

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!).

I have provided links with more information and project ideas, but please do your own research in addition to what I have suggested.

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 types of Mississippi agriculture are in the image?

Soybeans

Cotton

Corn

Wheat

Rice

Sweet Potatoes

Chickens/Eggs

Cattle

Pecans

Hay

What other agriculture is produced in Mississippi?

*Forestry
Hogs
Milk
Peanuts*

<https://www.mdac.ms.gov/agency-info/mississippi-agriculture-snapshot/>
<https://mississippi.org/doing-business/industries/agriculture-food-beverage/>

What are the different agricultural regions in Mississippi?

*Southern Mississippi Valley Alluvium: The Delta
Southern Mississippi Valley Uplands: Brown Loam Hills and Thin Loess Areas
Coastal Plain
Blackland Prairie
Gulf Coast Marsh
Eastern Gulf Coast Flatwoods*

<http://extension.msstate.edu/agriculture/soils/mississippi-land-resource-areas#:~:text=Land%20Resource%20Regions&text=The%20South%20Atlantic%20and%20Gulf,Prairie%20Major%20Land%20Resource%20Areas.>

What crops grow in which regions in Mississippi?

For a map showing agricultural products from each county visit here:
<https://www.mdac.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/MSagmap.pdf>

Why is the soil in the Delta so fertile?

The soil in the Mississippi Delta is deep, moist, and rich in nutrients. The Mississippi River and its tributaries flood often, and when they do, they deposit new sediment and replenish the topsoil. Also, when the plants that grow in the Delta die, they are recycled into the soil as natural fertilizer. The soil is free of large rocks and is easy to cultivate with farm machinery.

<https://www.nps.gov/locations/lowermsdeltaregion/the-natural-environment-the-delta-and-its-resources.htm#:~:text=The%20soils%20commonly%20need%20to,sediment%20and%20replenishing%20the%20topsoil.>

How has agriculture in Mississippi changed over time?

Before slavery was abolished, much of the agricultural work in Mississippi was performed by enslaved people. After that, a sharecropping system was in place in which tenant farmers agreed to work an owner's land in exchange for housing and a share of the profits. The sharecropping system often resulted in insurmountable debt for the tenants.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/harvest-sharecropping-slavery-rerouted/>

More recently, farming has become increasingly expensive and more mechanized. Middle class farmers are disappearing, and large corporations are operating many of the farms in Mississippi. Small farmers who sell to local stores and farmers' markets are still thriving.

https://www.meridianstar.com/news/as-agriculture-has-evolved-in-mississippi-the-state-is-losing-its-middle-class-of-farmers/article_be138bbc-a69f-11ee-a622-bf8bb596d74b.html

Suggested activities:

Start a class garden.

<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/how-to-start-a-school-garden-your-complete-guide/>

Visit a farmer's market.

<https://agnet.mdac.ms.gov/msFarmersMarkets/FarmersMarkets>

Visit a local farm.

<https://www.kidfriendlymississippi.com/farms>

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

<https://msfarmcountry.com/food/recipes/>

Hatch chickens in the classroom.

Ask students to bring in produce from their own gardens (if they have them). Talk about the different fruits and vegetables students grow in their gardens at home.

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

<https://beyondpenguins.ehe.osu.edu/issue/weather-and-climate-from-home-to-the-poles/weather-stations-teaching-the-science-and-technology-standard>

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—although some people say we don't have an official state food!)

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:

What is the history of the slugburger? Where and why did it originate? How did economics influence its creation?

Most people believe that a man named John Weeks was the first person to cook the Slugburger in Corinth, Mississippi when he moved there from Chicago in 1917. It became a staple in the Great Depression when people didn't have enough money for meat, so they extended their meat by mixing it with dough. This "dough burger" was fried in oil and sandwiched between buns and sold for a nickel (which was commonly called a "slug"). Today you can still buy them in diners throughout Northeast Mississippi.

<https://whatscookingamerica.net/history/sandwiches/slugburger.htm>

Why do we have hot tamales in Mississippi?

