



**PALO ALTO BATTLEFIELD
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
JUNIOR RANGER BOOKLET**



WANTED FOR AN IMPORTANT MISSION!

Adventurous boys and girls willing to

- ◇ **EXPLORE** the site of the first battle of the U.S.-Mexican War
- ◇ **LEARN** about the soldiers who fought in the Battle of Palo Alto
- ◇ **PROTECT** the history & future of Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site



YOUR REWARD

A JUNIOR RANGER BADGE

Show people you are a
Palo Alto Battlefield Junior Ranger,
a defender of history and park guardian!

To be a Junior Ranger, complete at least one activity in these sections:

1. National Park Service Discovery (p. 2)
2. The U.S.-Mexican War Learning Zone (pp. 3-5)
3. Battlefield Exploration (pp. 6-12)
4. Visitor Center Investigation (pp. 13-17)
5. All About Rangers (pp. 18-22)

Ask parents/guardians and Park Rangers for help.

TO ACCEPT THIS MISSION, FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW

Name: _____

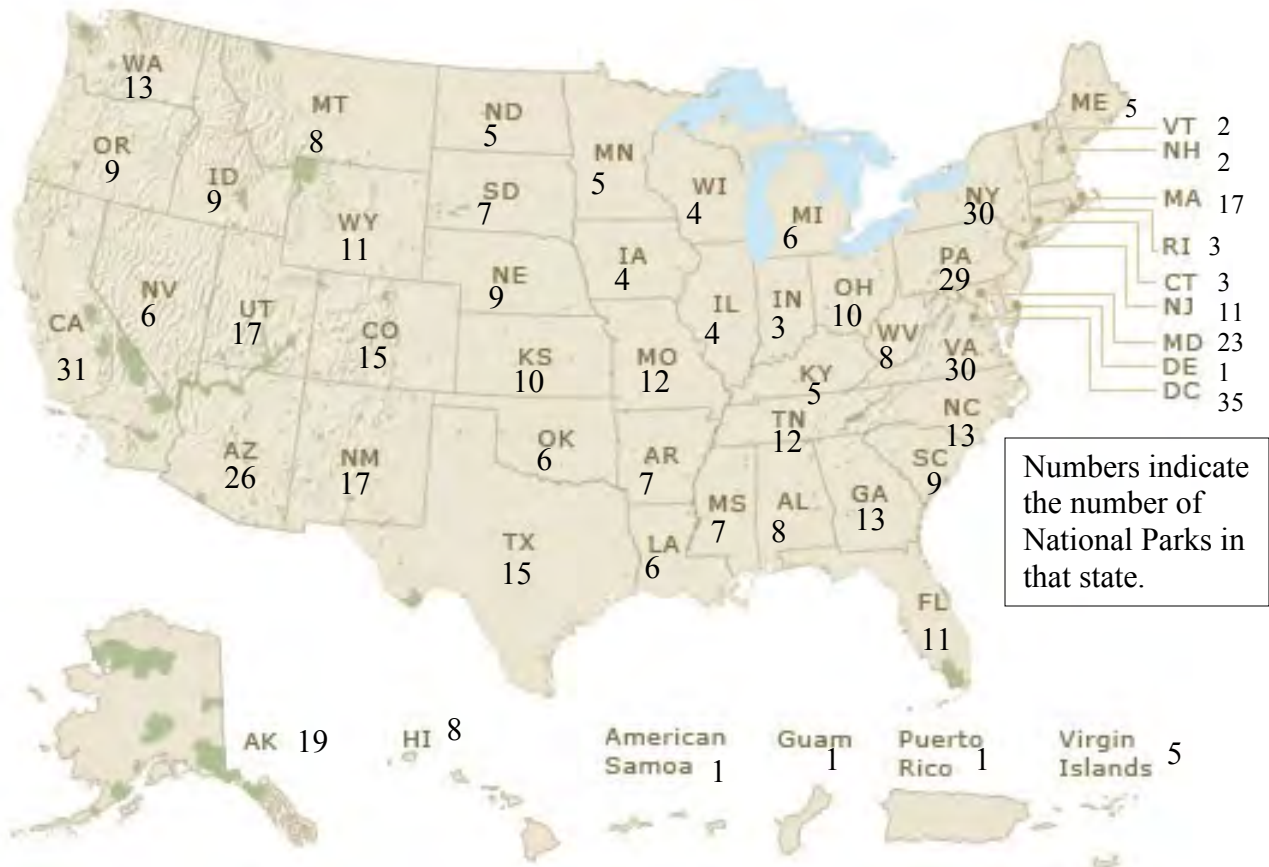
Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

When finished, return the booklet to a Park Ranger.

EXPLORE THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE!



From the slopes of Rocky Mountain National Park to the shores of Padre Island National Seashore, from Gettysburg National Military Park to Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site and all points in between you can find a National Park.

Draw an **X** where you live.

What National Park are you in now?

How many National Parks are in your home state? _____

Which National Parks have you visited?

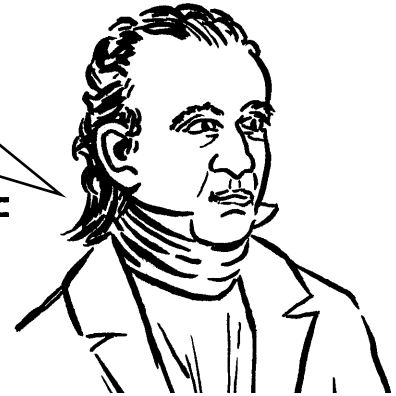
Many visitors carry a National Park Passport. At each National Park they visit, they stamp their passport.

Can you find the Palo Alto Battlefield Passport Cancellation Station and stamp the area below?

