

FOLKWRITING

**LESSONS ON PLACE, HERITAGE, AND TRADITION
FOR THE GEORGIA CLASSROOM**

Diane W. Howard and Laurie Kay Sommers, editors

**With Vanessa Mitchell, Judith Phillips, Margo Harris,
Trina Brown, Adam Hathaway, and Jeremy Williams**

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PREFACE

This book combines folklife and writing background information with lesson plans, resources, and student writing samples. Although Diane Howard was the project director on record, Laurie Sommers shared the leadership role equally, working closely with the humanities content of the lessons. The six teachers from Cook County Schools wrote the original drafts for lesson plans and piloted those lessons. The lessons that appear in this book reflect considerable editing and revising by Laurie Sommers and Diane Howard; hence, the particular versions printed in this workbook were not necessarily piloted in the classroom prior to publication. The Folkwriting website (<http://www.valdosta.edu/folkwriting>), operational in fall 2002, will reflect any changes and suggestions made by educators who use this unit, new resources which become available, and new lessons which may arise. The participants in this project hope that Folkwriting will spark lively conversation about folklife and writing among Georgia educators. Diane Howard and Laurie Sommers are available to work with teachers interested in the Folkwriting approach.

Many of the student work samples included here are not edited, but they are included to represent actual student work based on the draft version of this workbook.

Standards in the classroom for performance and assessment are addressed in each lesson; rubrics for assessment are in a basic format, allowing teachers to add more specific levels of proficiency. The State of Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum Standards are most complete and detailed, whereas performance standards developed by the P-16 Initiative, in which Valdosta State University and Cook County Schools are participants, are broader and more focused on the performance tasks and in assessment standards matching the performance standards. Therefore, the lessons in the book attempt to present both QCCs and performance standards (the P-16 Initiative).

This workbook includes lessons on a number of folklife topics (place, local heroes, games, family names, traditions of work, holiday traditions, foodways, personal treasures, calendar customs) and a wide variety of writing genres. Although written for specific grade levels, each chapter has resource and extension ideas for all levels. Although many lessons have cross-disciplinary potential, the success of the folklife and writing partnership is in language arts and social studies classrooms. Let us know how it works for you.

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FOLKWRITING

SECTION ONE

Folkwriting Project's Background

Section One is divided into five chapters which give information about the Folkwriting Project: its background, the writing process, folklife as a subject for writing assignments, definition of folklife, instructions for doing fieldwork and interviews in the classroom.



White oak splint baskets at the State Farmers Market, Thomasville. Photo by Laurie Kay Sommers, 1997.

CHAPTER ONE

Folkwriting: A Narrative of the Connecting Homes, Schools, and Communities Project

Laurie K. Sommers and Diane W. Howard



Gail Hughes, Cook County Historical Society member, listens to students in Vanessa Mitchell's 2nd grade class ask questions about the history of towns in Cook County. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter introduces our Georgia Humanities Council funded "Folkwriting" project and the people who created it. The central idea behind the project is that local places, people, and events are powerful subjects for student writing. During the summer of 2001, a team teachers attended three folklife and interviewing in-service workshops and then developed writing units tailored to Georgia materials, resources, standards, and quality core curriculum.

Why Folklife and Writing?

Recent test results in Georgia and in other states throughout the country show a continuing need for effective writing strategies in schools. Teaching students reading and writing is no longer the sole responsibility of the language arts teachers; math, science, social studies, physical education, music, and as well as English teachers are to include reading and writing activities and assignments in their classes.

Studies on the reading-writing connection, literacy skills, and the pedagogy of writing show that students write best when they write about what they know. "What they know" is the environment, people, places, and events of their lives. The term "folklife," or the living traditions of families and communities, captures what students know. Folklife brings together a body of information—including narratives, songs, customs, beliefs, crafts, and foods—that is at the heart of culture and defines an individual's and a community's sense of place and identity. Folklife as an instructional tool can be used at any grade level, in all disciplines, and with all types of learners. In addition, as the nation becomes increasingly diverse, folklife provides a vehicle for developing local multicultural resources that reflect the traditions of all members of the community. Teachers do not need to be experts on all of the culture groups represented in the classroom and community; rather, students write about their own traditions and research those of their neighbors and classmates.

