

# 5 WORKING IN 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 landscape of the Louisiana Delta helps determine the occupations of the working people of the area. Fertile soil, waterways, farming, timber, and gas plus other river-related occupations give rise to the majority of jobs in the region. The river, of course, is essential. Riverboat work has been an occupation of Delta residents for generations. Today there are jobs on towboats, in flood control, and fishing, too. Floods, chemicals from local areas and upriver, insects, and other challenges face the region, though.

The topsoil of the area has long drawn settlers to the area. Native Americans came and remain today, as well as many other groups. Someone was always working the land. For many years, cotton plantations dotted the river bank. Then, sharecroppers and small farmers became numerous. Life on a small farm was not easy. At age six or seven children learned to plow. They carried their lunch in a bucket so they did not have to leave the field. Mechanization arrived after World War II and farming changed again. Today machines do most of the farm work. Local farmers still raise cattle, too. Catahoula cur dogs often help round up wild hogs.

Throughout the Louisiana Delta, the river and the occupations which thrive from it remain important in the lives of many people in the region. People make nets, build boats, and work to teach these skills to future generations. Floods, chemicals from local areas and upriver, insects and other challenges face the region.



### DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- Traditional Boats of Catahoula Lake  
[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles\\_Essays/LFJcatahoulaboats.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/LFJcatahoulaboats.html)
- Working in the Delta  
[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles\\_Essays/DeltaSIWork.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaSIWork.html)
- Whitey Shockley: Mississippi River Fisherman  
[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles\\_Essays/DeltaShockley.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaShockley.html)

### LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit VIII Lesson 1: On the Job  
[http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit8/edu\\_unit8\\_lesson1.html](http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit8/edu_unit8_lesson1.html)

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Nicholls State houses the Center for Traditional Boat Building with information and pictures here:  
<http://www.nicholls.edu/boat/index.html>

## AN EXCELLENT ESSAY WITH VIDEO INTERVIEW ABOUT LOUISIANA BOAT BUILDING CAN BE FOUND AT

- Louisiana Boatbuilding: An Unfathomed Fortune  
[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles\\_Essays/creole\\_art\\_boatbuild\\_unfat.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/creole_art_boatbuild_unfat.html)



## ANSWERS: LOUISIANA DELTA WORK ACTIVITY

Use the Louisiana Delta Work Activity to explore boats in the Delta.

### BOAT I

*Type of Boat:* Dugout

*Type of Wood(s):* Cypress, poplar, tupelo gum

*Use(s):* Trapping and transporting wild hogs, transportation, fishing

### BOAT II

*Type of Boat:* Flatboat, John Boat or Bateau

*Type of Wood(s):* Cypress

*Use(s):* Transporting goods, animals and people

### BOAT III

*Type of Boat:* Houseboat

*Type of Wood(s):* Plywood or cypress for gunwales, cypress

*Use(s):* Primary and secondary residence, fishing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# LOUISIANA DELTA WORK

1

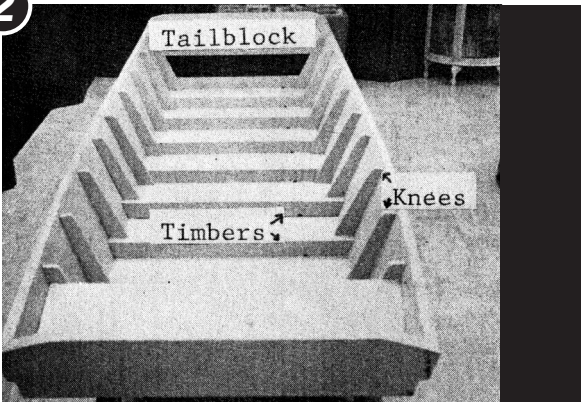


Type of Boat \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Wood(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Use(s) \_\_\_\_\_

2

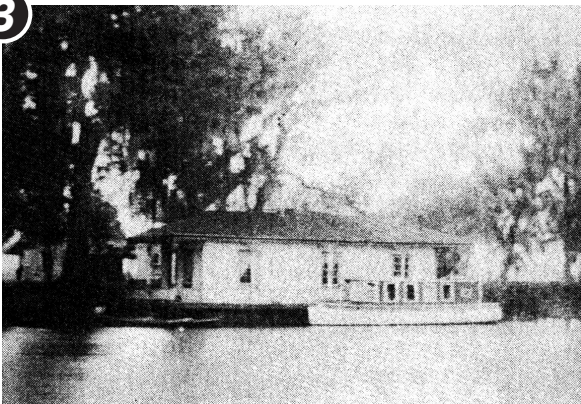


Type of Boat \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Wood(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Use(s) \_\_\_\_\_

3



Type of Boat \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Wood(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Use(s) \_\_\_\_\_