There are several guesses as to why we have hot tamales in the Mississippi Delta. One is that in the early 1900s, migrant laborers from Mexico came to Mississippi to harvest cotton. Others say that the history with hot tamales goes all the way back to the U.S.-Mexican War in the mid 1800s when U.S. soldiers traveled to Mexico and brought tamale recipes home. Others say that they date back to Native American culture.

<https://www.southernfoodways.org/interview/hot-tamales-the-mississippi-delta/>

What is comeback sauce and how do you make it?

Comeback sauce originated during the 1930s or 1940s in Jackson, Mississippi, either at the Greek Restaurant, The Rotisserie, or the Mayflower Café. The name comes from a traditional goodbye in Mississippi "Come back!" or maybe it just means to "come back" and have some more! You can serve it with shrimp, fish, chicken, french fries, as salad dressing or just about anything...including saltine crackers.

Comeback Sauce Recipe (from Southern Living):

Ingredients

- *1 cup mayonnaise*
- *1/4 cup chili sauce (such as sriracha)*
- *2 Tbsp. ketchup*
- *1 Tbsp. lemon juice*
- *1 tsp. smoked paprika*
- *2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce*
- *1 tsp. hot sauce*
- *1/2 tsp. kosher salt*
- *1/2 tsp. garlic powder*
- *1/2 tsp. onion powder*
- *1/2 tsp. dry mustard*
- *1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper*

Directions

Stir everything together and chill.

<https://www.southernliving.com/recipes/comeback-sauce>

Where was Coca-cola first bottled?

Coca Cola was first put into bottles in Vicksburg, Mississippi, at the Biedenharn Candy Company on March 12, 1894.

<http://www.biedenharncoca-colamuseum.com/faqs.htm>

What is our official state food?

Although some research says that Mississippi doesn't have an official state food, it is most often listed as the butter cookie.

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/collection/the-official-food-of-every-state/>

Butter Cookie recipe (from Taste of Home):

- *1 cup butter, softened*
 - *3/4 cup sugar*
 - *1 large egg, room temperature*
 - *1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract*
 - *2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour*
 - *1 teaspoon baking powder*
 - *1/4 teaspoon salt*
-

Directions: Preheat oven to 375°. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking powder and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture. Chill.

Rolls out dough and cut with cookie cutter. Place on baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake until set but not brown, 6-8 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

What is the newest official state food adopted in Mississippi?

The blueberry was adopted as our official state fruit in March of 2023.

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/Mississippi-students-advocate-for-state-fruit/645045/#:~:text=The%20blueberry%20is%20now%20the,the%20legislature%20to%20their%20cause.>

Suggested activities:

Research the catfish industry and shrimp industry.

<http://extension.msstate.edu/agriculture/catfish#:~:text=Mississippi%20leads%20the%20country%20in,a%20number%20of%20Mississippi%20counties.>

<http://extension.msstate.edu/content/commercial-shrimp-industry>

Cook a meal of “Mississippi” food.

Make comeback sauce and eat it on a cracker.

Bring favorite family recipes and create a classroom cookbook.

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/browse?search=creating%20a%20class%20cookbook>

Visit a locally owned restaurant or have the school cafeteria cook a “Mississippi” meal.

Visit the Biedenharn Coca Cola Museum in Vicksburg.

<https://www.visitvicksburg.com/attraction/biedenharn-coca-cola-museum-1890/>

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 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?

B.B. King: Known as the "King of the Blues" was born to a sharecropper in 1925 in Itta Bena, Mississippi, as Riley B. King. B.B. stands for "Blues Boy", a nickname he took in the 1940s. He is a singer, songwriter, and guitarist whose biggest hit was "The Thrill is Gone." He died in 2015.

<https://bbking.com>

Leontyne Price: Born in 1927 in Laurel, she is the first black opera singer to achieve worldwide fame. She is a lyrical soprano. In 1961, when she debuted at the Metropolitan Opera as Leonora in Verdi's Il Trovatore, her performance sparked a 42-minute standing ovation.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leontyne-Price>

<https://www.classical-music.com/features/artists/leontyne-price>

Elvis Presley: Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, in 1934, Elvis Presley is known as the “King of Rock n Roll.” He has been inducted into five Halls of Fame: Rock ‘n’ Roll, Country, Gospel, Rockabilly and R&B and has sold over one billion records worldwide.

