; it’s a fact.  
We know it to be true—
it’s something we can prove.

**D. V. Crockett:** You’re right again, Player #2. We know that it’s a fact because David wrote about it in his autobiography. David had worked helping a man drive a herd of cattle across Virginia. The man liked his work so much that he wanted to force Davy to stay on and keep working for him. But, as the story says, Davy would not let even deep snow or a seven-mile walk stop him from seeking his freedom!

**Announcer:** Well, Player #2 is in the lead with two points. Come on, Player #1. Let’s see if you can take this one!

**Wanda Know:** In 1814 David was the best alligator wrestler in the swamps of Florida. He could wrestle a dozen alligators at a time.

**Player #1:** No way! That must be a legend!
**Player #2:** Hmm, he fought bears and was a good hunter. I think it could be true.

**Legendaire Chorus:** *(chanting)* It’s a legend; it’s a story.
   It may be partly true,
   but we don’t know for sure.

**Announcer:** Mr. Crockett, what was the real story?

**D. V. Crockett:** David was in Florida, but he was in the army. He was fighting the British and the Indians who were helping them. He tracked them through the swamps.

**Announcer:** And Player #1 is now on the board with one correct answer! Let’s have our next question.

**Wanda Know:** David Crockett was a member of the Kentucky legislature. A few years later he became a congressman.

**Player #1:** No, I don’t think this could possibly be true. Davy Crockett could hardly read or write. There’s no way he could have been a lawmaker.

**Player #2:** I’m going to have to disagree. I think I read about this somewhere. I’m going to go ahead and say this one is true.

**Factito Chorus:** *(chanting)* It’s a fact; it’s a fact.
   We know it to be true—
   it’s something we can prove.

**Announcer:** So that’s another correct response for Player #2?
D. V. Crockett: That’s right. Player #1 is correct in saying that David did not read or write well. But Player #2 is also correct—David served the people of Kentucky as a lawmaker. He really knew how to listen to people. That’s what made people think he would truly represent their interests. In fact, David served in the state legislature and later as a congressman.

Announcer: Now here’s our last question.

Wanda Know: We know that David fought at the Battle of the Alamo in Texas in 1836. However, some say that he escaped in a hot-air balloon. Then he lived on an island for the rest of his life.

Players #1 and #2: We’re not sure, but we hope it’s true.

Legendaire Chorus: (chanting) It’s a legend; it’s a story.
   It may be partly true,
   but we don’t know for sure.

D. V. Crockett: David fought bravely, but he was killed in the Battle of the Alamo. However, his heroic deeds live on.

Announcer: Thank you both for playing. You will each get a book about David Crockett and an imitation coonskin cap. And Player #2 will join us again tomorrow as we look at the life of another legendary figure.

Wanda Know: For now, let’s sign off with some words from David Crockett himself: “I’ll leave this truth for others when I am dead—just be sure you are right and then go ahead.”
Stretching the Truth

When someone exaggerates, they use some true information. Then they add funny or impossible actions to stretch the truth and make the story more entertaining. This is one way that a legend is created.

Here are some true statements about David Crockett. Use the information and exaggerate to change them into legends.

1. David Crockett was a good hunter.

2. David Crockett was strong.

3. David Crockett was a soldier.

4. David Crockett was a lawmaker.
Main Idea and Detail

A main idea is the most important thing about a story. The details tell more about the main idea. Reread the play “Davy Crockett: Fact or Legend?” Then circle the sentence below that tells the main idea. Write the details from the play that support the main idea.

Main Idea:

David Crockett was a good storyteller.

David Crockett is a famous American hero.

David Crockett lived a long time ago.

Details:

1. _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

4. _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________

   _____________________________________________
Answer Key

Spider Woman and the Gift of the Loom
page 14: Drawings will vary.
page 15: Answers will vary.
page 16: 1. Raise the sheep.; 2. Sheer the sheep.; 3. Wash the wool.; 4. Straighten the wool.;

A Wild Day
page 23: Birds and Butterflies: heron, pelican, swallowtail; Reptiles and Amphibians: alligator, crocodile, tree frog; Mammals: manatee, raccoon, bobcat
page 24: 1. can’t; 2. They’re; 3. Let’s; 4. That’s; 5. I’ll; 6. I’m; 7. We’re; 8. You’re; 9. isn’t; 10. It’s
page 25: Drawings will vary.

B. W. Hawkins and the Dinosaur Models
page 32: Artwork will vary. Check to see that models are assembled correctly.
page 33: Answers will vary.
page 34: 5. They made an iron skeleton.; 2. They made a small clay model.; 6. They made a brick base.; 3. They made a life-size clay model.; 1. They made a drawing.; 7. They covered the skeleton with cement.; 4. They made a mold for the body.

The Amazing Laundry Hamper
page 41: Chuck: friendly, helpful, neat, obedient; Doris: disobedient, greedy, lazy, messy
page 42: Answers will vary. Check to make sure that students use two adjectives per noun.
page 43: 1. Chuck obeyed his parents and Mrs. Dazzle. He did his work carefully and cheerfully.
2. Chuck got many silver dollars. 3. Doris was lazy and disobedient. She was not careful with her work. 4. Doris got mud stuck to her clothes. 5. People who do their work well will be rewarded with good things.

It Happened at Hull House
page 50: Answers will vary.
page 51: Answers will vary.
page 52: Answers will vary.

Davy Crockett: Fact or Legend?
page 60: Answers will vary. Check to make sure that students understand how to use exaggeration to embellish a true statement.
page 61: Main Idea: David Crockett is a famous American hero. Details: 1. He served in the army and fought the British and Indians.; 2. He was a member of the Kentucky legislature.; 3. He was a congressman from Kentucky.; 4. He gave his life at the Battle of the Alamo.

A Riddle-Maker Saves the Day
page 68: Answers will vary.
page 69: 1. smart, quick-witted; 2. large, huge; 3. small, miniature; 4. things, objects; 5. leave, go;
6. choose, pick; 7. rich, prosperous; 8. valuable, important. Drawings will vary.
page 70: 1. debt; 2. riddle; 3. bargain; 4. witness; 5. man’s head; 6. rock; 7. Students should draw a picture of the man leaving empty-handed, or of the peasants cheering.

The Walking Sticks Buy Shoes
page 77: Answers will vary. Check to make sure that students have entered the cost of three pairs of shoes, and then subtracted the cost of each pair from $75.00.
page 78: Artwork will vary.