

TEACHER'S GUIDE

One Mississippi

WORDS BY STEVE AZAR AND ILLUSTRATED BY SARAH FRANCES HARDY



This work of children's literature is meant to enhance Mississippi students' understanding of our state, providing a way to explore through song and artwork the rich cultural history found throughout Mississippi. This guide should get you started, but feel free to add your own knowledge and ideas to create fun interactive projects with your students (and let us know what you come up with!).

Watch the video of the song here:

<https://youtu.be/IQdd5RqODJY>

ONE MISSISSIPPI

ILLUSTRATION GUIDE WITH EDUCATIONAL PROJECT IDEAS

In every double spread, there is at least one mockingbird. See if you can find it!

Page 2-3 (Agriculture)

Fertile fields

Of flatlands and hills.

Raise 'bout anything,

Whatever a farmer can dream.

Illustration guide:

Left page: Flatlands of the Mississippi Delta with soybeans growing in the field

Right page: Hills with hay bales and grazing cattle

Girl in straw hat: holding cotton

Boy with glasses: watering corn

Boy in striped shirt: holding wheat

Girl with braid: holding rice

Girl and boy on knees: digging sweet potatoes

Girl in pink dress: holding a basket of eggs with a chicken (pecan tree above her with pecans on the ground)

Core Standards for Science:

Life science; Ecology and interdependence; Adaptations and diversity; Reproduction and heredity; Earth's resources; Earth's systems and Cycles; Earth's structure and history

Suggested questions for students:

What crops do you see growing in the pictures?

What other crops are grown in Mississippi?

What crops grow in which regions in Mississippi? What are the different agricultural regions in Mississippi?

Why is the soil in the Delta so fertile?

How has agriculture in Mississippi changed over time?

Do you have a garden at home? What do you grow?

Suggested activities:

Start a class garden.

Visit a farmer's market.

Visit a local farm.

Cook a meal using only Mississippi raised meats, dairy, and vegetables.

Hatch chickens in the classroom.

Ask students to bring in produce from their own gardens (if they have them).

Study the weather and its effects on agriculture—set up weather station/rain gauge.

Page 4-5 (Food)

*Slugburger, shrimp boil,
Catfish fried up in oil.
Oh, good gosh a'mighty!
Just 'a husk, a hot tamale.
Now that's Mississippi.*

Core standards:

Science: Ecology and interdependence; Earth's resources

Social Studies: Geography; History; Economic factors

Illustration Guide:

Boy with black hair on left: butter cookie (our official state food—who knew!?)
Boy with glasses: boiled shrimp with comeback sauce
Girl with pink ribbons: slugburger
Girl with orange headband: big platter with catfish, hushpuppies, crinkly fries, turnip greens
Boy with mohawk and girl with buns: hot tamales
Girl with braid: Mississippi mud pie
Coca Cola bottles at the bottom center of the page

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name all the foods shown in the illustration?
What is the history of the slugburger? Where and why did it originate? How did economics influence its creation?
Why do we have hot tamales in Mississippi?
What is comeback sauce and how do you make it?
Where was Coca-cola first bottled?
What is our official state food? What is the newest official state food adopted in Mississippi (blueberry was adopted in March of 2023—research how this came about!)?

Suggested activities:

Research the catfish industry and shrimp industry.
Cook a meal of “Mississippi” food.
Make comeback sauce and eat it on a cracker.
Bring favorite family recipes and create a class cookbook.
Visit a local restaurant or have the school cafeteria cook a “Mississippi” meal.
Visit the Biedenharn Coca Cola Museum in Vicksburg.

Page 6-7 (Musicians)

*America's music birthplace
Where rock n roll was made
Out of our gospel and blues
And that pure country tune.*

Core standards:

Social studies: Geography, History, Civil Rights

Arts: Music

Illustration guide: (the children pictured are dressed as famous Mississippi musicians)

Musicians from left to right:

B.B. King (holding his guitar "Lucille")

Leontyne Price

Elvis Presley

Jimmy Rodgers

Tammy Wynette

Robert Johnson

Charley Pride

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name the musicians represented in the illustration? What types of music did they play, write, or perform?