<https://elvispresleybirthplace.com>

<https://www.elvisthemusic.com>

Jimmy Rodgers: Jimmy Rodgers was born outside of Meridian in 1897, and he is known as the “Father of Country Music.” He sang with a style of blues yodeling as he traveled and played his guitar.

<https://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/jimmie-rodgers-the-father-of-country-music>

Tammy Wynette: Born in 1942 on a cotton farm in Itawamba County, Mississippi, Tammy Wynette sold more than 30 million records. Her hit song “Stand by Your Man” is the biggest selling single in the history of country music.

<https://tammywynette.com/about/>

Robert Johnson: Born in Hazelhurst, Mississippi, in 1911, he lived to be only 27 years old. It wasn’t until decades after his death that he became one of the most famous guitarists who ever lived influencing musicians and bands like The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, and the Allman Brothers. He is shown here at the Crossroads (see below).

<https://www.robertjohnsonbluesfoundation.org/biography/>

<https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/robert-johnson-myth-devil-crossroads-story/>

Charley Pride: He was born in 1934 to a sharecropper in Sledge, Mississippi, and he was the first black artist to have a number one country record. Although he dreamed of playing major league baseball, he became the nation’s first black superstar with over 50 Billboard Top Ten hits.

<https://charleypride.com/about/>

What happened at the Crossroads?

The legend says that Robert Johnson sold his soul to the devil in exchange for becoming the best blues musician who ever lived. The Crossroads is the intersection of Highway 61 and Highway 49 in Clarksdale, Mississippi.

<https://www.clarksdale.com/crossroads.php>

Why are we called America’s Music Birthplace? How has our music influenced the world of popular music?

Blues originated in Mississippi which is widely regarded as the root of all modern American music. Hundreds of famous and influential musicians have called Mississippi home.

<https://www.deep-south-usa.com/mississippi/music/musical-heritage>

Who is considered the King of Rock n Roll?

Elvis Presley

Father of Country Music?

Jimmy Rodgers

King of the Blues? *B.B. King*

(Pretty cool that they're all from Mississippi!!)

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

Cleveland

<https://www.grammymuseumms.org>

Where are the Blues Trail and Country Music Trail markers?

<https://msbluestrail.org/blues-trail-markers>

<https://mscountrymusictrail.org>

What do you know about Steve Azar?

Born in 1964 in Greenwood, he has been singing and writing songs since he was a boy. His album My Mississippi Reunion won the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Contemporary Music Award in 2021. The new official state song of Mississippi "One Mississippi" is included on that album.

<https://www.steveazar.com>

Can you name other Mississippi musicians?

Faith Hill, Conway Twitty, Marty Stuart, Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, Lance Bass, Bruce Levingston, Charlie Patton, Howlin' Wolf, Mississippi John Hurt, Elmore James, Bobbie Gentry, LeAnn Rimes, Mickey Gilley, Mississippi Mass Choir, Cassandra Wilson, Jimmy Buffett, Bobby Rush, Sam Cooke, Dorothy Moore...and many more!

Suggested activities:

Learn and perform "One Mississippi" by Steve Azar.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQdd5RqODJY>

Have a talent show.

Ask students to choose their favorite song by a Mississippian and play the students' selections for the class. It would be fun to play a new song every Friday afternoon before students go home for the weekend!

<https://mississippitourguide.com/music/>

Bring in local musicians to perform and talk about songwriting.

Take a field trip to the Grammy Museum, B.B. King Blues Museum, or Elvis's birthplace.

<https://www.grammymuseumms.org>

<https://bbkingmuseum.org>

<https://elvispresleybirthplace.com>

Have students create a presentation about their favorite Mississippi musician.

Research the musicians represented in the book and listen to their music as a class.

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 their most famous works?

Willie Morris: Willie Morris was born in 1934 in Jackson but grew up in Yazoo City which he wrote about in essays and novels. In 1967, he was the youngest editor of Harper's Magazine in New York City. His most well-known book is My Dog Skip which was made into a movie.

<https://www.mswritersandmusicians.com/mississippi-writers/willie-morris>

Margaret Walker: Born in 1915, the poet, novelist and professor Margaret Walker founded the Institute for the Study of the History, Life, and Culture of Black People at Jackson State University. Her most well-known works are her poem "For My People" and the novel Jubilee.

