



Delta PIECES

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

A Classroom Resource for Teachers

Provided by Lt Governor Jay Dardenne
and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism,
Office of Cultural Development,
Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program

2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction to the Delta Region	1
• Delta Timeline Activity with Dates	3
• Delta Timeline Activity	4
2. Louisiana Delta Map	5
• Delta Map Activity	7
3. The Louisiana Delta and the 1927 Flood	8
• Delta Flood Photo Activity	10
4. Ethnic Groups in the Delta	13
• Ethnic Groups Activity	15
5. Working in the Delta	16
• Boats of the Louisiana Delta Activity	18
6. Making a Home in the Delta	19
• Homemaking Interview Activity	20
7. Worshiping in the Delta	22
• Worshiping in the Delta Cloze Activity	24
8. Making Music in the Delta Music	26
• Making Music Activity	27
9. At Play in the Delta	28
• At Play Graphic Organizer Worksheet	30
10. Telling Stories in the Delta	31
• Telling Stories Activity	33
11. Delta Archive Word Search	35
• Delta Archive Word Search Answer Key	36
12. Delta Bibliography Crossword	37
• Delta Bibliography Crossword Answer Key	38

BACKGROUND

Everyone has folk traditions—the expressive customs of people in everyday life—regardless of age, sex, or ethnic heritage. Incorporating folklife in the classroom educates, motivates, engages, and fosters the creative expression of students and, at the same time, connects them to their communities and their state.

The Northeast Louisiana Delta region is blessed with a broad spectrum of cultures and traditions. These diverse aspects of the region offer educators an exceptional opportunity to enrich their curricula.

The Educator’s Guide for Delta Pieces contains 12 units. Each unit relates to a unit within the *Delta Pieces: Folklife in Northeast Louisiana* essays found at <http://www.louisianafolklife.org/deltapieces>. Together these essays offer an intensive look at this fascinating region of Louisiana. The Educator’s Guide units are correlated to the Common Core State Standards, particularly those in English Language Arts and are for grades 3-8.

Links are provided to the award-winning Louisiana Voices Folklife in Education Project. Located at louisianavoices.org, Louisiana Voices offers a set of free, online, interdisciplinary student units, collectively known as the Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide. These activities can also be adapted and used in any classroom.

The goal of this unit is to help teachers:

- Involve parents and community members as resources,
- Engage multiple intelligences and foster critical thinking,
- Authentically address cultural diversity and tolerance for others,
- Motivate students through familiar and interesting content,
- Help students meet the Common Core State Standards in innovative ways, and
- Improve the connection of students to their tradition bearers.

Folklife can be explored, shared, presented, and enjoyed!

Maida Owens
Louisiana Folklife Program Director

Eileen Engel
Educator’s Guide Coordinator

“ The Delta is still a strange, wonderful place. ”
— Hiram F. “Pete” Gregory

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program is mandated to identify, document, present and preserve Louisiana's folk artists, practitioners, communities and landscapes. These activities are sometimes called "cultural conservation," since "preservation" is more readily applied to concrete materials such as historic houses or artifacts in museums. Conserving a living cultural tradition means encouraging and helping people and communities carry on the best of their traditions, from Cajun and zydeco music to blues and gospel, or from deer-hide chair making to wooden boatbuilding. This approach supports a cultural continuity that bridges Louisiana's past to its future.

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE DELTA REGION

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.

River deltas are considered to be birthplaces. A delta is a triangular patch of land at the mouth of a river accumulated between two of its branches. They usually form far from the source of the river, as the river approaches its destination or mouth. The river deposits nutrient rich soil which makes the land perfect for growing food. Most historians believe that civilization began in the delta between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and it continued to flourish in the Nile delta where the land was flooded and cultivated for thousands of years. The delta of the Mississippi River today flows through northeast Louisiana though the course of the river which began over 7,000 years ago (5,000 B.C.) has changed many times.

The Northeast Louisiana Delta region's first inhabitants, Native Americans who built mounds, such as Poverty Point, roamed the area even before that, probably 10,000 years ago (8,000 B.C.) The peak of the mound building was 1,000 B.C. By 600 B.C. the mounds culture no longer flourished, and the mound builders were gone. New Native American tribes came in and still live in the area. They have been joined by a diverse group people from all over the world, including Anglo Americans, African Americans, Italians, Mexicans, and Chinese. To more fully understand the people of the Delta, folklorists and others have written essays documenting the important areas of their lives; their work, homemaking, worshipping, music, play, and stories. *Delta Pieces: Northeast Louisiana Folklife* is a compilation of research conducted over a 20-year period by many different people and edited by Susan Roach and Maida Owens. By exploring this virtual book, anyone can learn about this fascinating area of Louisiana and the lives of some of its important people.

Visualizing information is difficult for many learners. Often they can memorize dates but have no way of putting them into context. Timelines are useful teaching tools that help students envision information in a new way and put it into perspective. Timelines can add another piece to a student's learning puzzle.



DELTA PIECES ESSAY

- Delta Pieces Introduction
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/Deltaintrosr.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit IV Lesson3: Sense of Place
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit4/edu_unit4_lesson3.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- Louisiana Traditional Cultures: An Overview
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Maidas_Essay/main_introduction_onepage.html
- Extensive information about the Atchafalaya Basin area that the Delta is a part of can be found at:
<http://www.atchafalaya.org/page.php?name=Curriculum>

Two worksheets on the Mississippi Delta timeline are provided so that they can be used according to their appropriateness within each classroom: one with dates and one without dates. The goal of the worksheets is to have the students put some of the human activities of the Delta in context.