Who are your favorite Mississippi musicians?

What happened at the Crossroads?

Why are we called America's Music Birthplace?

Who is considered the king of rock n roll? Father of country? King of the blues?

How has our music influenced the world of popular music?

Where is the Grammy museum (Mississippi has more Grammy winners per capita than any other state!)?

Where are the Blues Trail and Country Music Trail markers?

What do you know about Steve Azar?

Suggested activities:

Learn and perform "One Mississippi" by Steve Azar.

Have a talent show.

Ask students to choose their favorite song by a Mississippian and play the students' selections for the class (could play a new song every Friday afternoon)

Bring in local musicians to perform and talk about songwriting.

Take a field trip to the Grammy Museum or B.B. King Blues Museum.

Have students create a presentation about their favorite Mississippi musician.
Research the musicians represented in the book.

Page 8-9 (Writers)

*O' authors and poets,
So profoundly stoic,
An imagination of a child,
Let their words run wild.
Come on, now.
Now that's Mississippi.*

Core standards:

Arts: Creative writing
Language arts

Illustration guide:

The girl with the braid has the #20 on her jersey because Mississippi was the twentieth state admitted to the Union

Authors pictured in wall photographs from left to right:

Willie Morris
Margaret Walker
Shelby Foote
Ida B. Wells
Eudora Welty
William Faulkner
Richard Wright
Anne Moody
Walker Percy

Suggested questions for students:

Who are the writers in the photographs in the illustration?
What are each of these writers' most famous works?
Who are other famous writers from Mississippi? Do you know any personally?
Which Mississippi author won the Nobel Prize for Literature? What is the Nobel Prize?
Which Mississippi authors have won the Pulitzer Prize? What is the Pulitzer Prize?
Which Mississippi authors have won the National Book Award? What is the National Book Award?
Can you name any children's authors from Mississippi?
Have you read anything by a Mississippi author? What is it?
Why do you think so many famous authors are from Mississippi?
What is a journalist? Who are some famous Mississippi journalists?
What is the difference between fiction and non-fiction?

Suggested activities:

Read book, poem, essay, or short story by a Mississippi writer.

Write a poem, essay, or short story.

Write and illustrate a picture book featuring something about Mississippi.

Study the Mississippi Writer's Trail: Which authors are featured? What authors are from which different areas of our state?

Have students create a presentation about a Mississippi writer.

Page 10-11 (Chorus--parade)

I say, One Mississippi there's a magnolia tree...

*Two Mississippi
Where a mockingbird sings,
Out on its limb
Whistling that sweet, soulful hymn.*

*I say, Three Mississippi to this
land called home.
I'll breathe Mississippi
'Til I'm dead and gone.
Just carry on!
Ahh, carry on, Mississippi!*

Core standards:

Social studies: History; Civics; Civil Rights; Citizenship; Diversity

Suggested questions for students:

In what year did Mississippi adopt our current state flag? How did it come about?

What is our state bird and flower?

Have you ever heard anyone say "One Mississippi, two Mississippi...."?

Steve Azar composed the song "One Mississippi" for the state's bicentennial...what year was that? What year did the United State celebrate its bicentennial?

Suggested activities for students:

Have a Mississippi themed classroom parade.

Learn the chorus of "One Mississippi" and have students who play instruments accompany the song and march in a parade.

Page 12 (Hurricanes and floods)

*We survived hurricanes,
Know them by name.*

*Rose above the flood,
Built a wall
Of its own mud.*

Core standards:

Science: Weather; Climate change; Earth's systems and cycles; Environment; Engineering; Ecology; Geography; Weather

Social studies: Citizenship

Illustration guide:

Top: Hurricane cleanup effort.

Bottom: Children building a levy.