<https://www.jsums.edu/margaretwalkercenter/margaret-walker/>

Shelby Foote: *Shelby Foote began his career as a novelist, but he became known as a Civil War historian. He was born in Greenville in 1960, and his most famous work is The Civil War: A Narrative, a three-volume history of the American Civil War.*

<https://www.britannica.com/event/American-Civil-War>

Ida B. Wells: *She was born into slavery in Holly Springs in 1862. She is best known for her anti-lynching journalism and her fight for women's suffrage. In 2020, Ida B. Wells was awarded a posthumous Pulitzer for "[f]or her outstanding and courageous reporting on the horrific and vicious violence against African Americans during the era of lynching."*

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/ida-b-wells-barnett>

Eudora Welty: *Born in Jackson in 1909, Eudora Welty won many national and international awards for her writing about the South, including the Pulitzer Prize for her novel The Optimist's Daughter. She is also considered a master of the short story and is well-known for her photography.*

<https://eudorawelty.org/biography/>

Who are other famous writers from Mississippi?

Elizabeth Spencer, Dorothy Shawhan, Richard Ford, Stark Young, John Grisham, Natasha Trethewey, Jesmym Ward, Michael Farris Smith, Linda Williams Jackson, Beth Ann Fennelly, Tom Franklin, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Angie Thomas, Kiese Laymon, Ralph Eubanks, Greg Isles...and others!

<https://arts.ms.gov/writers-trail/>

<https://www.mswritersandmusicians.com/mississippi-writers>

Which Mississippi author won the Nobel Prize for Literature? What is the Nobel Prize?

William Faulkner won the Nobel Prize in 1949.

The Nobel Prize is awarded in six different categories for "the greatest benefit to human-kind."

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/>

Which Mississippi authors have won the Pulitzer Prize? What is the Pulitzer Prize?

William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, Ida B. Wells

The Pulitzer Prize awards are given for achievements in the United States in "journalism, arts and letters."

<https://www.pulitzer.org/page/history-pulitzer-prizes>

Which Mississippi authors have won the National Book Award? What is the National Book Award?

William Faulkner, Jesmyn Ward, Eudora Welty, Ellen Gilchrist

The National Book Award are a prestigious set of annual U.S. literary awards.

<https://www.nationalbook.org>

Can you name any children's authors from Mississippi?

Angie Thomas, Linda Williams Jackson, Margaret McMullan, Sarah Frances Hardy, Corabel Shofner, Jo Hackl, Gilbert Ford...and others!

What books have you read by Mississippi writers?

Why do you think so many famous authors are from Mississippi?

The writer Ralph Eubanks says it's because Mississippi "lies in a landscape that pairs ordinariness with beauty, magic with madness, and mystery with magnificence."

<https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2021/09/30/ralph-eubanks-mississippi-writers-book-241468>

What is a journalist? Who are some famous Mississippi journalists?

A journalist is a person who gathers information and shares it with the public.

Oprah Winfrey, Ida B. Wells, Curtis Wilkie, Shelby Foote, Hodding Carter, Wright Thompson, Shepard Smith, Bill Minor...and others!

What is the difference between fiction and non-fiction?

In fiction, the stories are made up by the author. In non-fiction, the stories are factual.

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?

<https://arts.ms.gov/writers-trail/>

Have students create a presentation about a Mississippi writer.

Visit William Faulkner's home.

<https://rowanoak.com>

Visit Eudora Welty's home.

<https://welty.mdah.ms.gov>

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?

The new flag was adopted in January of 2021. After racial incidents and protests nationwide, the Mississippi legislature passed a bill in June of 2020 to retire the version of the flag that contained the Confederate Battle Flag as part of its design. The legislature created a commission to design a new flag with the requirement that it contain the words "In God We Trust" and did not contain the Confederate symbol. The new flag passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Tate Reeves on January 11, 2021.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-Mississippi>

What is our state bird, tree, and flower?

Mississippi's official state bird is the mockingbird. Mississippi's official state tree and flower are both the magnolia.

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?