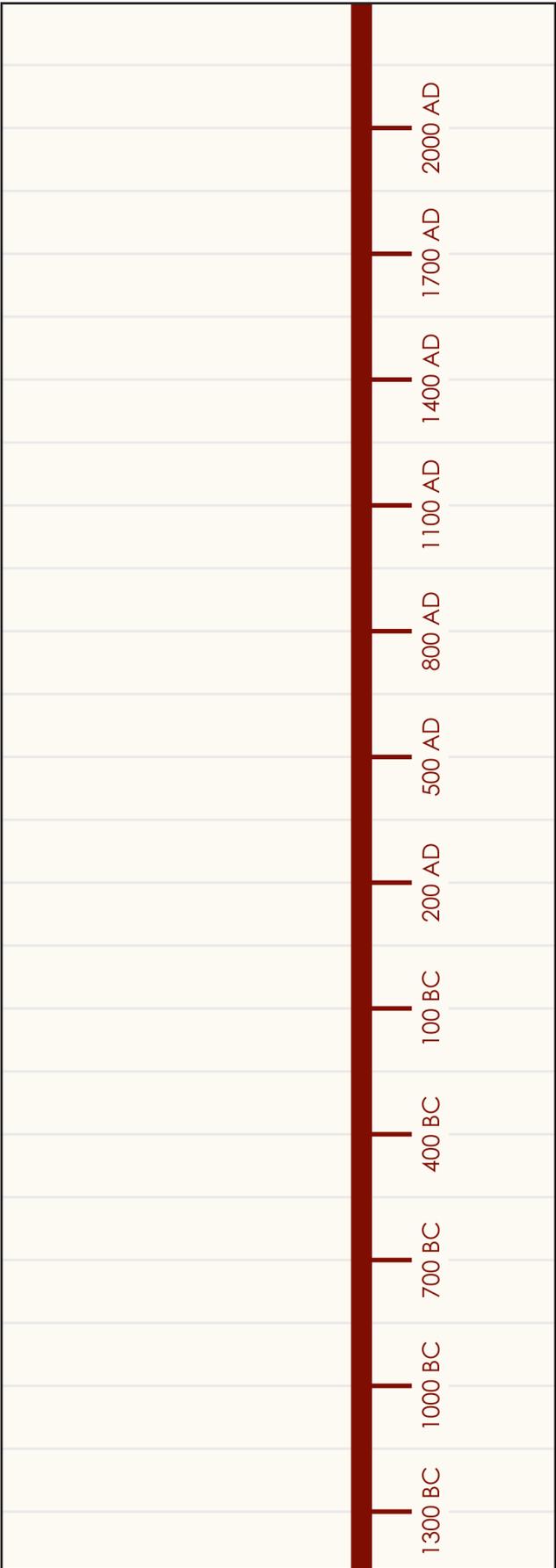


ANSWERS: DELTA TIMELINE ACTIVITY

Please add any dates you wish to the following:

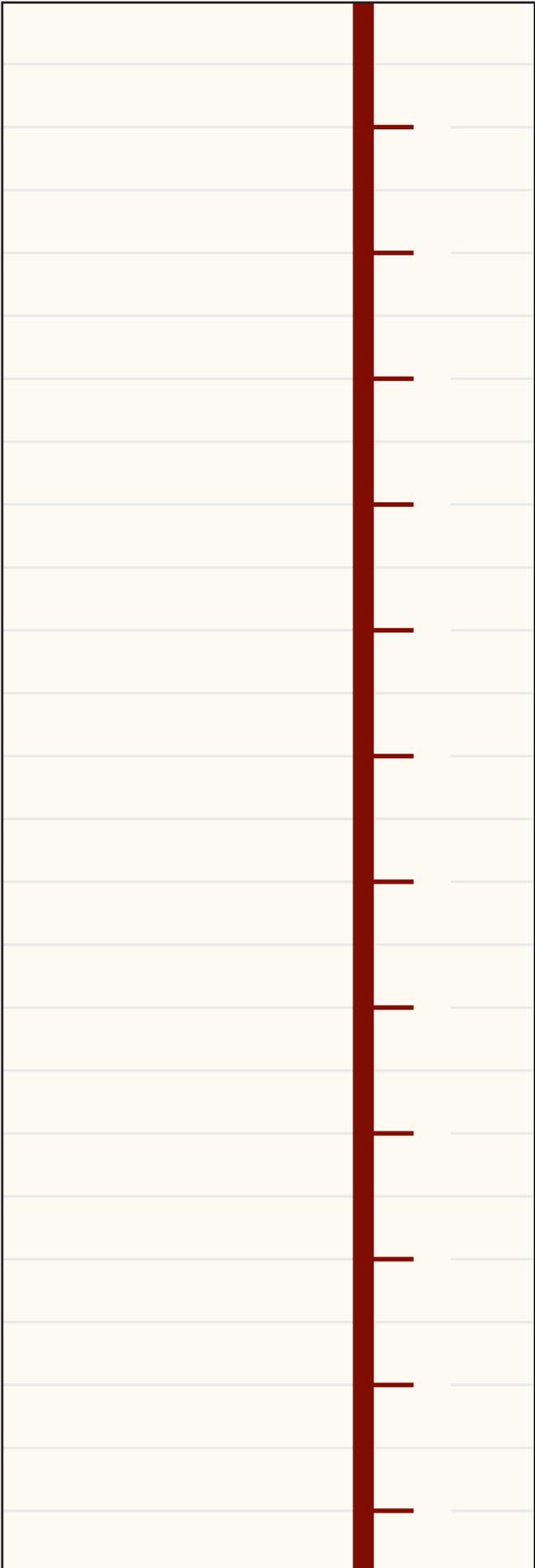
1. 1000 BC Poverty Point built
2. 1541 AD DeSoto arrives
3. 1770s AD French settlers arrive in area
4. Early 1900s AD Industrialization affects plantations
5. 1920 AD Delta Dusters begins in Tallulah and develops into Delta Airlines
6. 1927 AD Massive flood of the Mississippi River
7. 1950s-60s AD Mennonites move to the Delta to level land for soybeans
8. 1974 AD First woman judge is elected in Louisiana

LOUISIANA DELTA TIMELINE



Name _____ Date _____

LOUISIANA DELTA TIMELINE



Name _____ Date _____

2 LOUISIANA DELTA MAP

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.4-8.7

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

The Mississippi River is the largest river in the United States and the reason there is a delta. It marks the eastern border of the state of Louisiana and thus the border for the Louisiana Delta. Traditionally, deltas are areas at the mouth of rivers, but the Northeast Louisiana Delta is actually 150 miles north of the mouth of the Mississippi. The river has deposited a very rich and fertile soil here, and the culture of the region has long revolved around the river. On the west, the borders are the Ouachita and Black Rivers, Catahoula Lake and the hills of the region. On the south, the Red-Old River and the Arkansas state line and hills to the north boundary. The parishes included in the Louisiana Delta are Morehouse, Ouachita, West Carroll, East Carroll, Caldwell, Tensas, Catahoula, Richland, Madison, Franklin, LaSalle, and Concordia.