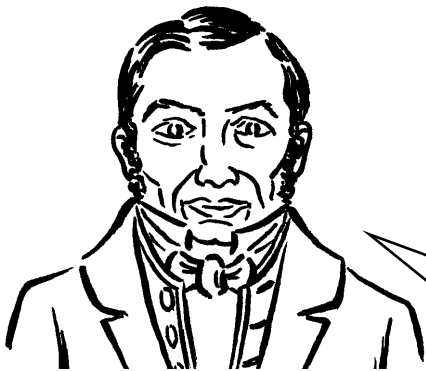
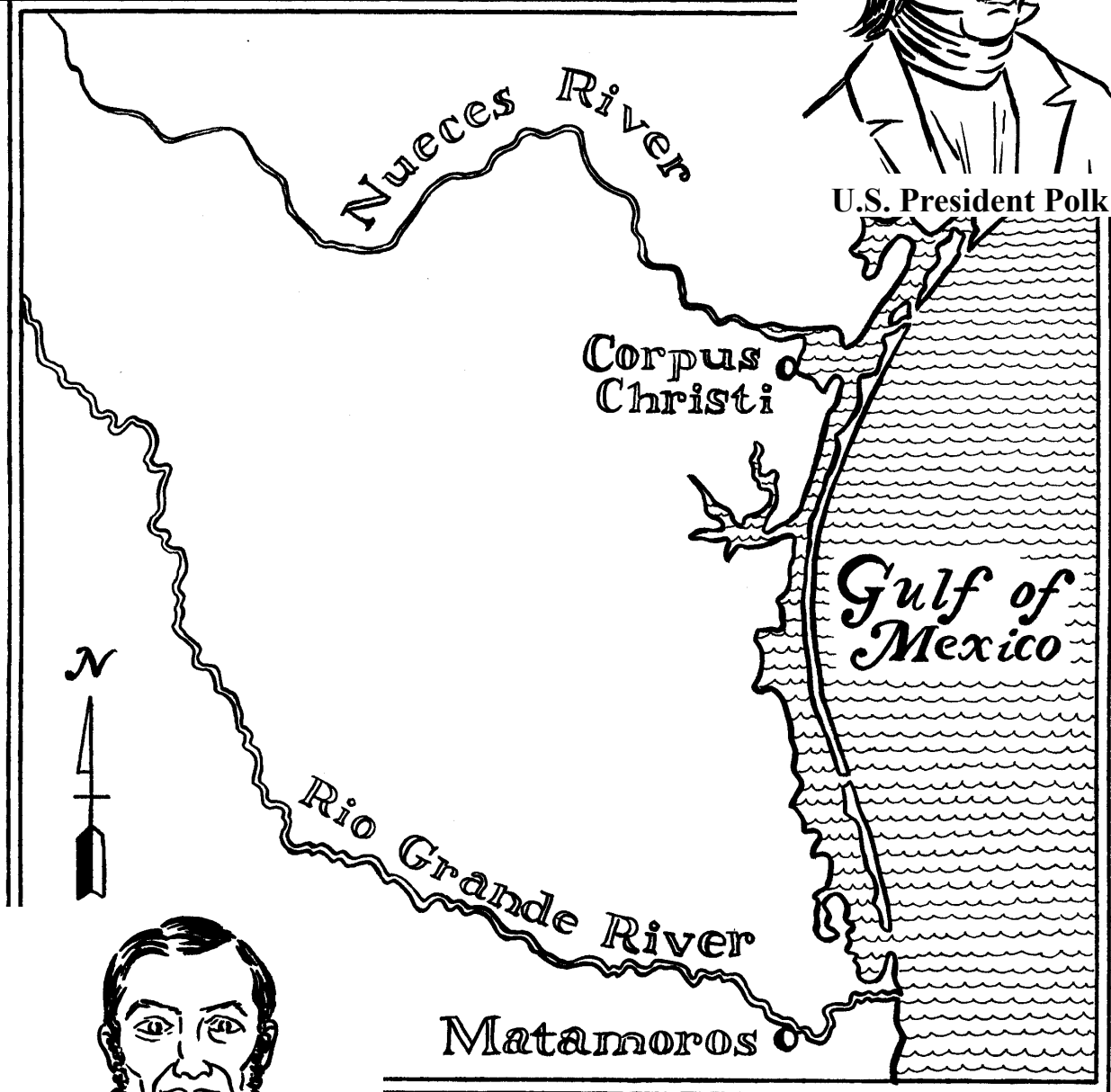
A FIGHT FOR LAND

The National Park Service preserves special places for everyone to enjoy.
What makes Palo Alto Battlefield so special?

Texas belongs to the United States. Its border is the Rio Grande. Mexico passed this border, invaded our territory, and shed American blood upon the American soil.



U.S. President Polk



Mexican President Paredes

Texas is part of Mexico. The boundary of Texas is and has always been the Nueces River. The United States violated existing treaties and occupied Mexican territory.

1. Mexican President Paredes said the _____ was the boundary of Texas. Color this river green.
 2. U.S. President Polk said the _____ was the boundary of Texas. Color this river blue.
 3. Color the area between the two rivers red.
 4. Both the United States and Mexico claimed this disputed territory belonged to them.
-

What Happened Next?

The United States and Mexico went to war.

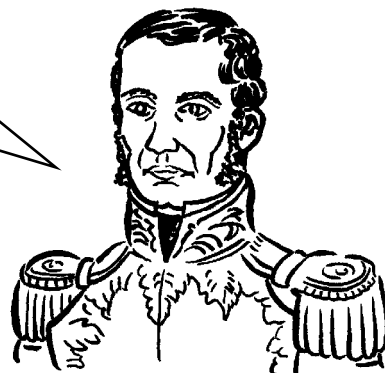
U.S. General Taylor marched soldiers into disputed territory and built a fort on the Rio Grande across from the Mexican city of Matamoros.