A bicentennial is the celebration of a 200th anniversary. Mississippi's bicentennial was in 2017. The United States celebrated its bicentennial in 1976.

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 major hurricanes that have caused damage in Mississippi? When did they occur?

1906 The Mississippi Hurricane

1909 The Grand Isle Hurricane

1965 Hurricane Betsy

1969 Hurricane Camille

1979 Hurricane Frederic

1985 Hurricane Elena

1998 Hurricane Georges

2005 Hurricane Katrina

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

Hurricanes form over the ocean pulling warm air into the storm. The air rises and cools, forming storms. When the wind reaches 74 mph, it is classified as a hurricane.

Mississippi is a coastal state and is directly in the path of hurricanes that form in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.

<https://www.wjtv.com/news/hurricane-season-in-mississippi-an-historical-perspective/>
<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/how-hurricanes-form.html#:~:text=Warm%20ocean%20waters%20and%20thunderstorms,enhancing%20shower%20and%20thunderstorm%20activity.>

What happened in the Flood of 1927? How destructive was it? What is a levee? What has been done to prevent a flood from recurring?

After months of heavy rain, the Mississippi River swelled and flooded as levees gave way. The flood affected 16 million acres of land and displaced nearly 640,000 people. It was one of the worst natural disasters in the history of the United States.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/great-mississippi-river-flood-1927>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Mississippi-River-flood-of-1927>

A levee is an embankment or structure used to keep a body of water from flooding.

To prevent another flood of the Mississippi River, the state of Mississippi has adopted a "multilayered approach" to prevent flooding using a combination of dams, crevasses in the landscape, spillways, levees, reservoirs, and wetlands.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/900b59aca0774173ab8f8e648f6dbfd4>

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 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.

<https://enjoy-teaching.com/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?

Christian, Judaism, Buddhism, Muslim

What different religions can you name?

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

Christianity is the prominent religion practiced in Mississippi. A religious denomination is a subgroup within a religion. For example, Presbyterian and Methodist are both denominations of the Christian religion.

<https://mississippiencyclopedia.org/overviews/religion/#:~:text=Above%20all%2C%20Mississippi%2C%20even%20more,Methodists%20and%20other%20evangelical%20groups.>

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 and histories of the different religions found in Mississippi.

Research the Buddhist monastery found in Batesville, Mississippi.

<https://magnoliagrovementery.org>

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 in the background with flag flying.

Suggested questions for students:

Why is the Mississippi River so important?

The Mississippi River is one of the world's major river systems with habitat diversity and biological productivity. It is also one of the most important commercial waterways. It serves as a migration route for both birds and fish.

<https://www.nps.gov/miss/riverfacts.htm#:~:text=The%20Mississippi%20River%20is%20one,for%20both%20birds%20and%20fishes.>

How long is the Mississippi River?

2,340 miles

Where did we get the name "Mississippi"?

"Mississippi" means "big river" and comes from the Ojibwe language. The Ojibwe lived in Minnesota where the Mississippi River begins.

What type of bridge is pictured?

The Vicksburg Bridge is a cantilever bridge.

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

Soybeans, Fuel Oil, Corn, Petroleum, Coal, Gasolene, Fertilizer, Sand and Gravel, Wheat, Salt, Iron Ore...and other goods!

<https://www.bts.gov/modes/maritime-and-inland-waterways/commodities-mississippi-river-2019>

A barge is a flat-bottomed boat for carrying freight.

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?

Jim Henson was the creator of the muppets. He was born in Greenville, Mississippi, and he lived in Leland until his family moved to Maryland when he was in the fifth grade.

<https://www.henson.com/our-founders/>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jim-Henson>

Who is your favorite muppet?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Muppets

When did Jim Henson create his first muppet?

Kermit was created in 1955 from his mother's old coat with ping-pong balls for eyes.

[https://dia.org/about/media-room/news/kermit-frog-puppet-donated-jim-henson-goes-](https://dia.org/about/media-room/news/kermit-frog-puppet-donated-jim-henson-goes-display-detroit-institute-arts-)

[display-detroit-institute-arts-jan#:~:text=Kermit%20first%20appeared%20in%201955,has%20a%20double%20crenelled%20collar.](https://dia.org/about/media-room/news/kermit-frog-puppet-donated-jim-henson-goes-display-detroit-institute-arts-jan#:~:text=Kermit%20first%20appeared%20in%201955,has%20a%20double%20crenelled%20collar.)