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name hurricanes that have caused damage in Mississippi? When did they occur?

What causes a hurricane? Why do we have them in Mississippi?

What happened in the Flood of 1927? How destructive was it? What were the relief efforts like? What is a levy? What has been done to prevent it from recurring?

Suggested activities for students:

Interview someone whose home was damaged in one of the hurricanes.

Research clean-up efforts and talk about ways Mississippians came together to help each other.

Create a presentation about one of the Mississippi hurricanes (Katrina, Camille, Betsy) using archival photos, news stories, and interviews.

Talk about the way tracking weather and communication has changed over the years.

Create a presentation about the Flood of 1927.

Draw a map of the Mississippi River.

Set up a classroom weather station.

Page 13 (Religion)

*And come Sunday mornin'
We profess our faith
With "Near the Cross"
And its "Amazing Grace."*

Now that's Mississippi.

Core standards:

Social studies: History; Cultural traditions and religions; Diversity

Illustration guide:

Christian: (children in choir robes) girl is wearing a cross.

Jewish: (children at top right) girl is wearing Star of David; boy is wearing Jewish prayer shawl and yarmulke on his head.

Buddhist: (boy in orange) boy is wearing traditional Buddhist monk clothing and is meditating in the lotus position.

Muslim: (girl in purple) girl is wearing head scarf and kneeling on prayer rug.

Other religions: girl in middle with prayer hands could represent other religious practices.

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name the different religious practices depicted?

What different types of religions can you name?

What is the predominant religion of our state? What is a religious denomination?

What are the histories of different religions in Mississippi?

Do you know the songs "Near the Cross" and "Amazing Grace"? What other worship songs do you know?

Suggested activities for students:

Learn about the different beliefs of the different religions found in Mississippi.

Research the Buddhist monastery found in Batesville, Mississippi.

Visit different types of worship spaces.

Page (14-15) (Chorus—Mississippi River)

*I say,
One Mississippi there's a magnolia tree...*

*Two Mississippi
Where a mockingbird sings.
Out on its limb
Whistling that sweet, soulful hymn.*

*I say,
Three Mississippi to this land called home.
I'll breathe Mississippi
'Til I'm dead and gone.
Just carry on.
Ahh, carry on,
Mississippi.*

Core standards:

Science: Ecology; Earth's resources

Social studies: Geography

Illustration guide:

Vicksburg bridge over the Mississippi River is depicted in the background with flag flying.

Suggested questions for students:

Why is the Mississippi River so important?

How long is the Mississippi River?

Where did we get the name "Mississippi"?

What type of bridge is pictured?

What types of goods are transported on the Mississippi? What is a barge?

Suggested activities for students?

Do a presentation about the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

Study different types of bridges found on the Mississippi River.

Study different types of boats found on the Mississippi.

Take a field trip and boat ride on the river.

Page 16-17 (Muppets)

'Round here's where the Muppets grew up.

Core standards:

Arts: Visual arts

Illustration guide:

Children are creating their own puppets.

Suggested questions for students:

Who was Jim Henson? Where did he grow up?

Who is your favorite muppet?

How did Jim Henson create his first muppets?

Suggested activities for students:

Puppet-making inspired by Jim Henson's creations.

Perform a classroom puppet show.

Visit the Jim Henson Museum in Leland.

Learn about Jim Henson's puppet-making process.

Page 18-19 (Artists)

*And potters and artists
inspired all of us.*

Core standards:

Arts: Visual arts

Social studies: History and traditions; Native American history; Cultural diversity

Illustration guide:

(Children are dressed as artists and creating work in their styles)

From left to right:

Theora Hamblett—painting a landscape in her pointillist, primitive style

Lee McCarty—throwing pottery (example of one of his platters surrounding girl)

Walter Anderson—drawing a mockingbird and wearing his signature hat, border is common motif he used.

Sam Gilliam—abstract expressionist painter who painted and draped large cloths.