Mexican General Arista went to Matamoros.

When the U.S. army crossed the Nueces River and marched into Mexican territory, the United States forced us to go to war.



U.S. General Taylor



Mexican General Arista

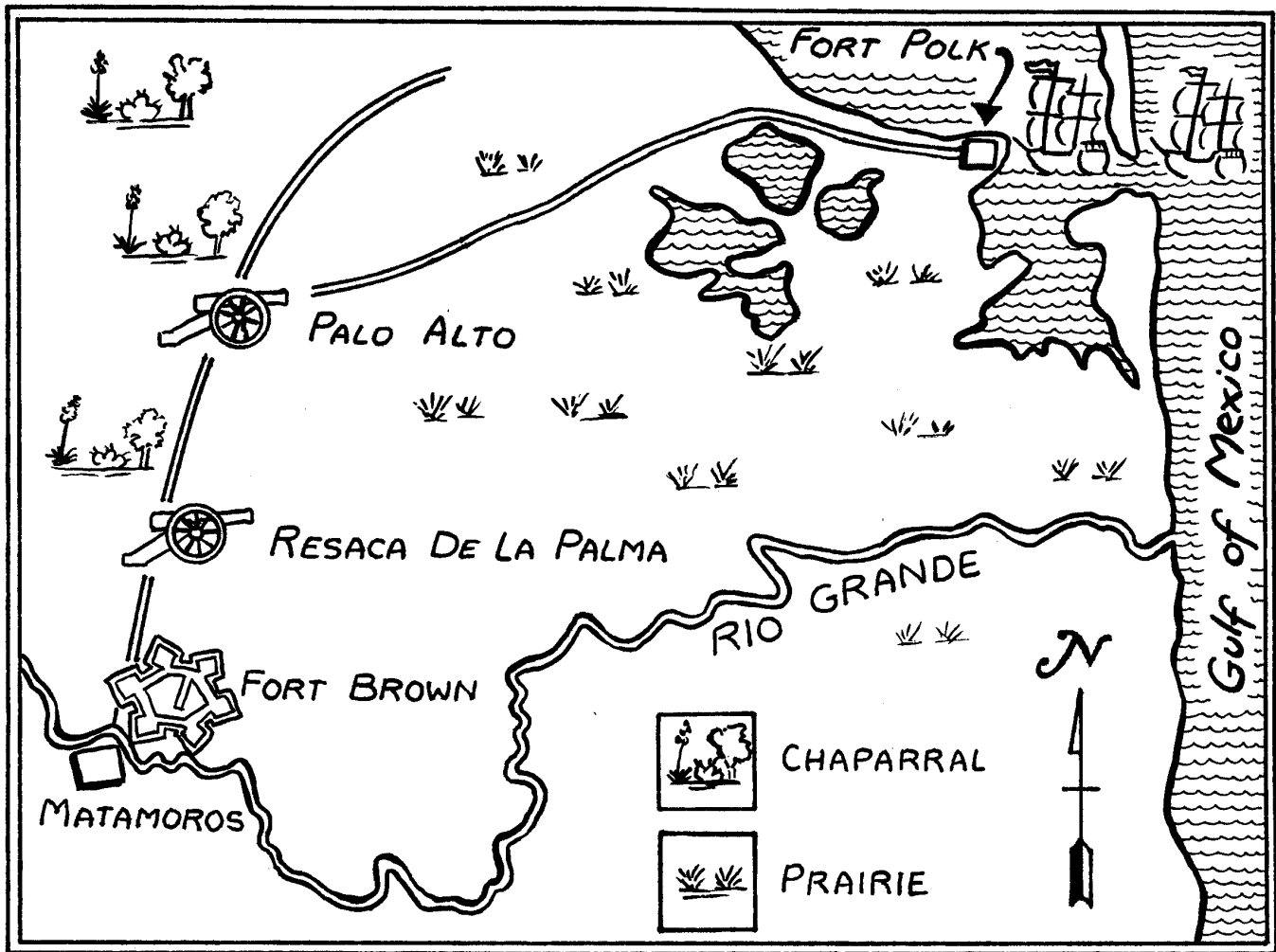
President Polk sent me to the Rio Grande to defend this river as the boundary of the United States.

1. According to Mexican General Arista, _____ started the War. How?

2. According to U.S. President Polk, _____ started the War. How?

THE FIELD KNOWN AS PALO ALTO

Discover how the field known as Palo Alto became an important battlefield!



U.S. soldiers built a fort on the Rio Grande to defend that river as the U.S. boundary.
Draw a red, white, and blue flag over the U.S. fort.

The Mexican Army was stationed in Matamoros to protect their land from the U.S.
Draw a red, white, and green flag over the city of Matamoros.