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.

Watch the documentary about Jim Henson: *Jim Henson Idea Man*
<https://youtu.be/iyGFV6VixkI?si=kAWLq6TZqOSDDih>

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 makes beautiful woven baskets

Suggested questions for students:

Can you name the artists referenced in the illustrations?

Theora Hamblett: Born in 1895 in Paris, Mississippi, Hamblett did not begin painting until she was 55 years old. She often painted children playing as well as brightly colored landscapes. She is best known for her paintings of religious visions and daydreams. She lived in Oxford.

<https://museum.olemiss.edu/collections/theora-hamblett/>

<https://mississippencyclopedia.org/entries/theora-hamblett/>

Lee McCarty: Lee McCarty grew up in Merigold, Mississippi, and he and his wife Pup returned there in 1954 to start McCarty's Pottery. They developed their own signature glazes and adorned their pottery with a wavy black line representing the Mississippi River.

<https://www.mccartyspottery.com/mccartys-pottery--history>

Walter Anderson: *Walter Anderson is Mississippi's most well-known artist. He often rowed a boat out to Horn Island to be alone and paint wildlife. Anderson believed that in order to "realize the beauty of humanity we must realize our relation to nature."*

<https://www.walterandersonmuseum.org/who-we-are>

Sam Gilliam: *Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, Sam Gilliam was a world famous abstract painter. During the 1970s, he cut and rearranged geometric shapes from painted canvases creating large art pieces which resembled "crazy quilts".*

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/sam-gilliam-1811>

George Ohr: *Known as the "Mad Potter of Biloxi" (and also known for his 18" mustache!), George Ohr created wacky pottery with twisted handles and crumpled edges. No two of his pieces were alike.*

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-mad-potter-of-biloxi-106065115/>

Eudora Welty: *Not only was Eudora Welty a Pulitzer Prize winning writer, she was an acclaimed photographer. During the 1930s, she was a junior publicity agent for the Works Progress Administration, and she chronicled everyday life in Depression Era Mississippi.*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/09/lens/eudora-welty-photos-mississippi.html>

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians: *The Tribe is the only federally recognized Native American Tribe in Mississippi. When creating baskets, they used what could be found in their environment. Basket weaving techniques have been passed down for generations.*

<https://www.choctaw.org>

Can you name other Mississippi artists?

Marie Hull, William Hollingsworth, Dusti Bonge', Bill Dunlap, Wyatt Waters, Sammy Britt, Glennray Tutor, Ethel Mohamed, Susan Ford, Andrew Young, Bill Beckwith, Obie Clark, William Egglestons...and many more!

<https://www.mswritersandmusicians.com/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?

Chuck Galey, Sarah Frances Hardy, Marshall Ramsey, Gilbert Ford

An illustrator's work is narrative; in other words, it tells a story unlike fine art which depicts a scene, a portrait, or a mood.

Suggested activities for students:

Visit Mississippi Museum of Art, Walter Anderson Museum of Art, George Ohr Museum, the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, the Gumtree Museum of Art, Chahta Immi Cultural Center, or any art museum in your area.

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).

For educational materials about Walter Anderson:

<https://www.walterandersonmuseum.org/lesson-plan-library>

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?

Known as “the vine that ate the South”, this creeping vine was brought to the United States from Japan and Southeast China. At first it was used for erosion control in Mississippi, but people soon learned that kudzu overtakes and grows over everything in its path. It grows at a rate of one foot per day.

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/stories-in-indiana/kudzu-invasive-species/>

Can kudzu be used for anything?

It is edible and can be used for medicinal purposes. People also weave baskets from the vines and make kudzu candles and jelly.

Suggested activities:

Find and identify kudzu.

Weave kudzu vines.

<https://www.matttommy.com/basket-weaving-techniques/how-to-weave-a-basket-with-kudzu-runners>

Make kudzu jelly.

<https://www.ediblecommunities.com/recipes/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:

Who is your favorite football team?

Who are other famous football players from Mississippi?