A growing number of lesson plans and instructional units focus on folklife and community-centered and place-based learning, among them the "Louisiana Voices" on-line folk arts and folklife curriculum (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>); "Writing the Essay of Place" from the Montana Heritage Project (<http://www.edheritage.org>); and *Student Worlds Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* by Elizabeth Radin Simons. A recent example from Georgia is Sandra Worsham's *Everybody Has a Story to Tell* that engages at-risk students in collecting and publishing the stories of community members in Milledgeville (<http://www.mff.org/spotlight/milledgeville2.html>). Our project draws on these and other materials and organizes them into a series of instructional units organized around the themes "My Places," "Their Places," and "Our Places."

Especially during this period of change in Georgia's educational system, teachers need an accessible, easy-to-use model, which is teacher-tested. The units in this book of lesson plans, although written by Cook County educators, will provide any Georgia teacher with an effective tool for improving student writing skills and engaging students in writing through folklife. Ultimately, we hope these units will help to build dialogue and exchange among interested teachers statewide.

The Unit Model

The basic model for this project was adapted from an introductory college writing course developed by Diane Howard, a former director of the South Georgia Writing Project. By combining folklife and writing, Howard saw first-hand how students were able to use the humanities discipline of folklife to improve their writing skills through the five stages of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Howard's model introduced students to stages of the writing process with the following units: 1) Place, 2) Person, 3) Historical Event, 4) Community Event, and 5) Memoir or Personal Experience Narrative with a Historical Focus. The combined units were then published or presented as a portfolio about folklife and community by the students at the end of the semester.

During the Folkwriting Project development phase, the team members incorporated home and community interviews and fieldwork into the model, adapted activities and technology links to appropriate levels and Georgia Quality Core Curriculum standards (QCCs), developed lesson

plans, and utilized relevant resources on Georgia folklife. Their model units incorporate technology as much as possible by using tape recorders, video recorders, cameras, computers, the Internet, and email. This workbook includes overviews on folklife and the writing process, Web links, level-specific lesson plans, and student work samples, all organized around lessons titled “My Places,” “Their Places,” and “Our Places.”

Folkwriting Project Collaborators

Our Folkwriting Project was a collaborative project between Valdosta State University and the Cook County School System, funded in part by the Georgia Humanities Council, the National Writing Project, and the National Endowment for the Arts Folk and Traditional Arts Infrastructure Initiative. Major project development funding came through a Georgia Humanities Council grant titled “Connecting Homes, Schools, and Communities: A Collaborative Teacher Enrichment Project Using Folklife and Writing,” later shortened to “Folkwriting.”

Two special projects at Valdosta State played key roles in the project conception and implementation. The South Georgia Writing Project (SGWP) is one of the 167 sites of the National Writing Project, a nationwide network of school/university programs dedicated to improving the teaching of writing in K- college classrooms. Since SGWP’s first intensive writing institute in 1995, South Georgia teachers have come together to participate in Invitational Summer Institutes. Other regional writing events hosted by SGWP have included young writers’ workshops, teacher-led workshops for teachers, and writing instruction forums. In addition, SGWP teacher consultants have led writing workshops in their schools, in other schools throughout the state, and at national meetings. For more information see the following: <http://writingproject.org> (National Writing Project) or <http://www.valdosta.edu/sgwp> (South Georgia Writing Project).

The South Georgia Folklife Project (SGFP) of the Valdosta State University College of the Arts was founded in 1998 to identify, support, and interpret the traditional arts of VSU’s 41-county service area in South Georgia. Recent projects include a documentary radio series, community heritage workshops, traveling exhibitions, and materials for educators. The SGFP maintains a growing resource collection on South Georgia community culture, including oral interviews, sound recordings, and photographs. Major support for the SGFP comes from the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information see <http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP>.

Folkwriting Project Team

The project team consisted of the project director Diane Howard, folklorist Dr. Laurie Sommers, and seven Cook County teachers: three high school, two middle school, and two elementary. An additional team member, Bobbie Newbern, helped Sommers prepare a community resource list on Cook County’s folklife for use by piloting teachers. The Cook County School system is a partner system with Valdosta State University. Diane Howard and Cook County school administrators selected participating teachers; these teachers were chosen because of their interest and merit.