George Ohr—“Mad Potter of Biloxi”; he had a crazy mustache and did curvy pottery pieces like the ones shown.

Eudora Welty—known for her black and white photography of life in the 1930s as well as her writing

Choctaw woman making a basket—Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians make beautiful woven baskets

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name the artists referenced in the illustrations?

Can you name other Mississippi artists?

Who is your favorite Mississippi artist?

Do you know any Mississippi illustrators? What is the difference between a visual artist and an illustrator?

Suggested activities for students:

Visit Mississippi Museum of Art, Walter Anderson Museum of Art, George Ohr Museum, or Chahta Immi Cultural Center.

Visit a local art gallery.

Create your own art project in the style of a Mississippi artist. Study the artist and mimic their process (for example, go outside and paint from nature like Walter Anderson).

Create a presentation about your favorite Mississippi artist complete with biography and visuals of their creations. Explain why certain artists speak to you.

Page 20 (Kudzu)

There are kudzu walls.

Core standards:

Science: Ecology and interdependence; Environmental impact; Adaptation and diversity

Illustration guide:

Children looking up at kudzu taking over a landscape.

Suggested questions:

What is kudzu?

Why is it found in Mississippi?

Can kudzu be used for anything?

Suggested activities:

Find and identify kudzu.

Weave kudzu vines.

Make kudzu jelly.

Page 21 (Sports)

and fall football.

Core standards:

Social studies: Geography

Physical education

Illustration guide:

Tents at the Grove at the University of Mississippi in the background.

Depicted 7 public universities with football teams (left to right):

Jackson State University: Walter Payton #34

University of Southern Mississippi

Delta State

Alcorn State

University of Mississippi (Ole Miss): Archie Manning #18

Mississippi State University

Mississippi Valley State: Jerry Rice #88

Suggested questions for students:

What are the mascots for the 7 public universities with football teams? Who is your favorite team?

Who are other famous football players from Mississippi? Where did they play?

How many national championships have Mississippi college, community college, and high school teams won all together? (33!)

Who is Ray Guy and what is the Ray Guy Award?

Who is considered the greatest receiver of all time?

Which football players have made it into the Hall of Fame?

What Mississippi quarterback wrote the song "Midnight Train to Georgia"?

What other sports are played at our Mississippi universities? Can you name other famous Mississippi sports figures?

Suggested activities for students:

Create a presentation about the history of football in Mississippi.

Create a presentation about famous sports figures from Mississippi.

Go to a college, community college, or high school sports event.

Ask students to do a presentation about their favorite sport.

Learn the rules of a sport and play as a class.

Attend students' sporting events as a class.

Talk about good sportsmanship and being a fan of Mississippi sports.

Page 22-23 (Sunrise/sunset)

*A gulf coast sunset...
and a delta dawn.*

Core standards:

Science: Weather and weather patterns; Earth and space science; Physical science

Social Studies: Geography

Illustration guide:

Top picture: gulf coast

Bottom picture: delta

Suggested questions for students:

What is the scientific reason for the beautiful colors at sunset and dawn?

What does the term “delta” mean?

Suggested activities for students:

Play the song “Delta Dawn.”

Paint a sunrise or sunset. Talk about the different landscapes underneath the painted sky.

Page 24-25 (Natchez Trace)

*It's simple nights,
A smile on a face,
Takin' that peaceful drive
Down the Natchez Trace.*

Core standards:

Social Studies: Geography; Cultural traditions; History and traditions; Native American history; Cultural diversity

Science: Earth science; ecology; Environment; Earth's resources

Illustration guide:

Phone images from left to right:

Map of Natchez Trace with pictured landmarks noted on the map.

Tishomingo State Park

Bynum Mounds

French Camp

Cypress Swamp

Rocky Springs Church

Cars: Blue Nissan Titan and Red Toyota Corolla (both made in Mississippi)

Suggested questions for students:

What places have you visited on the Natchez Trace?

Where does the Natchez Trace run?

What is the history of the Natchez Trace?