Looking at the map provided by Hiram F. “Pete” Gregory, we can see how much of the Mississippi and other rivers determine much of the region’s character. The plantation region has occupied the area closest to the river for over 200 years. The Upland South hills region found between the rivers utilizes the rich soil for farming and fishing communities are found on the banks of the Mississippi and Ouachita Rivers and on Catahoula Lake.

Many of the folk traditions of the region such as fishing and hunting traditions are not unique to the boundaries of the area, but some, like Easter Rock are specific to the area. *Delta Pieces* seeks to present many of the traditions and help them continue.

A map activity is included to further student’s knowledge of the specific boundaries of the region and their place within it. Directions are on the page.



DELTA PIECES ESSAY

- Pete Gregory’s map of the Cultural Micro-Regions of the Delta, Northeast Louisiana
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/Deltamap.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide Unit IV Lesson 1: Louisiana’s Major Folk Regions
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit4/edu_unit4_lesson1.html

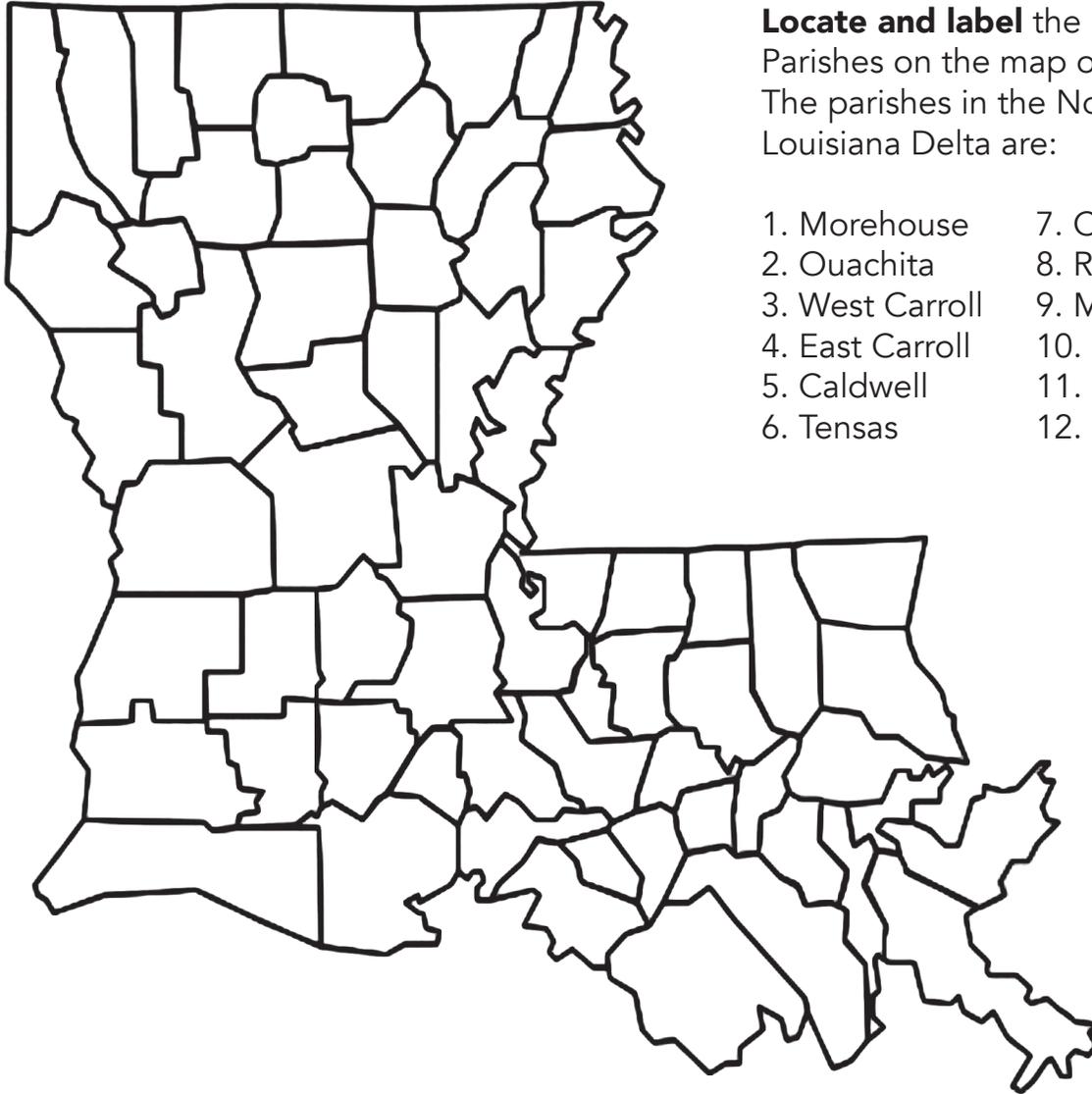
OTHER RESOURCES

- Several Delta Maps
<http://www.ladelta65.org/Maps/default.htm>
- Maps of the Mississippi River
<http://www.mississippiriverinfo.com/map-of-the-mississippi-river/>

Name _____

Date _____

MAP OF LOUISIANA PARISHES



Locate and label the 12 Delta Parishes on the map of Louisiana. The parishes in the Northeast Louisiana Delta are:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Morehouse | 7. Catahoula |
| 2. Ouachita | 8. Richland |
| 3. West Carroll | 9. Madison |
| 4. East Carroll | 10. Franklin |
| 5. Caldwell | 11. LaSalle |
| 6. Tensas | 12. Concordia |

Find the parish you live in. Color that parish **red**.

Color the parish **north** of your parish **blue** if it is a part of the Northeast Louisiana Delta.

Color the parish **south** of your parish **green** if it is a part of the Northeast Louisiana Delta.

Color the parish **east** of your parish **purple** if it is a part of the Northeast Louisiana Delta.

Color the parish **west** of your parish **yellow** if it is a part of the Northeast Louisiana Delta.

3 THE LOUISIANA DELTA: LAND OF RIVERS

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

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 Mississippi River is millions of years old. For the last 10,000 years, it has rambled like a snake undulating back and forth through the Gulf Coast region spilling nutrient rich soil wherever it went. The river and the abundance of food sources attracted Native Americans to the area over 6,000 years ago. Living along the natural levees and bayous, they harvested the area's abundance of fish, reptiles, birds, deer and other small animals. Hundreds of prehistoric sites and thousands of Native American artifacts populate the Delta. Among the historic sites are mounds, some of the largest Native American mounds in the North America. They remain today as a tribute to their builders, who probably used them for burial places or temple sites. Today Native Americans especially from the Tunica, Biloxi, and Choctaw tribes still live in the area.