Project Director:

Diane W. Howard (M.Ed.) oversaw the project. Howard is an instructor of English at Valdosta State University and the former Director of the South Georgia Writing Project. She has taught writing in high school and college classrooms for over 30 years. An early advocate of technology in the composition classroom, Diane has presented dozens of writing workshops for students, teachers, faculty, and business executives in Georgia. She has presented papers and led national workshops on writing and technology at such conferences as the National Council of Teachers of English, the Computers and Writing, and the College English Association Conference. Her work has been published in several on-line journals including *Journal for Teacher of Writing in a Webbed Environment* and *Teaching in the Community College (Electronic) Journal*.



Project Folklorist:

Laurie K. Sommers (Ph.D.) led the training on folklore field collecting techniques, facilitated folklife content at workshops, and ensured the integrity of the project's folklife content. Laurie is founder and director of the South Georgia Folklife Project at VSU. She holds a Ph.D. in folklore from Indiana University with an emphasis in ethnomusicology, and has worked as a public sector folklorist since 1982 for organizations such as the Indiana Division of State Parks, the Bureau of Florida Folklife, the Smithsonian Office of Folklife Programs, and the Michigan State University Museum. Laurie is the author of various publications for academic and general audiences and has produced public programs such as folklife festivals, exhibitions, educational radio, documentary CDs, folklife institutes, and educational materials.



Community Historian:

Linda Ward Meadows (EdS) is a Cook High School graduate, a teacher for 27 years in Cook County, and a charter member and past president of the Cook County Historical Society. She also has been STAR Teacher for three years, Cook County Teacher of the Year in 1984, and a National Board Certified Teacher in Adolescence Young Adulthood/Social Studies-History. Linda routinely incorporates local traditions into her



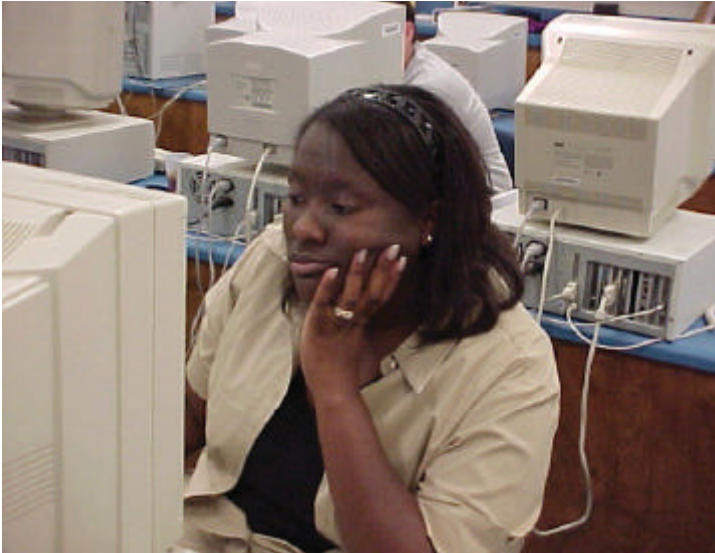
history courses; in particular she encourages her students to record their family histories and incorporates South Georgia history in class projects, believing that students' love of the past can be fostered by an awareness of their ancestors' time and place in history. She and her students also wrote and performed a play entitled "Hats Off to Cook County," which they performed for the Cook County High School's Annual Founders' Day Banquet in 1996.