Brett Favre

Jackie Slater

Lem Barney

Frank "Bruiser" Kinard

L.C. Greenwood

Charlie Conerly

Steve McNair

Eli Manning

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?

Ray Guy became the first punter ever selected in the first round of an NFL draft. He played at USM in Hattiesburg. The Ray Guy Award honors the nation's best collegiate punter.

<https://www.rayguyaward.com/about>

Who is considered the greatest receiver of all time?

Jerry Rice

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

Brett Favre, Frank "Bruiser" Kinard, Lance Alworth, Willie Brown, Lem Barney, Jackie Slater, Walter Payton, Billy Shaw, Jerry Rice

<https://www.clarionledger.com/story/sports/2016/02/10/mississippi-now-has-9-pro-football-hof/80077312/>

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

Jim Weatherly

What are some other sports are played at our Mississippi universities?

Baseball, Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis, Soccer, Softball, Golf, Track and Field

Can you name other famous Mississippi sports figures?

Will Clark (baseball)

Don Blasingame (baseball)

Roy Oswalt (baseball)

Jennifer Gillom (basketball)

Ruthie Bolton (basketball)

Henry Armstrong (boxing)

Jake Gibbs (baseball)

Charlie Hayes (baseball)

Hugh Green (football)

Ralph Boston (long jump)

Lusia Harris (basketball)

Felix "Doc" Blanchard (football)

And many more...

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?

When the sun is low on the horizon, sunlight passes through more atmosphere than when the sun is high in the sky. This means more “scattering” of blue and violet light occurs, leaving the yellows, oranges, and reds to find their way to your eyes.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/11/071108135522.htm#:~:text=“Because%20the%20sun%20is%20low,light%20away%20from%20your%20eyes.”>

What does the term “delta” mean?

A delta is a low, flat, triangle-shaped area where a river branches out before entering the sea. The Mississippi Delta is fertile because the Mississippi River and its tributaries have flooded, depositing rich sediment.

Suggested activities for students:

Play the song “Delta Dawn.”

Delta Dawn was written by Alex Harvey and Larry Collins. Harvey said the words were inspired by his mother who had “come from the Mississippi Delta and she always lived her life as if she had a suitcase in her hand but nowhere to put it down.”

<https://americansongwriter.com/the-heartbreaking-story-behind-delta-dawn-by-tanya-tucker/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGtbcJndz74>

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?

<https://www.nps.gov/natr/planyourvisit/highlights.htm>

Where does the Natchez Trace run?

The Trace begins in Natchez, Mississippi, and follows a Native American Trail to the northeast and ends near Nashville, Tennessee.

What is the history of the Natchez Trace? Which Native American Tribes lived along the Natchez Trace?

Native Americans traveled and traded along the Trace which traverses the homelands of the Natchez, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations. It is one of the oldest transportation routes in North America.

<https://www.nps.gov/natr/learn/historyculture/index.htm#:~:text=The%20Old%20Natchez%20Trace%20is,%2C%20Chickasaw%2C%20and%20Choctaw%20nations.>

Where are Toyotas and Nissans manufactured in Mississippi?

Toyotas are made in Blue Springs. Nissans are made in Canton.

Suggested activities for students:

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

<https://www.scenictrace.com/top-stops-natchez-trace-parkway/>

Make presentations about specific points of interest along the Trace.

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

<https://www.nps.gov/natr/learn/nature/plants.htm#:~:text=This%20enables%20it%20to%20contain,species%20adapted%20to%20warmer%20conditions.>

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, squirrel, skunk, deer, rabbit, fox, possum, mockingbird, bass (in water), mallard ducks

Suggested questions for students:

What other animals are found in Mississippi?

Alligators, rattlesnakes, cottonmouth snakes, catfish, bald eagles, bottlenose dolphin, bobcats, and many more!

<https://a-z-animals.com/animals/location/north-america/united-states/mississippi/>

<https://www.animalspot.net/animals-in-us/animals-in-mississippi>

What are nicknames for the Mississippi River?

Ol' Man River, The Big Muddy, Old Blue, The Gathering of Waters

What is the state fish? The state land mammal?

The state fish is the largemouth bass. The state land mammal is the white tailed deer and the red fox.