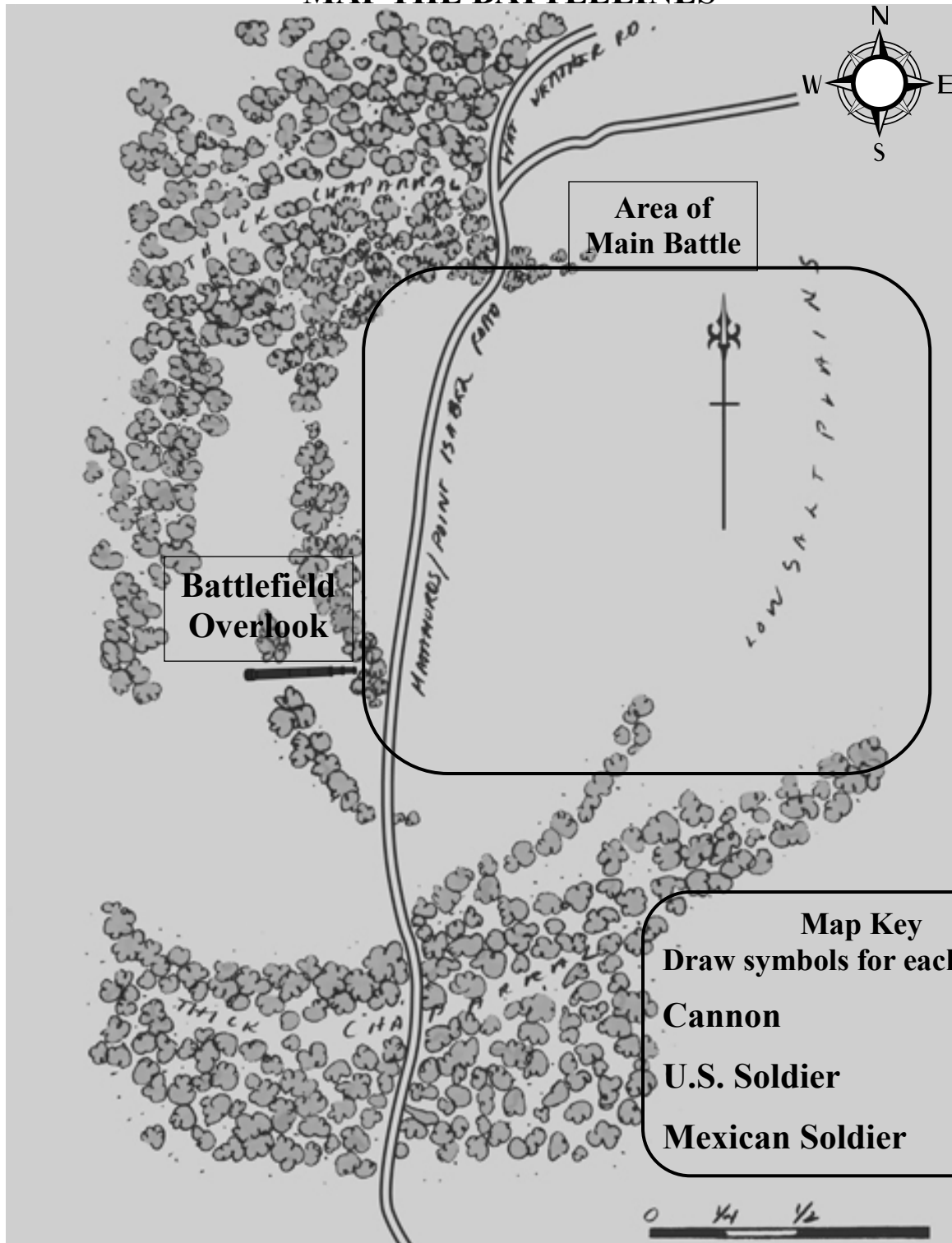
On May 8, 1846, tensions erupted into battle.

How did these two armies end up on the field known as Palo Alto?

Part of the U.S. army marched to Fort Polk to gather supplies. They marched back on the Matamoros-Point Isabel road. Draw blue arrows showing where they marched.

General Arista chose the field of Palo Alto as the spot to stop Taylor. Arista blocked the road with cannon and placed soldiers in the field. Draw a green **X** on the spot where Arista wanted to stop the U.S. Army.

MAP THE BATTLELINES



Go to the Palo Alto Battlefield Overlook (Trail Guide #6).

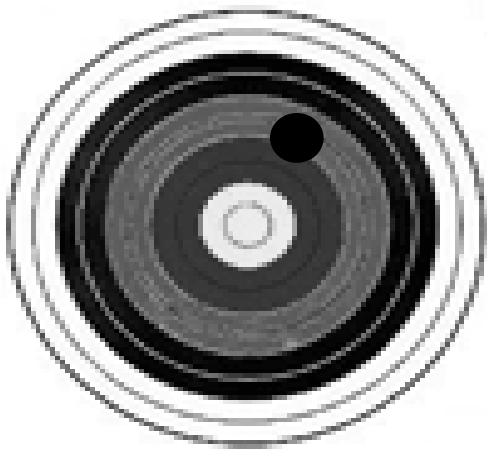
Draw cannon and a line of Mexican soldiers lined up east-west in the south part of the battle area. Look at the cannon and red, white, and green banners (Trail Guide #10 & 7).

Draw cannon and a line of U.S. soldiers lined up east-west in the north part of the battle area. Look at the cannon and red, white, and blue banners (Trail Guide #9 & 8).

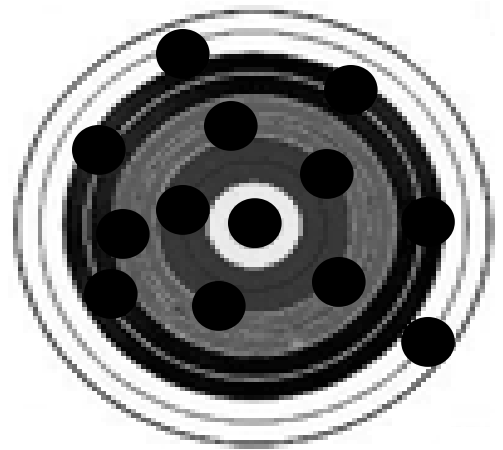
ARTILLERY AMMUNITION

Archeologists discovered both solid shot and grape shot at Palo Alto Battlefield.
Read on to learn more about these cannonballs.

PROPERTY	SOLID SHOT	GRAPESHOT
Shape	Solid Ball	Iron Balls Packed in a Canister
Weight	6—18 pounds	4—8 pounds
Distance	600-2,000 yards	200-400 yards
Strength	Effective at long distances	Hits many objects over a wide area
Weakness	Only hits one object directly	Only effective at close distances
Used by	U.S. & Mexico	U.S.



