

4 ETHNIC GROUPS OF THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

The Indians and the mounds they built interested all the other people that came to the Delta region. As Anglo-Americans and Euro-Americans came into the area in the 1700s and 1800s, they tried to guess what the mounds were. The stories grew and continue to grow concerning their origins and uses. These raised, manmade structures were sometimes the highest places in the area and farmers learned to use them during times of flood. People of Scots-Irish descent occasionally built farmhouses atop the mounds. Some were torn down, but many remained. In fact, some farmers built mounds of their own as stock refuges and high ground for houses and barns.

Farming attracted Italian and Sicilian immigrants to the region in the early 20th century. Often they worked hard to make enough money to buy land in the area. With them came their customs, particularly foodways. They even opened bakeries, grocery stores, restaurants, and fruit stands to help keep their traditional foods, like fig cookies and sausage in their everyday life.

Recently Mexican and Central American immigrants have come to the region to work in Louisiana's agricultural industry and take advantage of other opportunities here in the industrial or oil and gas fields. The area has adapted by bringing in more foods that are common in their cultural foodways to local grocery stores.

Some cultures adapt to the region in other ways. A traditional Jewish dish throughout the world is matzoh ball soup. The Jewish population in the northeast Louisiana makes the matzoh balls as a side dish and adds a gravy common in the area. What about the Chinese? Initially, Chinese people came to work on the railroads, but later opened grocery stores and restaurants, but very few of these original Chinese groups remain. Instead new Chinese have come into the area to start their own restaurants.

The Louisiana Delta brings together many cultural groups to contribute their gifts to the region. They make the area richer through their presence.

The activity allows students to more closely view some of the unique gifts of the regional cultures.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- The Delta is an Indian Place
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaReflections-IndianPlace.html
- The Invisible Population: Mexicans and Central Americans in Northern and Central Louisiana
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/invisible_pop.html
- The St. Joseph's Day Altar Tradition In Monroe
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaPollacia.html
- Qin Lin: Chinese Paper Crafts
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaLin.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit I Lesson 2: Folk Groups
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit1/edu_unit1_lesson1.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- An excellent in-depth resource about Poverty Point can be found at:
<http://www.crt.la.gov/cultural-development/archaeology/teaching-materials/activity-guides/index>
- This link highlights St. Joseph's Altars and has information about their history, recipes, and even a craft for students to make their altars.
<http://www.thankevann.com/stjoseph/history.html>



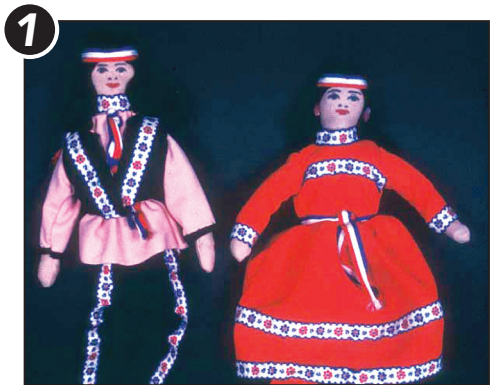
ANSWERS: DELTA ETHNIC GROUPS ACTIVITY

Which object is associated with which Louisiana Delta ethnic group? Write a short description of the object(s).

ETHNIC GROUPS	DESCRIPTION
1. Tunica-Biloxi Native American	Answers will vary.
2. Italian	Answers will vary.
3. Mexican/Central American	Answers will vary.
4. Jewish	Answers will vary.
5. Chinese	Answers will vary.

ETHNIC GROUPS ACTIVITY

Look at the objects below, and the essays in Delta Pieces Ethnic Groups. Which object belongs with which Louisiana Delta ethnic group? Write a short description, too.



	ETHNIC GROUP	DESCRIPTION
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Name _____

Date _____