



Unit IV The State of Our Lives: Being a Louisiana Neighbor

Cultural Perspectives on Place or Event

Language and dialect (What languages or dialects are spoken at the event or in the place?)

Foodways (What events take place in which food or food preparation is important? What are the places where local produce is sold, the local food hang-out, a locally owned restaurant?)

Music and dance (Where do people go to hear music or go dancing? What events in everyday life or special events include music or dance? Think, for example, about lullabies, campfires, playground songs, school fight songs, weddings, birthdays.)

Geography, ecology, and environment (Where is the place located? What is the population? Climate? What are some of the important landforms like rivers, ponds, swamps, springs? What plants and animals are found in the area? What are the important man-made features in the place, such as roads, bridges, dams, canals, reservoirs, malls? How do these affect the plants and animals?)

Landscape and land use (Where are the parks, the playgrounds, the farms, businesses, industries, neighborhoods, and towns?)

Soundscape (What does the place or event sound like? Are they natural sounds or human-made sounds?)

Religions (What religions are practiced? Where are religious activities held? What events are associated with places of worship or religious beliefs? What are the places in the community where religious activity occurs?)

Crafts, decorative arts, and material culture (Fish traps, poles, nets, decoys? Objects related to hunting such as traps, bird calls, blinds? Do you know any woodcarvers or people who are active in textile arts such as crochet, embroidery, knitting, or quilting? Are there any blacksmiths in your area? How are local buildings constructed and decorated: ironwork, brickwork, terra cotta, murals, etc.? How are gravestones decorated in local cemeteries? How are crafts used within events or how do they contribute to a distinctive sense of place? How are the crafts learned and the skills passed on? Are there places where material culture is particularly evident?)



Customs, celebrations, and festivals (What are the major events? Is there a festival, homecoming or reunion, fair, pageant, parade, or procession? What about events associated with the cycle of life such as birth, coming of age, marriage, death? What are the places where these events traditionally occur?)

Seasonal round (What events always occur at a particular season of the year? Where do these activities occur?)

Oral narrative genres (Are there jokes, stories, tall tales, legends, riddles, proverbs, folktales, and anecdotes? Are there events or places where you can hear these narratives? Are there narratives about local places or events? What about stories of important events in local history, or how national events affected people in the community?)

Family names and formal and informal place names (How did places in the area get their names?)

Ethnic and other folk groups (Who takes part in the event? Whose place is it?)

Occupations and occupational folklife (What are the work-related skills: the knowledge, customs, traditions, stories, jokes, music, and lore of different jobs or occupations?)

Settlement history and pattern (Who founded or discovered or named the place? Who started the event? Where did some current ethnic groups in town come from? Where did they/do they live? What brought them here? What did/do they do for a living?)