



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Annie Webb Blanton. Then, answer questions about it.

Annie Webb Blanton 1870–1945

As a public official, suffragist, and educator, Annie Webb Blanton devoted her life to women's rights. She said, "Everything that helps to wear away age-old prejudices contributes towards the advancement of women and of humanity."

Born in Houston in 1870, Blanton pursued a career in teaching to demonstrate her independence. After graduating from The University of Texas in 1899, she worked at Denton's North Texas State Normal College, now the University of North Texas. There she took an interest in the challenges facing women educators and joined the suffrage movement. Blanton believed that women working together for change were more effective than those struggling alone.

In 1918, Blanton was elected State Superintendent for Public Instruction, becoming the first woman in Texas to hold a statewide elected office. She pursued a vigorous agenda of increasing teacher pay, improving rural schools, and standardizing instruction.

After two terms, Blanton became a professor at The University of Texas, where she spent the rest of her professional life. In 1929, she and several colleagues founded Delta Kappa Gamma, a society for women educators. Starting in Austin, the organization quickly expanded throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Blanton died in 1945, but her legacy lives on in the equal opportunities enjoyed by Texas women and the model she set for those who followed her into public service.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Annie Webb Blanton. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Why did Annie Webb Blanton pursue a career in teaching?
2. Blanton became the first woman elected to statewide public office in Texas. To what position was she elected?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Taking a Position.** Blanton thought that people were more effective when they worked together to create change, rather than alone. Do you agree? Why or why not?