Circle the target
that was hit by
grapeshot.



EXPLORE!

Search the Visitor Center to find the solid and grapeshot.
Then, ask a park ranger to show you how these cannonballs look before being fired.
Which cannonball is more effective and why? _____

COMPARE YOURSELF TO A U.S.-MEXICAN WAR SOLDIER



Men joining the U.S. Army were listed in a register of enlistment that recorded their personal information, such as age, height, and eye color.

Record your information to compare yourself to an average U.S.-Mexican War soldier.

	Age	Eye Color	Hair	Complexion	Height	Weight
Mexican Soldier	Unknown	Brown	Black	Dark	5 ft., 4 in.	120 lbs.
U.S. Soldier	26	Hazel	Brown	Ruddy	5 ft., 6 in.	150 lbs.
You						

Fill in the blanks and circle the appropriate word to further compare yourself to the average U.S.-Mexican War soldier.

I am _____ years older/younger than the average U.S. soldier.

I am _____ ft., _____ in. shorter/taller than the average Mexican soldier.

EXPLORE!

Check the register of enlistment on the Palo Alto Visitor Center computer to discover if someone with your last name fought in the U.S.-Mexican War.

Ask a Ranger if you need help

**Palo Alto Battlefield is also a special place because many
Color the animals you**

Butterfly

Roseate Spoonbill

Long-Billed Curlew

Rabbit

Coyote

Harris Hawk

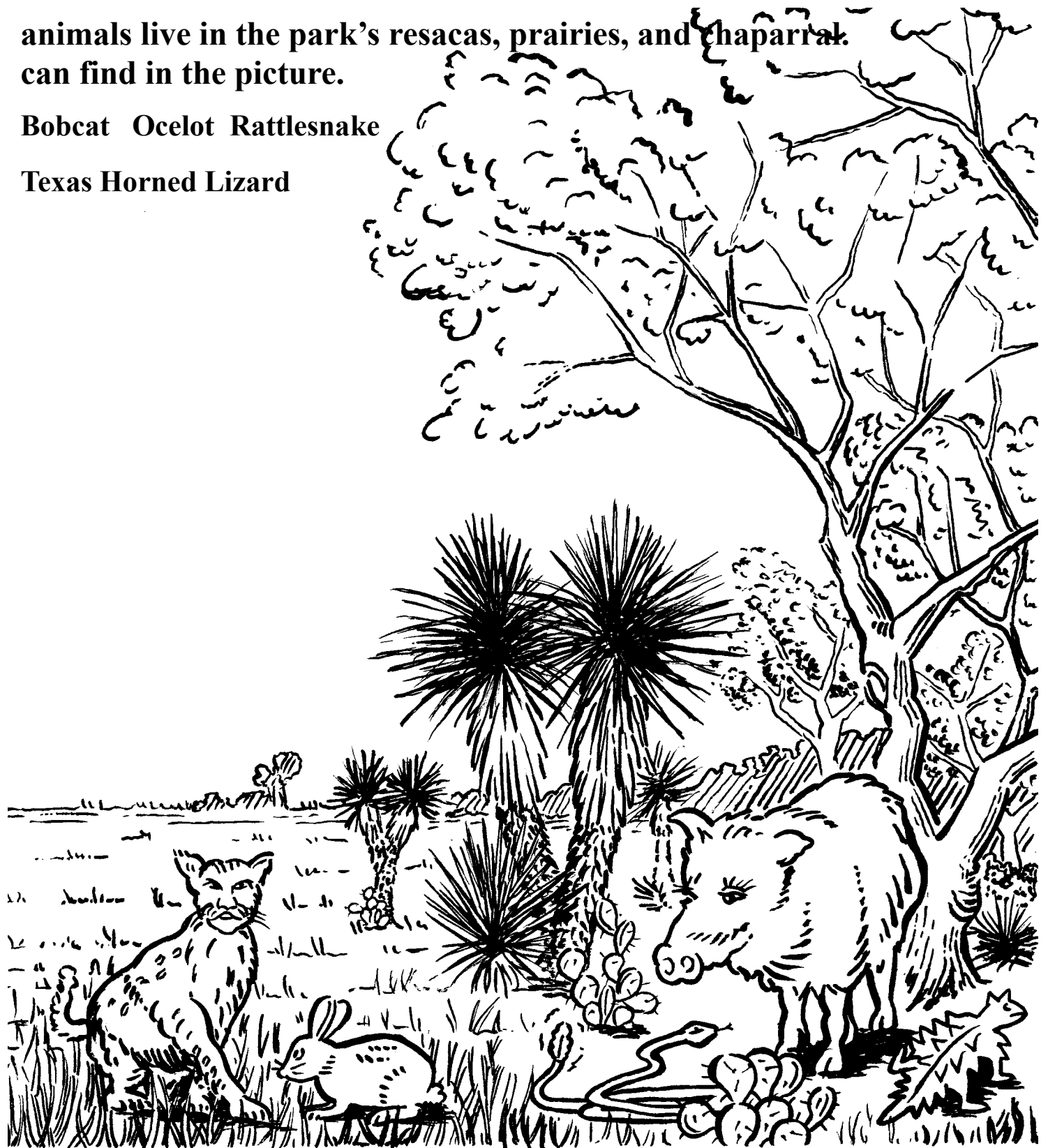
Javelina



animals live in the park's resacas, prairies, and chaparral.
can find in the picture.

