

# 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](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](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](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](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](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](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](http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu_unit2.html)*
- Fieldwork Basics  
*[http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu\\_unit2\\_fieldworkbasics.html](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.