The free flowing river that brought so many resources to the area also brought challenges. The Mississippi often overflowed its banks, wreaking havoc with the residents. In 1927, a historic flood affected everyone living in the area. The worst recorded Mississippi River flood saw the levees break in 145 places and caused over 700,000 people to be displaced from their homes.

It is difficult to describe to students how overwhelming the flood was, so the student activity asks the students to look analyze photographs from the period and see what they can discover about the event. Answers to the activity will vary.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- The Flood of 1927 and the Great Depression: Two Delta Disasters
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaDepression.html
- Delta Folks - Oren Russell Mississippi River Boat Pilot
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaRussell.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit IV Lesson 2: Geography, Ecology, and Folklife
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit4/edu_unit4_lesson2.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- Louisiana Digital Library photos from the Flood of 1927
<http://cdm16313.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/collection/LHP/searchterm/flood%201927/order/nosort>
- Excellent PBS source for primary sources on the Flood
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/flood-moton-second-report/>

Name _____

Date _____

DELTA PIECES PHOTO ACTIVITY

***A picture is worth
1,000 words.***



The Mississippi River has flooded its banks many times. The Flood of 1927 though, was the most destructive Mississippi flood in the history of the United States. It started with heavy rains in 1926 in the northern tributaries of the River. By the time the water flowed into the Mississippi River and down to the Delta region, it was so powerful that it caused the levee to break in 145 places and flooded 27,000 square miles of land. Some areas were flooded up to 30 feet. Because of the flooding, over 700,000 people were displaced and a new levee system was built.

In this activity, you will act as a historian, examining photographs from the past and trying to determine the circumstances. First, you will want to read Oren Russell's personal experiences about the Flood at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaRussell.html.

Betty Jo Harris writes about the Flood in her essay at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaDepression.html. After reading the essay, look at the flood pictures and complete the tables below. In this article, you can also listen to Miles Smith tell about his personal experience.

Instructions: Study 3 photographs from the site for 2 minutes each. Form an overall impression, and then fill in the following tables:

Photograph #1

Caption:

List 2 things can you tell from the picture.

<i>I can tell ...</i>	<i>because ...</i>
1.	
2.	

Photograph #2

Caption:

List 2 things can you tell from the picture.

<i>I can tell ...</i>	<i>because ...</i>
1.	
2.	

Photograph #3

Caption:

List 2 things can you tell from the picture.

<i>I can tell ...</i>	<i>because ...</i>
1.	
2.	

List 3 things you learned from this activity.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

After looking at the photographs, what new questions do you have?

How could you find out the answers to your questions?

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 _____

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
- Working in the Delta
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaSIWork.html
- Whitey Shockley: Mississippi River Fisherman
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

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



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

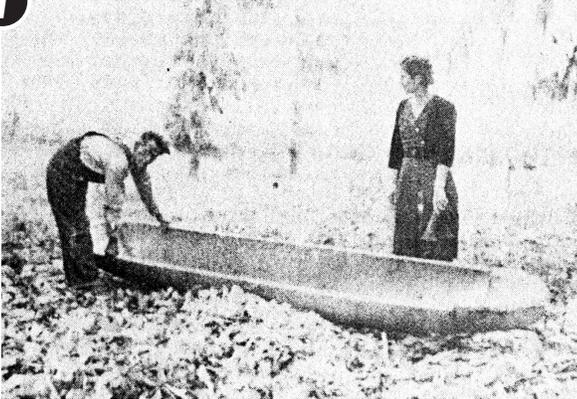
Use(s): Primary and secondary residence, fishing

Name _____

Date _____

LOUISIANA DELTA WORK

1

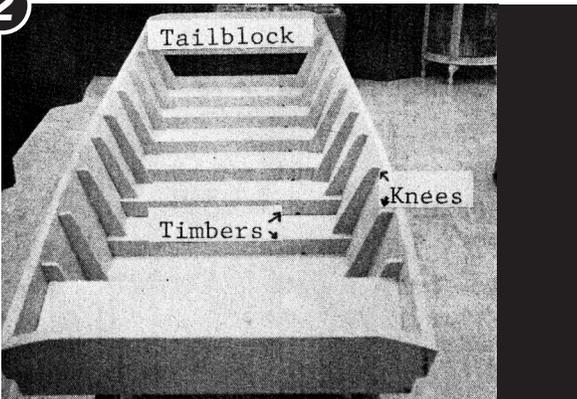


Type of Boat _____

Type of Wood(s) _____

Use(s) _____

2

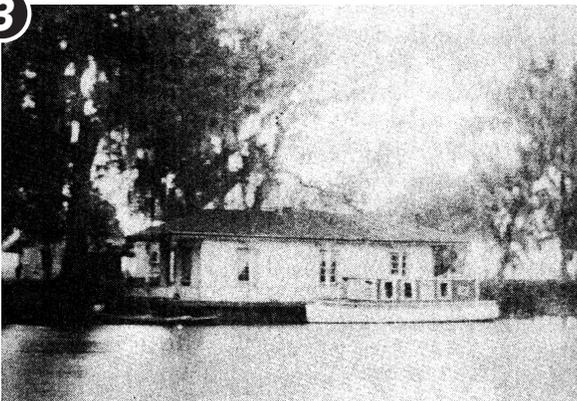


Type of Boat _____

Type of Wood(s) _____

Use(s) _____

3



Type of Boat _____

Type of Wood(s) _____

Use(s) _____

6 MAKING A HOME IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

In each home, someone needs to take care of the many details of living each day; preparing food, keeping up the garden, and so much more. The Delta has many rural areas which share a lifestyle similar to other rural communities in the United States.

Gardens can provide both beauty and food for the family. Many family gatherings are held outside where a lot of food is eaten. Plants that give an afternoon fragrance such as four o'clocks, honeysuckle and magnolias are important to giving the garden a flowery scent.

Creating jams and jellies from local or homegrown produce has long been a tradition in the area. At one time, it was the only way that fruit was available during the winter. Muscadines, blackberries and mayhaws are common fruits used, and the whole family may be involved in the process.