Community Liaison:



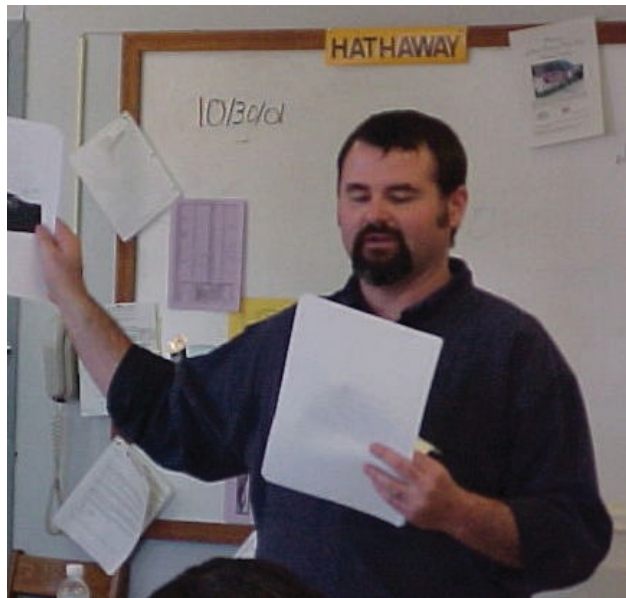
Shelby (Bobbie) Newbern, a native of Cook County and a former rural postal driver in the county, made significant contributions as a community liaison. She participated in the South Georgia Writing Project 2000 Summer Institute, where she and other fellows created their own story in a quilt project that was displayed at the 2000 National Writing Project Conference in Milwaukee, as part of a panel presentation. In April 2001, Bobbie was a member of the team invited to present a workshop at the NWP's Rural Sites Network Meeting in Perdido Beach, AL. Serving as Co-Director of South Georgia Writing Project, she was instrumental in adding a poetry-writing workshop to the SEWSA/VSU 2002 Seventh Annual Interdisciplinary Women's Study Conference. Newbern obtained her Masters in English at Valdosta State University in 2001 and currently teaches English at her alma mater. Her writing is published in *Georgia Women Speak*, an anthology of poetry and fiction, and she is currently working on a collection of short stories and pursuing a Masters in History.

Participating Teachers from Cook County Schools:



Trina Brown moved to Cook County after graduating from Fort Valley State University with a BS in education. Small town and country life is familiar to Trina who has taught seventh grade language arts at Cook Middle School for the past three years. At Cook Middle School, she serves on several committees and is the sponsor for Cook Middle School Spirit Club. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Trina says the challenges she faces from day to day are “to stay encouraged and be the very best teacher I can be”.

Adam Hathaway, has been teaching English at Cook High School since 1997, when he graduated from Valdosta State University. Originally, Adam is from Cogdell, Georgia, a very small town located in Clinch County, about an hour away from Cook County. He has spent the last sixteen years in South Georgia with the exception of a two-year stint in the U.S. Army. In addition to teaching English, Adam has coached football, currently coaches wrestling and golf at Cook High, and co-directs the South Georgia Writing Project (SGWP) at Valdosta State University. Adam says going through the SGWP’s 2000 Invitational Summer Institute and becoming co-director have been the greatest motivators and revelations in his educational career. He has presented at the National Writing Project’s Annual Fall Meeting Conference, Georgia Council of Teachers of English (GCTE), Rural Sites Network (RSN) Conference, and the Valdosta State University Understanding Place Conference. In 2002, Adam was selected by GCTE as runner-up for Teacher of the Year. Adam sees education as changing; therefore, teachers must adapt to change in order to be successful in the classroom. He views these Folkwriting units as valuable because students actually get excited about what they are writing.



Margo Harris is a native of Cook County. She comes from a family who has lived in Cook County for as long as any member of the family can remember. After graduating from Cook High School, Margo commuted to Abraham Baldwin College in Tifton, Georgia, then Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, where she earned her BS in middle grades education. Though Margo began her teaching career at Cook Elementary School, she currently teaches language arts to eighth graders at Cook Middle School. Besides teaching, Margo is actively involved in Beulah Holiness Baptist church, which her great grandfather helped to establish in the 1800's. She also participates in many local events including the Adel Christmas Parade, the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, and the Cook Middle School Spirit Club. Since Margo is from Cook County, she is especially proud to be part of this project that entices students to explore and connect with Cook County people, customs, and traditions. Margo shared her students' poems and essays about Cook County at the 2002 Georgia Council of Teachers of English Conference where she gave a classroom demonstration.