<https://www.ms.gov/mississippi-state-emblems-symbols>

Have you camped or canoed in Mississippi? Tell about it!

<https://visitmississippi.org/things-to-do/canoeing-kayaking/>

Suggested activities for students:

Any kind of nature field trip: hiking, canoeing, fishing.

Visit the Natural History Museum in Jackson.

Choose your favorite Mississippi animal and do a presentation.

Create a map and label lakes, rivers, and types of wildlife found in Mississippi.

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"?

Mississippians are known for being friendly, welcoming, and inviting.

What are some of the museums located in Jackson?

Mississippi Museum of Art

<https://www.msmuseumart.org>

Mississippi Civil Rights Museum

<https://mcrm.mdah.ms.gov>

Museum of Mississippi History
<https://mmh.mdah.ms.gov>

Mississippi Children's Museum
<https://mschildrensmuseum.org>

Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum
<https://www.msagmuseum.org>

Mississippi Museum of Natural Science
<https://www.mdwfp.com/museum/>

Old Capitol Museum
<https://www.mdah.ms.gov/explore-mississippi/old-capitol-museum>

Eudora Welty House and Garden
<https://welty.mdah.ms.gov>

What are Freedom Riders?

Freedom Riders were civil rights activists who rode buses into the segregated South in 1961 to register people to vote.

<https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/freedom-rides>
<https://www.visitjackson.com/directory/former-greyhound-bus-station/>

Who was Fannie Lou Hamer?

She was a civil rights activist who worked to desegregate the Mississippi Democratic Party. She was one of the most powerful voices in the Civil Rights movement.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fannie-Lou-Hamer-American-civil-rights-activist>
<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/fannie-lou-hamer>

What is the Mississippi Freedom Trail?

The Mississippi Freedom Trail includes 25 sites honoring important Civil Rights leaders and events.

<https://visitmississippi.org/things-to-do/freedom-trail/#:~:text=Part%20of%20the%20United%20States,the%20great%20state%20of%20Mississippi.>

Who was the first African American United States Senator?

Hiram Revels of Mississippi was elected to the United States Senate in 1870.

<https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/senate-stories/First-African-American-Senator.htm>

Did dinosaurs live in Mississippi? What kinds?

Relatives of the T-Rex, ostrich dinosaurs, raptors, and horned dinosaurs lived in Mississippi.

<https://phys.org/news/2022-10-ostrich-like-dinosaurs-mississippi-world-largest.html>

<https://www.wlbt.com/story/32566518/new-discovery-horned-dinosaurs-walked-mississippi-soil/>

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

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_people_from_Mississippi

<https://www.50states.com/bio/miss.htm>

<https://www.wjtv.com/news/state/famous-inventions-created-in-mississippi/>

<https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/mississippi/changes-and-inventions-from-ms/>

<https://stacker.com/mississippi/famous-actors-mississippi>

Suggested activities for students:

Research and visit sites along the Mississippi Freedom Trail.

<https://civilrightstrail.com/attraction/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.

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?

Jackson was established as the state capital in 1821.

What is the difference between "capital" and "capitol"?

The "capital" is the seat of state government (the name of the city). The "capitol" is the building where lawmakers meet to make laws.

How is our state government organized? Where do our legislators meet? Who is our governor? Lieutenant governor? Who are your elected representatives?

Like the United States federal government, Mississippi has executive, legislative, and executive branches of government. In the legislative branch, Mississippi has a bicameral legislature with a 122 member House of Representatives and a 52 member Senate. Representatives and Senators are elected to four-year terms, and they make the laws of the state. They meet in the state capitol. The executive branch enforces the laws of the state and consists of the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state auditor, state treasurer, commissioner of agriculture and commerce, commissioner of insurance, three public service commissioners, and three transportation commissioners who are all responsible for specific government functions. The judicial branch is the state's court system. They make sure Mississippi laws do not conflict with the state Constitution.

<https://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/government-of-mississippi-how-it-functions>

For a list of current state government officials:

<https://www.ms.gov/government/elected-officials>

Suggested activities for students:

Field trip to the Mississippi State Capitol.

Learn about how bills become laws in Mississippi.

Discuss your school's student government (student council, class president, etc.).