Other indoor family traditions include needlework and quilting. By quilting, families could utilize left-over material from other sewing projects, and create something that could be passed on from generation to generation.

For many years, families had little access to traditional medicine and doctors, so folk remedies were common ways to relieve simple problems. For example, some families put up blackberry juice without sugar and gave it to family members for an upset stomach. Tobacco was chewed and put onto insect bites.

For many generations, Delta families' resourcefulness helped them succeed and though the old traditions are slowly dying out, new family traditions will appear.

The activity for this topic brings a tradition bearer into the classroom. Local individuals, who quilt, make preserves or garden, often make excellent interviewees. Bringing someone from the Delta into your classroom can enrich the Delta knowledge of your students.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- Making a Home in the Delta: Women and the Domestic Environment
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/at_home_in_delta.html
- The Fabric of Family: Preserving the Parker Family's Quilting Heritage
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/Deltaquilts.html
- Jelly Maker Maye Torrey: "Berries In The Winter"
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaTorre.html

- Hazel Dailey: “To Make Something Each Day That I Am Here”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaDailey.html
- Helen Lyke: Passing On Family Traditions From Needlework To Stories
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaLyke.html
- Folk Medicine Remedies Of Virginia Roberts: “For Tummy Aches”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaRoberts.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide Unit 2 Classroom Applications of Fieldwork Basics
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu_unit2.html
- Fieldwork Basics
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu_unit2_fieldworkbasics.html
- Written Release
<http://www.louisianavoices.org/pdfs/Unit2/WrittenReleaseForm.pdf>

OTHER RESOURCES

- The Louisiana Quilt Documentation Project has images of over 2,000 Louisiana quilts.
<http://www.louisianafolklife.org/quilts/homemaster.shtm>
- To see the quilts look here, and then click See All Results at the bottom:
<http://www.louisianafolklife.org/quilts/search.shtm>



INTERVIEW ACTIVITY

Allowing students the opportunity to learn from a tradition bearer is important. After choosing someone who quilts, makes preserves, or gardens follow the steps listed below:

Prior to Interview

1. Invite a tradition bearer to come to the class to be interviewed.
2. If the students are to be graded on the project, tell them what their final product will be and how it will be graded.
3. Research topic with students.
4. Prepare a list of questions. Some should be fact-based, some open-ended, and some should be follow-up questions to what the interviewee says at the time of the interview.
5. Have the students prepare a script of what will happen from the time the interviewee enters the room, giving roles to individual students.

During the Interview

1. Begin by recording on paper or recording device the day, date, time and place of the interview and the full name of the interviewee.
2. Have the interviewee sign a Written Release form.
3. Begin by asking about biographical information such as how long have you (quilted, preserved, gardened)? Then go to the students' specific questions.
4. Have the students take notes, and ask any questions of their own at the end of the interview.
5. Take pictures of event.

After the Interview

1. Have students write impressions, ideas, and any questions they might have.
2. Brainstorm with the students about what they learned from the interview. Have them vote with stickies for the most important thing from the list.
3. Send interviewee a thank-you note.

Potential Projects

The following are possible projects the students could do with the information they gather from the project: flyer, newspaper article, trifold exhibit, Powerpoint presentation, school webpage, an article, bulletin board, collage, mobile.

7 WORSHIPING IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-8.7

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Religious worship is as varied as everything else in the Louisiana Delta. Some preachers sing or chant the Word while others pride themselves on preaching without a written text. Music is the heart of many services, and this too, varies greatly. Today many congregations sing spirituals that were once sung by enslaved Africans. A cappella music with no musical accompaniment still occurs in some churches, though more often musical instruments ranging from pianos to guitars and drums are possible.

Gospel music is an important part of the Delta heritage, and gospel quartets are a mainstay. The classic quartet sound uses four-part harmonies with each chord having four notes. Many quartets sing a cappella to further the effect.

One event, particular to the Louisiana Delta region and quite spectacular to see is the Easter Rock which combines music and movement. This traditional ritual happens on the Saturday evening before Easter Sunday. The church pews are moved so that they face the middle aisle of the church and a long table covered with a white tablecloth is placed in the aisle. The participants are dressed in white and walk around the table filled with lamps, cakes, and Easter eggs, chanting songs. Rockers chant songs in unison, and move around the table in the shuffle step from side to side which echoes like a drum on the wooden floor. Hand clapping and foot stomping accompany the singing. Later, everyone enjoys the table's gifts.

Another traditional sacred ritual that no longer occurs in many places, but still happens in the Louisiana Delta is river baptisms. Accompanied by traditional spirituals, participants reenact the baptism of Jesus. These baptisms represent the hope of renewal for those who take part.

Worship unites the Louisiana Delta region displaying the strengths of common features and the distinctiveness of individuality.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- 'Like a River Flowing with Living Water': Worshiping in the Mississippi Delta
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaSIworship.html
- Sacred Music in the Delta: From Shaped Note to Quartet Singing
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaSinging.html

- “Everyone Rockin’ Together”: Continuity and Creativity in the Louisiana Delta Easter Rock
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/easterrock.html
- “Take Me to the Water”: African American River Baptism
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/creole_art_river_baptism.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide Unit IV Part 2 Lesson 2: Rites of Passage
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit9/edu_unit9_p2_lesson2.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- For an update on river baptisms in Northeast Louisiana check out this USA Today article:
http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-08-04-riverbaptism_N.htm



ANSWERS: WORSHIPING IN THE DELTA CLOZE ACTIVITY

The worship culture of the Louisiana Delta is very complex. One reason is that cultures from [Africa](#) and [Europe](#) came to the Delta, interacted, and they now have [adapted](#) similar religious traditions.

Singing the Word

The central figure in the folk religious community is the [preacher](#). Although both African Americans and Anglo-Americans perform the folk chanted sermons-and may go beyond chanting to actually singing the sermon-the tradition has been most fully developed in the [African American](#) community.

Songs of the Spirit

[Gospel](#) music has contributed tremendously to the Mississippi River Delta region’s unique musical [heritage](#). Anglo-American settlers moved to the Delta, they brought their [fiddling](#), [ballad-singing](#) and [sacred music](#) traditions.

Sacred Rituals

Rites of passage such as [birth](#), [death](#) and [marriage](#) mark a change in person’s socio-religious position. Baptism in the Delta region, a ritual of [purification](#) and [initiation](#), is a significant [rite of passage](#). Another sacred ritual in rural African-American churches is the [Easter Rock](#) ceremony.