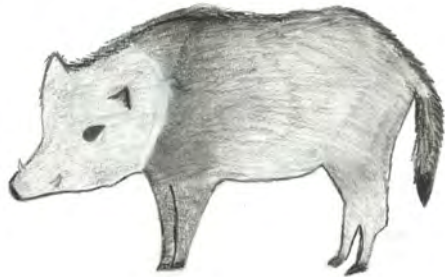
Bobcat Ocelot Rattlesnake

Texas Horned Lizard

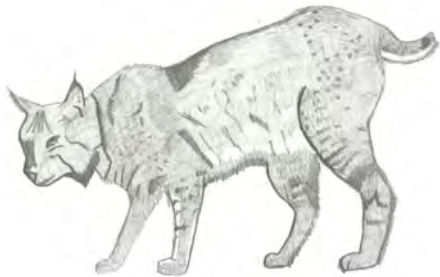


READ MY TRACKS

Draw a line from each animal to its tracks.
Circle any animals or tracks you see while walking on the trail.



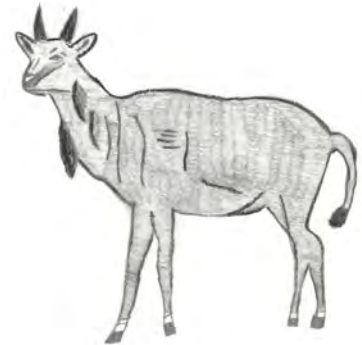
Javelina
Small & rounded



Bobcat
No claws showing



Eastern Cottontail
Long & rounded



Nilgai
Round dewclaws
(extra toe) can show in
soft mud



Coyote
Claws show



Feral Hog
Wide & rounded; Triangular
dewclaws (extra toe) can
show in soft mud

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Archeologists discovered many artifacts at Palo Alto Battlefield.
Train to be an archeologist and find three artifacts in the Palo Alto Visitor Center.
Draw them below.

Weapon

Item that fell off a soldier's uniform in the heat of battle

This _____ may have
belonged to a _____
who used it to _____.

This _____ may have
belonged to a _____
who used it to _____.

Free Choice

This _____ may have
belonged to a _____
who used it to _____.

PAINTING THE WAR

Below are parts of paintings in the Palo Alto Visitor Center.
Explore the Visitor Center to find the paintings and complete this activity.



This painting is of the Battle of _____
which was fought on May _____, 1846.



This painting is of the Battle of _____
which was fought on May _____, 1846.

Explore the paintings to discover the differences between these two battles.

	LAND	WEAPONS	FIGHTING STYLE
Battle of Palo Alto			
Battle of Resaca de la Palma			

WITH THE DAWN

Walk on the overlook boardwalk (Trail Guide #11). Read the sign **With The Dawn**.

102 Mexican soldiers were killed, 129 wounded, and 26 missing.

9 U.S. soldiers were killed, 44 wounded, and 2 missing.

Most of these soldiers were never given a proper burial.



Texas State Memorial
Vicksburg National Military Park



Hampton's Pennsylvania Battery
Gettysburg National Military Park

Many National Military Parks build monuments to honor the sacrifices of the soldiers.

Draw a memorial to honor the U.S. and Mexican soldiers who fought at Palo Alto.

Different Soldiers have

The _____ was in charge of the army and decided how to fight a battle.

Charge! The _____ fought on horseback and could speed across a field. The U.S. army had dragoons trained to fight on horseback and on foot.

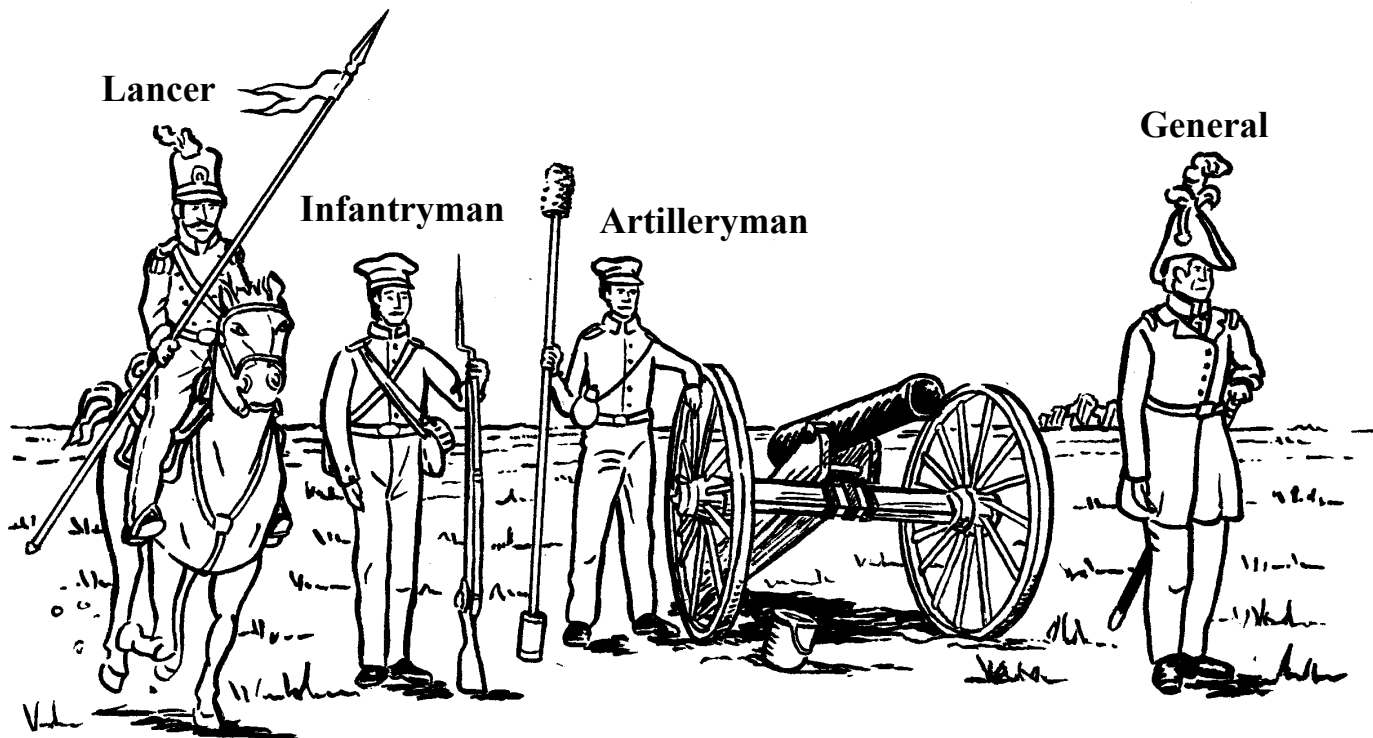
The _____ drew battle maps, designed forts, and helped make battle plans.