Which Native American Tribes lived along the Natchez Trace?

Where are Toyotas and Nissans manufactured in Mississippi?

Suggested activities for students:

Field trip to scenic places/hike along the Natchez Trace.

Make presentations about specific points of interest along the Trace.

Make lists of trees found along the Natchez Trace Parkway and learn to identify them.

Page 26-27 (Mississippi River/Wildlife)

*And our ol' man river,
Lavish lakes, and streams.
Pines full of the wildest life
And possibilities.
That's Mississippi.*

Core standards:

Science: Earth science; ecology; Environment; Earth's resources; Life science

Illustration guide:

Animals pictured (from left and then down): Black bear, racoons, skunk, deer, rabbit, fox, possum, mockingbird, bass (in water), mallard ducks

Suggested questions for students:

What other animals are found in Mississippi?
Why is the Mississippi River called Ol' Man river?
What is the state fish? The state animal?
Have you camped or canoed in Mississippi? Tell about it!

Suggested activities for students:

Any kind of nature field trip: hiking, canoeing, fishing.
Visit the Natural History Museum.
Choose your favorite Mississippi animal and do a presentation.
Create a map and label lakes, rivers, and types of wildlife found in the area.

Page 28-29 (Jackson)

*Now, Jackson is some kind of centerpiece,
On a most celebrated table of hospitality.*

*And ain't it funny
how the world has come
to count it seems?*

*They're doin' it everywhere
It's not just one, two, three...*

Core standards:

Social studies: Civil Rights; Diversity; Historical figures and events; Citizenship; Civics

Science: Natural science; Ecology; Environment; Biology; Earth's resources

Physical Education: Play; Nature hikes

Illustration guide:

From left to right:

Brent's Drugstore: Located in the Fondren area in Jackson. Brent's was started by the illustrator's (Sarah Frances Brent Hardy) grandfather, Alvin Brent, in 1946...his photo is above the girls' heads. Brent's now operates as a restaurant.

Former Greyhound Bus Station: Freedom Riders came here in 1961 to help register people to vote. Restored in the 1980s.

Fannie Lou Hamer exhibit at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum.

Dinosaur at Mississippi Museum of Natural Science.

Mississippi Children's Museum: Le Fleur's Bluff playground.

Suggested questions for students:

Why is Mississippi called "the hospitality state"?

What museums are in Jackson?

What are Freedom Riders?

Who was Fannie Lou Hamer?

What is the Mississippi Freedom Trail?

Did dinosaurs live in Mississippi? What kinds?

Can you name other famous Mississippians (scientists, inventors, actors...)?

Suggested activities for students:

Research and visit sites along the Mississippi Freedom Trail.

Study and create presentations about Mississippi Civil Rights leaders.

Study and create presentations about prehistoric animals who lived in Mississippi.

Study and create presentations about Mississippi scientists and inventors.

Visit museums in Jackson: Mississippi Children's Museum, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, Mississippi Museum of History. Walk the Museum Trail.

Page 30-31 (Mississippi State Capitol)

*We're
One Mississippi
Where there's a magnolia tree...*

*Two Mississippi
While a mockingbird sings,
Out on its limb,
Oh, and what a sweet, soulful hymn.*

*I say,
Three Mississippi
To this land called home.*

*I'll bleed Mississippi
'Til I'm dead and gone.
Won't you carry on?
Ahh, carry on,
Mississippi.
Mississippi.
Mississippi.*

Core standards:

Social studies: Civics; Government; Citizenship

Illustration guide:

Children running towards the Mississippi State Capitol.

Suggested questions for students:

What is our state capital? When did Jackson become our capital?
What is the difference between "capital" and "capitol"?
How is our state government organized? Where do our legislators meet? When are they in session? Who is our governor? Lieutenant governor? Who are your elected representatives?

Suggested activities for students:

Field trip to the Mississippi State Capitol.
Discuss your school's student government (student council, class president, etc.).