Spiritual Spaces

The religious experiences of many people are tied to specific [places](#) where [rituals](#) are performed. Others construct their own sacred places.

Name _____

Date _____

WORSHIPING IN THE DELTA CLOZE ACTIVITY

TASK: The essay below has important information, BUT there are words missing! Please help by following the steps below and filling in the blanks.

STEP 1: Read the essay “Like a River Flowing with Living Water: Worshiping in the Mississippi Delta from the Delta Pieces site at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaSlworship.html.

STEP 2: Fill in the blanks with words that make sense to you.

STEP 3: Check your answers with the Answer Key, which your teachers will give you or read to you.

.....

The worship culture of the Louisiana Delta is very complex. One reason is that cultures from _____ and _____ came to the Delta, interacted, and they now have _____ similar religious traditions in common.

Singing the Word

The central figure in the folk religious community is the _____. Although both African Americans and Anglo-Americans perform the folk chanted sermons—and may go beyond chanting to actually singing the sermon—the tradition has been most fully developed in the _____ community.

Songs of the Spirit

_____ music has contributed tremendously to the Mississippi River Delta region's unique musical _____. Anglo-American settlers moved to the Delta, they brought their _____, _____ and _____ traditions.

Sacred Rituals

Rites of passage such as _____, _____ and _____ mark a change in a person's socio-religious position. Baptism in the Delta region, a ritual of _____ and _____, is a significant _____. Another sacred ritual in rural African-American churches is the _____ ceremony.

Spiritual Spaces

The religious experiences of many people are tied to specific _____ where _____ are performed. Others construct their own sacred places.

8 MAKING MUSIC IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-8.3

Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

Blues has deep roots in the Delta, but did not become known to the rest of the country and the world until its early recordings in the 1920s and 1930s. The Delta has a rich heritage of its very own special brand of music: the blues, and its cousins, rockabilly and jazz. Gospel influenced all of these musical forms.

The roots of blues grow deep into the region and became known to the rest of the country and world through early recordings from the 1920s and 1930s. Blues music comes from a combination of spirituals, work songs, field hollers, chants, ballads, and European and African folk music. You can hear some samples of Po' Henry and Tookie: Delta Blues Duo, http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaHandT.html.

In earlier days, residents used handy materials such as cigar boxes to make guitars. Blues musicians today use acoustic or electric guitars and harmonicas as well to accompany their lyrics. Today the repetitive rhythm of blues music is often assisted with bass playing. The lyrics often relate to the troubles of life and repetition in reinforcing an important idea or concept. For example, the following blues song concerns the Mississippi Flood of 1927.

*Backwater rising, Southern peoples can't make no time
I said, backwater rising, Southern peoples can't make no time
And I can't get no hearing from that Memphis girl of mine.*

— Blind Lemon Jefferson

Louisiana Delta native Jerry Lee Lewis is credited with being an early innovator in both rock music and the related rockabilly. His greatest hits included “Whole Lot A Shaking,” and “Great Balls of Fire.”

Today musicians like Po' Henry and Tookie, Kenny Bill Stinson, and Gray Montgomery, instrument builder Hilton Lytle allow the traditional Delta music to be preserved for future generations. For sample recordings check out the following by scrolling down to the audio on the pages below.



DELTA PIECES ARTICLES

- Performer and Songwriter Kenny Bill Stinson: “Mixing Country Music with the Blues”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/Deltastinson.html

- Po Henry and Tookie: Delta Blues Duo
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaHandT.html
- Vidalia's One-Man Band, Gray Montgomery: "Several Different Musicians Rolled into One"
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaMontgomery.html
- Easter Rock: A Description
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/EasterRockDescription.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit VI Lesson 6: Louisiana's Legendary Musicians
http://www.louisianavoices.org/edu_outline.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- To learn more about Louisiana Delta blues, rockabilly and soul, check out the following:
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/creole_art_hayride_boogie.html
- Check out the Delta Music Museum at *<http://www.deltamusicmuseum.com>*



ACTIVITY

1. Cut one 8 inch square of construction paper for each student. You can use one or various colors. Squares of scrapbook paper with a pattern that resembles a quilt also works well.
2. Cut 4 six inch squares of white cardstock for each student.
3. Have students listen to the following samples of Mississippi Delta music here:
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/deltaeducatorsmusic.html
 - Kenny Bill Stinson – rockabilly
 - Penola Caesar – gospel
 - Po' Henry – blues
 - Greg Montgomery – rock 'n roll
4. For each music segment, they should use one square.
5. They should label the square with the music type and then write words or lyrics, or draw pictures to describe the music.
6. At the end of the four music samples, they should choose the square they like best.
7. It should be backed by one of the 8 inch squares and put on the bulletin board.

9 AT PLAY IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-8.7

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

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.

Seasons are very important in the Louisiana Delta region, but not just summer, fall, winter and spring. The hunting season is particularly important for the region since many people hunt throughout the Delta area.

In the Delta, young people often begin to hunt at an early age, around 8 to 10 years old. Often they go with older members of their family and friends to a hunting camp in the woods to stay for a few days. Early in the morning the hunters go out and try to find the animals they want to shoot. Deer, squirrel, duck, fox, and dove hunting take place each year amid complex Louisiana rules about the hunting season for different weapons and quantities of game that can be brought down. The rules seek to keep the hunters safe and wildlife in the area for many years to come.

Hunting dogs and hunting horns are also very important to the experience. The horns can call the dogs or other hunters.



DELTA PIECES ARTICLES

- Blowing Horn Maker Nalda Gilmore: “The Horn Man”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaGilmore.html
- “Horns and Dogs Just Go Together”: James LeCroix’s Revival of the Hunting Horn Making
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaLeCroix.html
- Moses Poole on Pen Hunting in Catahoula Parish: “You’ve Got to Know Your Dog’s Mouth”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaPoole.html
- Hunter And Fisherman Kenneth Hebert: “Love It More Than Anything”
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaHebert.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide Unit VIII Lesson 3: Grownups at Play
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit8/edu_unit8_lesson3.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- Blowing Horn Maker Nalda Gilmore
This essay has more biographical information about Nalda Gilmore.
<http://louisianafolklife.nsula.edu/artist-biographies/profiles/88>

LOUISIANA DEPT. OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

- This site offers useful information about hunting in Louisiana including hunter education, regulations, licensing and permit information and more.
<http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/hunting>



ACTIVITY: DELTA PLAY GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Have students read Blowing Horn Maker Nalda Gilmore at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaGilmore.html. After they read the essay, they can complete the graphic organizer.

