



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 Samuel "Sam" Taliaferro Rayburn. Then, answer questions about it.

Samuel "Sam" Taliaferro Rayburn 1882–1961

As a young man, Sam Rayburn audaciously declared that he would study law, enter politics, and one day serve in the United States Congress.

He went on to spend forty-nine years in the U.S. House of Representatives, including a record seventeen years as House Speaker. Known affectionately as "Mr. Sam," Rayburn helped pass some of the twentieth century's most important legislation, working, as he put it, "with, not under," eight Presidents.

Born in Tennessee in 1882, Rayburn moved with his family to Fannin County, Texas, when he was five. As a young man, he served three terms in the state legislature and studied enough law at The University of Texas to pass the bar.

Rayburn was elected to Congress in 1912. As chair of the powerful Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, he advanced legislation creating the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Communications Commission. During the Depression, he sponsored key measures of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and was instrumental in ensuring the nation's preparedness for World War II.

A master of the political process, Rayburn was widely respected for his integrity and fairness. He also served as a mentor to many congressmen, including Lyndon B. Johnson. Shortly before his death in 1961, Rayburn said of his career: "I am one man in public life who is satisfied, who has achieved every ambition of his youth."

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Samuel "Sam" Taliaferro Rayburn. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How long did Sam Rayburn serve in the United States Congress, and for which position does he hold the record for longest tenure?
2. What are four of Rayburn's legislative accomplishments?

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. **Creating Connections.** Rayburn described his time in Congress as working "with, not under" eight presidents. How does this statement summarize our system of government?