Vanessa Mitchell is currently teaching in a self-contained second grade Early Intervention Program (EIP) at Cook Primary School in Adel, Georgia. She has ten years teaching experience. Before entering the teaching profession, Vanessa received a degree in Industrial Engineering Technology from Southern Poly Tech in Marietta, Georgia, and was a shift leader with Milliken and assistant manager with Red Lobster. Although both positions paid very well, Vanessa says she was not fulfilled and did not feel as if she was making a difference or contributing to society. Therefore, she changed professions and became a certified teacher ten years ago. Now, she has an impact on the lives of students that reaches far beyond the classroom. Vanessa says that she has come to

realize that teaching is not just what she does, but being a teacher is who she is. Vanessa has been invited to present a two-day Folkwriting workshop at the Georgia Council of Teachers of English Conference in Spring 2003.

Judy Phillips, originally from Niceville, Florida, has lived in Lenox, Georgia, and taught third grade for thirteen years. Judy currently teaches in the gifted program at Cook Elementary School in Adel, Georgia. Before moving to Georgia, she also taught third through sixth grades for nine years in Florida. Judy has a BA from the University of West Florida in Pensacola, Florida, and both a master and specialist's degree from Valdosta State University. Besides teaching, Judy has a second degree black belt in Tae Kwondo and for the past 17 years has been making furniture and renovating houses (when she is not crocheting, quilting, reading, or sewing at home; or teaching a children's lesson, playing piano, leading the music, or keeping the nursery at church.) Her family—a son in the Navy, one granddaughter, one daughter-in-law, three dogs, one horse, five donkeys, seven goats, and a list of eleven foreign exchange students who have lived varying amounts of time in her home—will attest to her being a “Renaissance” woman.



Jeremy Williams is originally from Sneads, Florida, a small town on the banks of Lake Seminole. Since his hometown is small, the close-knit society of Cook County feels like home to Jeremy. Discovering his love for theatre early in life through plays in elementary school and his church, Jeremy became completely enthralled by the theatre during his freshman year in high school. By the time he graduated, Jeremy knew he would follow a career path in theatre so he attended Chipola Junior College on a full theatre scholarship and graduated from Troy State University in South Alabama with a BS degree in theatre. Before joining the faculty at Cook High School, he taught drama to middle-school students

at the Colquitt County Arts Center. Mid-school year 1998-1999, Jeremy started teaching theatre at Cook High School and working toward his teaching certificate; by fall 1999, he was teaching drama and English full-time at Cook High School. Since then, he has been named to Who's Who Among America's Teachers and established the Cook High School drama troupe, The Theatre Wing, which has received statewide recognition for excellence in acting, design, and overall performance.

CHAPTER TWO

The Writing Process

Diane W. Howard



Poems written by Judy Phillips' students on display at the Cook Primary and Elementary School booth at the 2001 Exchange Club Fair. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter discusses the writing process and the stages—pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Becoming a Writing Teacher

I have been teaching writing the past thirty years; however, I did not know how to teach writing until four years ago when I was first introduced to the writing theory texts of Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, Linda Flower, William Zinsser, and others who give more than lip service to the writing process. In their books and articles, these writing practitioners give detailed accounts of the steps of the writing process, complete with student work to illustrate the writing stages.

When I began emphasizing the stages or steps of the writing process to my students, I became a writing teacher and not simply a teacher who taught writing. There is a difference.

I realized this difference recently when I had the privilege of leading a reading and writing workshop for middle school teachers. A math teacher in this group had been one of my students in a high school composition 20 years ago. Throughout the weeklong workshop, I kept apologizing for the “error of my ways” of teaching when I sternly gave cold, canned, packaged writing assignments to her and her peers twenty years ago. I had been a product-oriented teacher of writing.

Process Not Product

Now, I am a process-oriented writing teacher. No longer giving a writing assignment topic and collecting the five-paragraph essay product in 60 minutes, I now give a writing prompt, model the stages of writing process, and collect the written piece several days or even weeks later. I am teaching students how to write, not punishing them for not producing a “good” essay on the spot.