Each rectangular question has triangle boxes close by for the answers. When the students have filled in the triangle pieces, they should draw lines from the center to the question and then from the question to the answer. Here is an outline of some of the ways the organizer can be filled out.

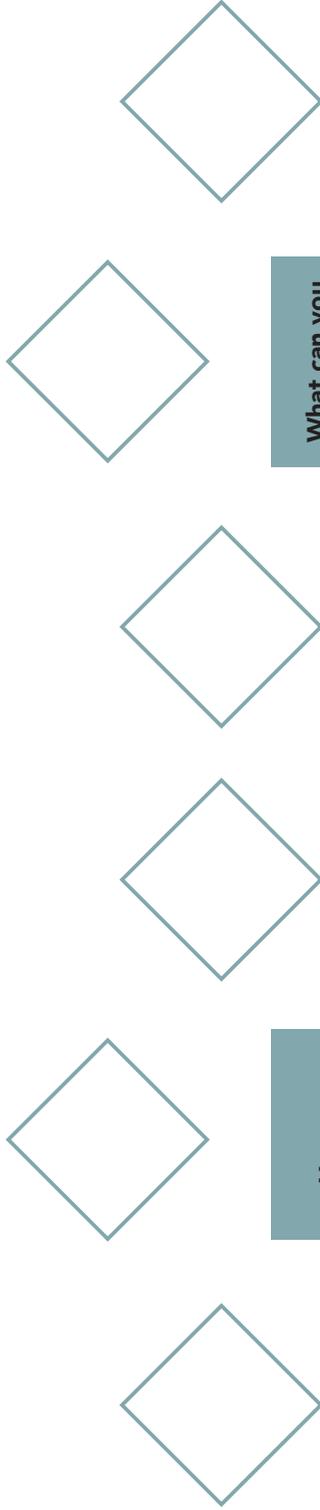
Making Hunting Horns

1. How are horns used?
 - a. Call dogs.
 - b. Signal partners.
 - c. Beauty
2. How are the horns made today?
 - a. Get a cow horn. (Nigerian best)
 - b. Saw the large end off of the horn.
 - c. Drill a hole in the top of the horn.
 - d. Polish with a cloth buffer.
3. What can you do with the leftovers?

There are many answers for this one. Here are just a few.

 - a. Shoe spoons. (A shoe spoon is an alternative for a shoe horn.)
 - b. thimbles
 - c. earrings
 - d. necklaces
 - e. key chains
 - f. knife handles
 - g. buttons

DELTA PIECES AT PLAY



What can you do with those leftovers?

How are horns used?



How are horns made?

Name _____

Date _____

10 TELLING STORIES IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6-8.3

Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Everyone has a story to tell, especially in Louisiana. Throughout history, even before the written story, oral narratives played an important role in passing on important or humorous information about a culture. Today we tell jokes on the playground, play riddles in the car while going on a trip, or tell family stories whenever everyone gets together. All of these are different forms of storytelling.

How do you know when you are about to hear a story? If it is a fairytale, we might hear “Once upon a time.” Often, in everyday life we hear, “Did I tell you about,” or “That reminds me of” or “One time I” as story starters.

Louisiana has a long history of storytelling. Through ghost stories, political yarns, buried treasure fables, tall tales, and animal stories, Louisianans learn about the diverse voices and outlooks of the residents of the state. In the Louisiana Delta area, because hunting and fishing are such integral parts of the culture, hunting and fishing tales are very common. Stories about hunting and fishing predate the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock in 1620 as Native Americans have long told their stories, too.

The activity for students involves them following directions to create their own folktale about seeing a large animal or catching a large fish. Their stories will vary.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- “The Big One”: Deer Hunting in Northeast Louisiana
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/LFJhunting.html
- Whitey Shockley: Mississippi River Fisherman
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaShockley.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide Unit V Lesson 1 Introduction to Traditional Oral Narratives
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit5/edu_unit5_lesson1.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- “A Tale about a Catfish”: Here is a good Louisiana fish story from the book, *Swapping Stories: Folktales from Louisiana*.
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit5/edu_ss129_tale_catfish.html
- Below are some graphic organizers to further your students’ storytelling experience.
http://www.edhelper.com/teachers/Storytelling_graphic_organizers.htm

Name _____

Date _____

DELTA PIECES TELLING STORIES ACTIVITY

A folktale is a traditional tale. In Northeast Louisiana, one common form of folktale is "The Big One" about sighting a large buck during deer hunting season or a big fish that got away from the fisherman. Read the tales in the essay "The Big One": Deer Hunting in Northeast Louisiana on the Delta Pieces site at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/LFJhunting.html.



ELEMENTS IN COMMON

- The hunter/fisherman knows the exact time and place of the sighting.
 - Each animal seems to appear out of nowhere.
- The animal is always the biggest the hunter/fisherman has ever seen.
 - The hunter/fisherman is always overwhelmed by the beauty of the animal.
- The hunter/fisherman always gets a good look, but he or she is the only one to see it.
 - Something or someone always stops the hunter/fisherman from getting a good shot.