The _____ was often called a foot soldier because he marched and fought on foot.

Explore the Palo Alto Visitor Center and find the painting The Battle of Palo Alto.

1. _____

3. _____



different jobs!

Sick and hurt soldiers were brought to the _____.

Boom! Loading, aiming, and firing the cannon was part of the _____'s job.

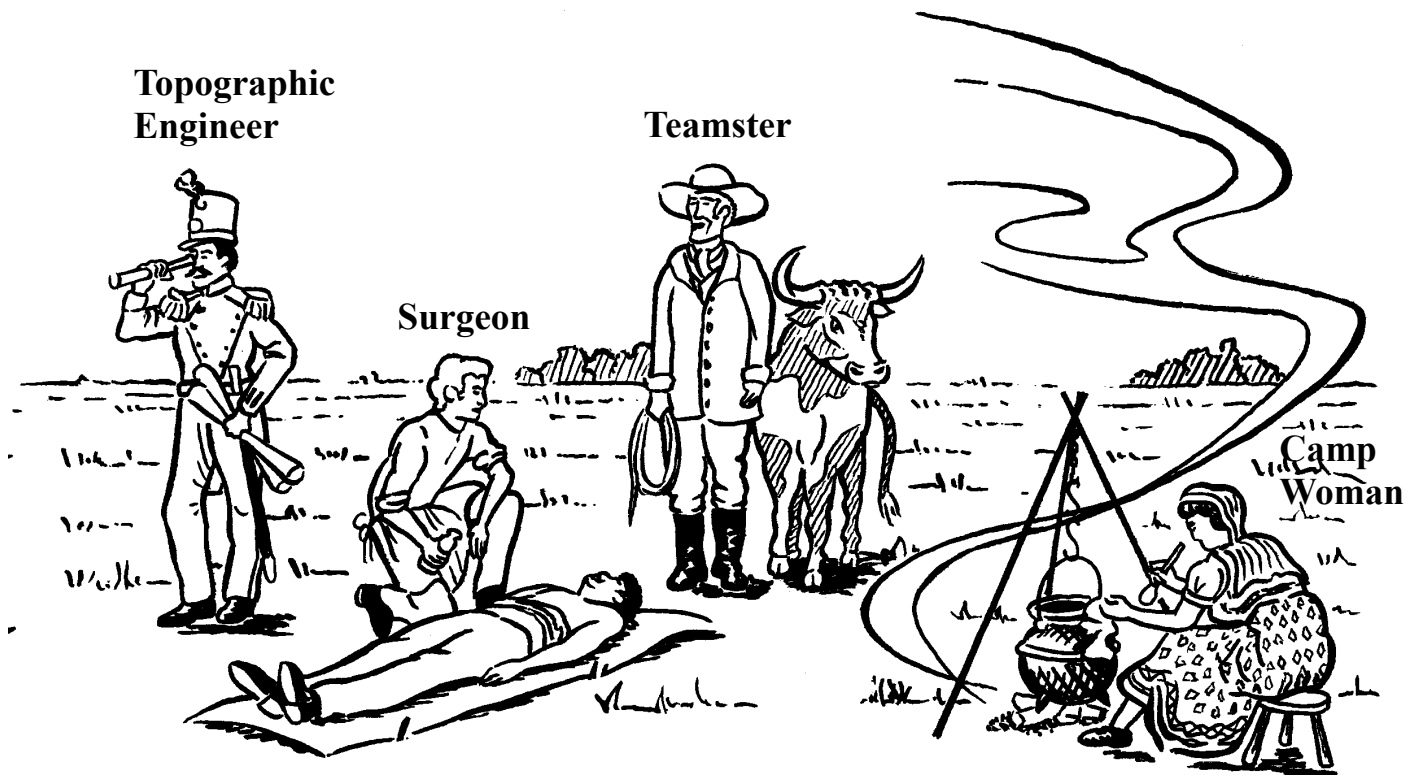
A _____ cooked and cleaned for the soldiers and nursed the wounded.

Teams of horse and oxen pulled supply wagons and cannon. The _____ was in charge of these animals.

List the jobs you can find in the painting.

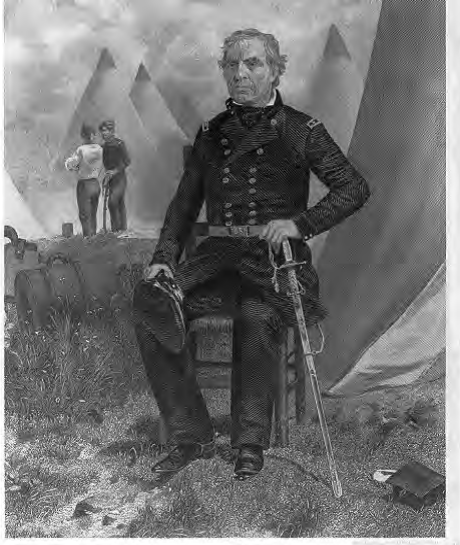
2. _____

4. _____



WHO WERE THEY?