With my newfound approach to teaching writing, I no longer struggle to find just the right reader for my students. If I am to focus on teaching them how to write, I should not spend class time or their study time, for that matter, on reading an essay or story emphasizing my views or opinions. After all, the intent of a first-year composition course in college is to teach students about writing, not about abortion, gun control, euthanasia, global warming, or even education reform. The intent of the course is to teach students how to be better writers and better thinkers, not to tell them what to think. I believe that writing teachers should not brainwash their students.

Hence, teaching the writing process became my primary goal, by establishing an environment to stimulate students to think and to engage in the steps of writing needed to produce an essay, poem, play, newspaper article, advertisement, or document paper. I let the students write about what they know and what they care about: themselves and their families, friends, and neighbors. By not devoting precious class time to teaching a story or poem, I show them how to write. I model.

The Pre-Writing Stage

With each writing unit, I begin by using class time to prepare the students for writing by taking them through a pre-writing stage. Sometimes I play music to set a tone or mood. Other times I use smells to prompt the students to remember. Frying bacon in an electric skillet is a great pre-writing activity to help students think about breakfast and an early morning event in their lives. Other times I have them close their eyes and take them to a place in their past as I talk to them softly about walking into a house, looking around the room, seeing a person, listening to that person, and replying to that person. Even a one-word prompt for a focused and fast freewriting is a helpful pre-writing activity.

The First Draft Stage

Once the students select a topic during or following the pre-writing stage, they write a first draft, a “shitty first draft” as Anne Lamott calls it in *Bird by Bird*. I like using Lamott’s description because my students know I am not disappointed when their first attempts on paper are as bad as the aroma from skunks and three-day old dead fish. They know these attempts are only beginnings and they are willing to take risks and experiment with something new as they begin the essay or

poem or whatever genre they have chosen. I, too, write a first draft from the topic of my pre-writing activity.

Writing with my students accomplishes two things: it gives them a model of a person writing and an actual model of the stages of the writing process; it also gives me a greater understanding of what writing is all about. I identify with their anxieties, their fears, their frustrations, and their celebrations. It is amazing how much I learn about teaching writing from my students and from being a writer with my students. If teachers are to teach writing, they must be writers.

The Revision Stage

Once we have written first drafts, we have something to revise. I like to teach revision in two stages. The first stage is for reshaping the piece; the second is for giving more details and for revising sentence structure.

To reshape their pieces, students re-read their drafts, asking tough questions about the beginning, the development of the paragraphs, and the ending. The order in which they present their ideas, as well as the development of their ideas, is important. A piece must be a complete unit.

Once the piece holds together as a unit, it must be fine-tuned. Each sentence and each word need to be considered for appropriateness. If details are omitted, they are added. Because the flow and the sound of words are important, hearing the language of the piece from an oral reading is important.

The Editing Stage*

After revising, students are ready to edit the pieces. Peer and self-editing are helpful to most students. Mini-lessons on grammar and punctuation are incorporated into teaching the writing process at this time. I find that when I teach a grammatical concept and give an example of correcting an error, such as a pronoun-antecedent agreement error, and then have the students look at their own revisions for pronoun-antecedent agreement, they can spot errors in their own writing. The goal is to have students locate and correct errors on their own first, then help them avoid making these errors in the future. Spotting errors and counting off points are not my goals, and I do not count off points during the teaching process.

The Publishing Stage

The final and most exciting stage is the publishing stage. This stage can take a variety of forms: a handwritten or printed piece submitted to me or read to the class; a piece uploaded on a Web page; a piece submitted to and printed in a newspaper or other publication; a piece printed in a collection or anthology; a poster or wall hanging; or any piece presented to an audience. Publishing is simply the act of presenting written work to an audience.

Since teaching the writing process and writing *with* the students, I have gained a new zeal for teaching—and for writing. All the lessons in this book of writing about folklife are written with the writing process in mind. The teachers who wrote these lessons and activities are teachers of writing also. They have a zeal for teaching and wish to share their successful writing lessons with other teachers.