Name _____

Date _____

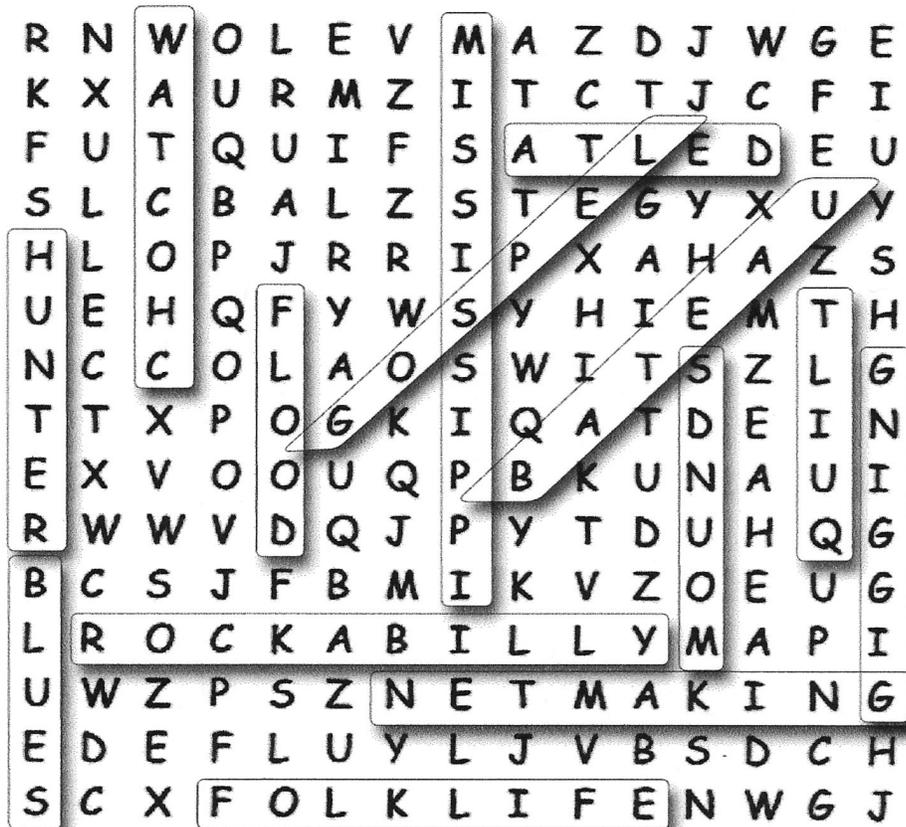
DELTA PIECES 11: WORD SEARCH

V A L B N D Z Y W W S E Q L Z
G F Y U Y F F I T V I W X C T
U N Y B C R L K K L K O K W W
C D I R D Y O O S D I R Y P F
E H C G D G D C O D S U P F M
L A H I G N K W K D N R Q I X
Z F O K V I O M F A E U S U D
I O C O X K G A C T B S O E D
W L T B U A A O N J I I L M I
W K A A C M M U E S I T L B P
A L W T C T H Y S D A I E L M
F I W E B E D I D Q H H P U Y
F F Z A E N P A S D Q M S E P
U E J U W P G Z J P J A O S O
W X O D I O J Y A A P I G N A

MISSISSIPPI
DELTA
MOUNDS
FLOOD
CHOCTAW
NETMAKING
HUNTER
BATEAU
QUILT
GOSPEL
ROCKABILLY
BLUES
GIGGING
FOLKLIFE

DELTA PIECES 11: WORD SEARCH

ANSWER KEY



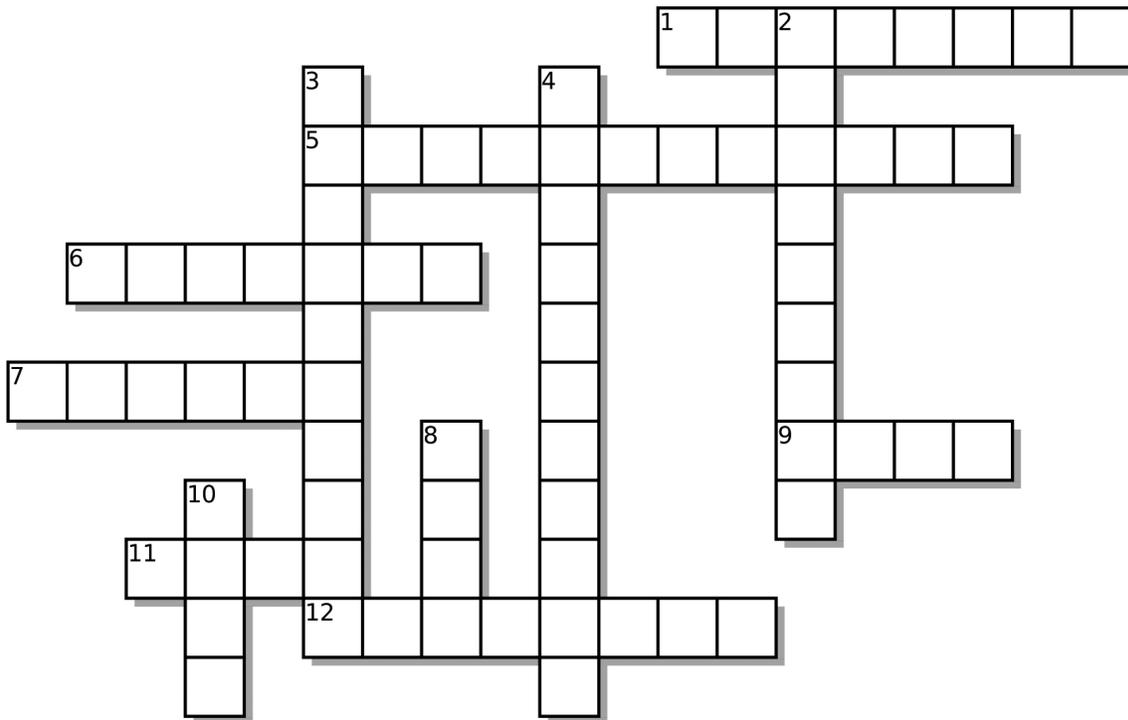
MISSISSIPPI
 DELTA
 MOUNDS
 FLOOD
 CHOCTAW
 NETMAKING
 HUNTER
 BATEAU
 QUILT
 GOSPEL
 ROCKABILLY
 BLUES
 GIGGING
 FOLKLIFE

Name _____

Date _____

DELTA PIECES 12: BIBLIOGRAPHY

All of the answers in the Crossword Puzzle can be found in the Bibliography listings of Delta Pieces at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaBib.html.



ACROSS

1. _____ Spitzer wrote a book about Louisiana Folklife.
5. Martin Lester write books about Louisiana _____ .
6. Jon Gibson's book is the _____ Mounds of Poverty Point.
7. _____ Rock: A description
9. A famous book by Mark Twain, _____ on the Mississippi
11. John Barry wrote a book about the Flood of 1927. It is titled Rising _____.
12. _____ Stories by Maida Owens and others

DOWN

2. Joseph Le Bon's book, _____ Hot Dogs
3. A former president wrote in the Louisiana _____.
4. Father _____ was published in 1927.
8. The _____ Band of Choctaws
10. Myra Lewis' book about Jerry Lee Lewis, Great Balls of _____

DELTA PIECES 12: BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANSWER KEY

