

## Matagorda Island Vocabulary List

1. **Lighthouse**

'lɪt-"haus (noun)

1. A structure (as a tower) with a powerful light that gives a continuous or intermittent signal to navigators

2. Beacon

2. **Empresario**

An empresario was a land agent or land contractor. Under the system used by the Mexican government as a means of colonization

3. **Aplomado Falcon**

Aplomado Falcon, *Falco femoralis*

Aplomado Falcons are endangered because their grassland habitat has been altered by overgrazing and brush invasion. Changing rangeland into farmland has destroyed large areas of habitat. Contamination from pesticides entering the food chain has also reduced the number of Aplomado Falcons. In 1995, as part of the reintroduction project, the first nesting pair of Aplomado Falcons in Texas in 43 years successfully raised a chick. Their wingspan is 15-18 in. long, 32-36 in.. They eat mostly birds and insects and live up to 20 years in captivity. They lay 2-3 eggs in April and May

4. **Lighters**

Main Entry: <sup>1</sup>ligh·ter

Pronunciation: 'lɪ-t&r

Function: *noun*

a large usually flat-bottomed barge used especially in unloading or loading ships

5. **Customhouse**

Main Entry: **cus·tom·house**

Pronunciation: 'k&s-t&m-"haus

Variant(s): *also* **cus·toms·house** /-t&mz-/

Function: *noun*

A building where customs and duties are paid or collected and where vessels are entered and cleared

6. **Pass Cavallo**

Cavallo Pass (Pass Cavallo) connects Matagorda Bay with the Gulf of Mexico between Matagorda Island and the Matagorda Peninsula in southeastern Calhoun County (at 28°23' N, 96°24' W). In the nineteenth century it was a major point of entry to the Texas interior.

7. **Artillery**

Pronunciation: ä'r-'ti-l&r-E, -'til-rE

Function: *noun*

Inflected Form(s): *plural* **-ler-ies**

1. Weapons (as bows, slings, and catapults) for discharging missiles

2. Large bore crew-served mounted firearms (as guns, howitzers, and rockets) : **ordinance b** : a branch of an army armed with artillery

8. **Ft. Esperanza**

A Civil War earthwork fortification on the eastern shore of Matagorda Island, was constructed to guard Cavallo Pass, the entry to Matagorda Bay

9. **Garrison**

Main Entry: **<sup>1</sup>gar·ri·son**

Pronunciation: 'gar-&-s&n

Function: *noun*

1. A military post; *especially* : a permanent military installation
2. The troops stationed at a garrison

**10. Fresnel**

Pronunciation: frA-'nel

Function: *biographical name*

Augustin-Jean 1788-1827 French physicist; instrumental in establishing the wave theory of light; pioneered in use of compound lenses in lighthouses

**11. Civil War**

Function: *noun*

A war between opposing groups of citizens of the same country

**12. Saluria**

Saluria was on the eastern end of Matagorda Island in southern Calhoun County. In September 1875 a hurricane devastated upper and lower Saluria. Its post office was discontinued the next year but was briefly reestablished in 1886-87. Another hurricane in 1886, however, sealed the fate of Saluria.

**13. Siege**

Pronunciation: 'sEj also 'sEzh

Function: *noun*

1. A military blockade of a city or fortified place to compel it to surrender **b** : a persistent or serious attack (as of illness)

- **siege** *transitive verb*

- **lay siege to** 1. Besiege militarily 2. To pursue diligently or persistently

**14. Lens**

Main Entry: **<sup>1</sup>lens**

Variant(s): *also* **lense** /'lenz/

Function: *noun*

Etymology: New Latin *lent-*, *lens*, from Latin, lentil; from its shape

- 1.a. A piece of transparent material (as glass) that has two opposite regular surfaces either both curved or one curved and the other plane and that is used either singly or combined in an optical instrument for forming an image by focusing rays of light
- b. A combination of two or more simple lenses **c** : a piece of glass or plastic used (as in safety goggles or sunglasses) to protect the eye
2. A device for directing or focusing radiation other than light (as sound waves, radio microwaves, or electrons)
3. Something shaped like a biconvex optical lens <*lens* of sandstone>
4. A highly transparent biconvex lens-shaped or nearly spherical body in the eye that focuses light rays (as upon the retina)