***Checklists for the Editing Stage: Peer Editing Checklist; Editor's Checklist**

Peer Editing Checklist

Name _____ Project _____

Peer Editor _____ Date _____

Use this list to check your paper carefully.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My writing meets the requirements of the assignment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I read the paper for meaning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I checked the paper for complete sentences.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I used correct principles of grammar.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I used the spell check tool on the computer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I double-checked for correct spelling.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All sentences start with a capital letter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proper nouns are capitalized.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The title has capital letters where needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Each sentence ends with proper punctuation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commas and quotation marks are used correctly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I followed the procedures of the writing process.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I reread the paper carefully for all errors.

(from Louisiana INTECH, a project of the Louisiana Department of Education based on the Georgia Framework for Integrating Technology in the Student-Centered Classroom. For the Georgia Virtual Learning Resource Bank see <http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/>).

Editor's Checklist

Name _____ Project _____

Date _____

Computers cannot find all your mistakes. Carefully check your writing with this checklist.

___ I read the work for meaning. It makes sense.

___ I checked the work for clear and complete sentences.

___ I checked the spelling using the spell check tool on the computer.

___ I read the work for correct word usage that the computer spell checker won't catch (to, too, two, they're, their, etc.).

___ The first word in all sentences starts with a capital letter.

___ Proper nouns that name a specific person, place, or thing have been capitalized.

___ The title has capital letters where needed.

___ Each sentence ends with a punctuation mark.

___ Commas are used in any series of three or more things (apples, oranges, and pears).

___ Commas connect the parts of compound sentences.

___ Quotation marks begin and end words that someone says.

___ I reread the document carefully for all errors.

Editor's signature _____

(from Louisiana INTECH, a project of the Louisiana Department of Education based on the Georgia Framework for Integrating Technology in the Student-Centered Classroom. For the Georgia Virtual Learning Resource Bank see <http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/>).

CHAPTER THREE

Folklife as a Subject for Writing

Diane W. Howard



Cook County folks fishing in the lake at Reed Bingham State Park. Memories of the park was the topic for a local writing contest. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter emphasizes the need for students to write about familiar topics or subjects in order for them to focus on learning how to write. Too many times writing teachers hear students say they have nothing to write about. This statement is far from the truth. Their lives and their communities provide them with a wealth of material for their poems, essays, plays, skits, letters, news articles, and more.

Also, this chapter stresses teaching students the writing process in a standards-based classroom, placing the learner at the center, not the teacher.

Their Lives

Let's face it. Teachers have stiff competition when it comes to finding ways to get students to listen. For example, the television with its Survivor series, action-packed cops and robbers programs, graphic sexy comedies, and MTV's nothing-left-to-the-imagination music videos leave teachers in the cold, looking for ways to get students' attention. Unless we want to transform teaching writing into a hot, new computer game, we need to focus on what subject will get students' attention.

If we are to teach writing, then we should capitalize on what our students know as the subject for writing essays, letters, poems, plays, or any genre. Their lives are what they know best. They know their past and present, the places, people, and events. They are experts on these things.

When students are learning to write, they need much material to use as content. They need to know this content well in order to provide the details and develop the ideas in the pieces they write. Their lives and traditions give them a wealth of material to write about. It is their living traditions or folklife that is the best subject for them to use when learning to write.

Nothing New

Using folklife as the subject in a writing class is not new. Elizabeth Radin Simons, Bonnie Sunstein, and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater and others have written books about using folklife to teach writing. Several excellent websites give details on lessons using folklife in a particular state or locale in the writing classroom. (See references cited in the Appendix for resources.) This lesson plan book is not unique. It is, however, the first lesson plan book about folklife writing for teachers in South Georgia.

Written and piloted by teachers from Cook County Georgia, the lessons in this workbook give teachers ideas for engaging students in activities that interest them and also help them become better writers. By having students write about the people, places, and events of their lives, their experiences in their homes and communities become integrated into their learning at school. This integration of home and community with school becomes the foundation for effective education. Students will become literate and will become writers in various genres, genres for the school curricula as well as for life-long literacy practices.

The Greatest Resources

By joining folklife and writing, teachers have a way to tap the greatest resources available, resources that are the bedrock of community—living traditions of the folks who are the citizens of that community.