These people were made famous by the U.S.-Mexican War.
Find them in the Palo Alto Visitor Center and write their names.



Known as “Old Rough and Ready” for his modesty and ability to make quick decisions during battles, he went on to become President.

Who is he?



The designer of “Flying Artillery” - lightweight cannon that could be quickly moved around a battlefield—was hit in the leg by a cannonball during the Battle.

Who is he?



Even though a bullet went right through her sunbonnet, she continued to cook and serve the soldiers during the siege of Fort Brown.

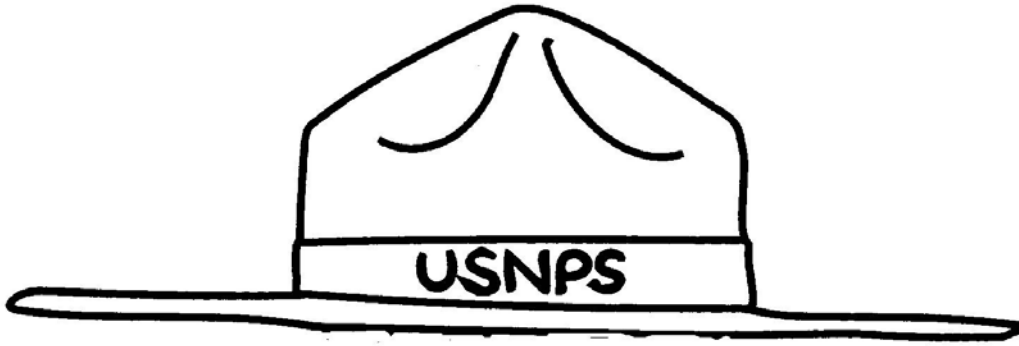
Who is she?



He became a cadet when he was only 15-years-old. His ambitions led him to be Secretary of War and President of the Mexican Republic.

Who is he?

MEET A RANGER



Now is your chance to discover what it is like to be a Park Ranger.
Ask a Park Ranger the following questions.

What is a typical day like as a Park Ranger? _____

What is the best part about being a Park Ranger? _____

Why did you decide to be a Park Ranger? _____

How can I become a Park Ranger? _____

How can I—a Junior Ranger—protect Palo Alto Battlefield? _____

Ask any question you'd like: _____?



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: CARETAKER OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS

The mission of the National Park Service is to:

- ◇ Protect and care for nature, history, and culture in parks
- ◇ Help visitors enjoy parks so everyone can enjoy them both now and in the future

What is your favorite thing that you own? _____

Each time you use your favorite thing there is a chance it could get lost or damaged.

How do you make sure you can use it in the future? _____

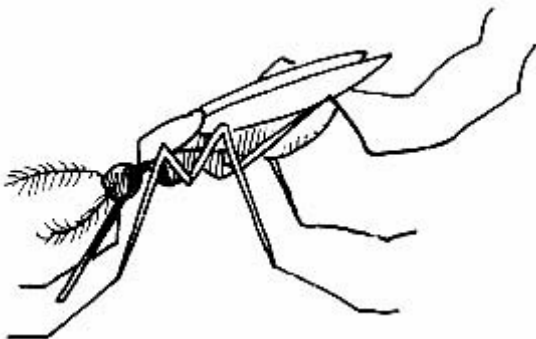
How would you feel if it were lost or damaged? _____

How would you feel if you couldn't visit Palo Alto Battlefield? _____

Park Rangers balance protecting parks and helping visitors enjoy parks.
Can you help Park Rangers solve these problems? Circle all good solutions—there may be more than one! If you know a better solution, write it in!

CHALLENGE #1

Visitors are complaining about all the mosquitos! You should . . .



- ◇ Spray insecticides even though it will harm other plants and animals.
- ◇ Help visitors understand the soldiers who fought here were also bit by mosquitos.
- ◇ Suggest visitors wear insect repellent.
- ◇ Close the park – too many mosquitos!
- ◇ My solution: _____



CHALLENGE #2

Some visitors want to hunt for cannonballs with metal detectors. Artifacts are like puzzle pieces. Archeologists need all the artifacts to discover what happened at the Battle of Palo Alto. The National Park Service protects these artifacts so others can learn about the Battle. You should . . .

- ◇ Allow them to use the metal detectors – they will have fun.
- ◇ Tell them no.
- ◇ Explain why archeologists need all the artifacts to understand the Battle.
- ◇ Tell them how to be trained as a volunteer for an archeology project.
- ◇ My solution: _____



CHALLENGE #3

Many feral hogs—a nonnative species—live on Palo Alto Battlefield and are digging up the park. Feral hogs can dig up to three feet deep—deep enough to destroy artifacts. You should . . .

- ◇ Study what effect feral hogs have on the battlefield.
- ◇ Ask hunters to shoot the hogs.
- ◇ Leave everything as it is.
- ◇ Research to discover if other National Parks have solved feral hog problems and ask for advice on what to do.
- ◇ My solution: _____

PALO ALTO BATTLEFIELD JUNIOR RANGER PLEDGE

As a Junior Ranger, I _____, promise to

- * Explore and learn about Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site
- * Protect this special place by
_____ so others many enjoy it too
- * Tell others about National Parks
- * Continue to explore these national treasures

Signed,



This Junior Ranger booklet was funded by the National Park Foundation, national charitable partner of America's National Parks. The National Park Foundation supports the NPS Junior Ranger program as part of their nationwide effort to connect children to America's heritage and ensure the future of our national parks.

To learn more about the online NPS Junior Ranger program,
visit www.nps.gov/webrangers.