Standards-Based

Over the past decade, many national educational organizations have set out to define voluntary standards for the various disciplines. These efforts have spawned conversations on state and local levels. Administrators and teachers at Cook County School System added to the dialogue as they began setting standards for the various disciplines including language arts.¹ These efforts to define standards for the language arts were motivated by three central beliefs:

- Standards are needed to prepare students for present literacy requirements as well as those of the future. Rapid changes in technology and our society have changed and will continue

to change the ways we use language to communicate and to think. Our students must be prepared to meet these current and future demands.

- Standards can articulate the shared vision of what teachers, teacher educators, parents, and business leaders expect students to attain in the area of language arts.
- Standards are needed to promote high educational expectations for all students and help ensure that all students become informed citizens who participate meaningfully in society (For a list of the Cook County Language Arts Standards, see the endnotes to this chapter).

Cook County Schools is a partner school with Valdosta State University in developing K-12 content and performance standards in order to help all students learn at high levels. A major thrust of the work in the partnership since 1996 has been VSU and Cook County Schools developing and implementing K-12 content standards that delineated what students needed to know and do to succeed at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. For more information about the standards-based classroom movement in Cook County and throughout Georgia assess the P-16 Initiative website, <http://www.usg.edu/p16/>.

These beliefs about standards-based classrooms explain the Folkwriting Project's commitment to specifying the standard(s) addressed by each activity. Students of all grade levels enjoy fun and game activities, but if these entertaining lessons are not standards-based, then the lessons are a waste of precious time. Classrooms must be more than expensive settings for our students' amusement. Teachers are not and should not be merely entertainers.

In a standards-based classroom, the learner is at the center. The teacher is the guide and model for the learner who is actively engaged in doing—reading, writing, asking, reviewing, summarizing, telling, performing, drawing, and countless other activities.

In keeping with the goal of education as a whole, these lessons help prepare students for their present and future lives as informed citizens, employees, neighbors, and family members. Students use language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes. The standards that have been incorporated into these lessons were designed with the broader educational goal of preparing students for their future lives.

Georgia Learning Connections (GLC) is a website developed by the Georgia Department of Education based on the QCC standards. Its mission is to provide a dynamic, interactive, online resource that will enhance and support teaching and learning in Georgia with the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) standards. Georgia Learning Connections provides the resources necessary for teachers to meet the educational needs of their students and increasing student achievement (<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/>).

The central focus of GLC is the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) standards. Web links, lesson plans, activities, and assessment correlations are attached directly to the standards. These resources have been gathered and created to help teachers teach and assess the standards. The Teacher Resource Center, is a large collection of education and curriculum resources without specific standards attached. The Lesson Plan Builder (<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/lp/>) is a tool for Georgia teachers to build and share “best practice” lesson plans that directly impact student learning and achievement. This site and its links have been used in the development of many of the lesson plans in this book. For more lesson plans attached to specific standards, go to <http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/trc/>.

Affirms Students' Place in the Community

We teachers need to remember that we are teaching students the specific content of language arts. The subject “folklife” allows students to hear and respect different perspectives and to communicate with others whose lives are different from their own. When we keep in mind that our students are individuals with different lives and different experiences, we account for the diversity of culture even within a single geographic location such as Cook County; thus, writing about folklife affirms each student’s life and place in the broader community.

Note

1. Cook County Schools Language Arts Standards, August 2001

The student will

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

CHAPTER FOUR

An Introduction to Folklife

Compiled by Laurie Kay Sommers¹



Peanut City, a folk architectural landmark in Cook County, serves up boiled peanuts along with stories. Here, co-founder Billy Martin looks on while grandson David Kelly serves a customer. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter provides

- A brief introduction to folklife for teachers;
- Guidelines on how to recognize folklife in everyday life;
- Classroom activities for all grade levels designed to help students understand and identify the living community traditions that surround them.

These materials are intended to supplement individual lessons in the workbook when introducing folklife in the classroom.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS: WHAT IS FOLKLIFE?

Folklife, also called folklore or traditional culture, describes LIVING TRADITIONS, learned and passed on informally. These are the traditions that are part of our daily lives and that help to define who we are: grandma's pound cake; lullabies at bedtime; stories shared around a campfire, a community festival, family reunions.

Folklife is shared within groups. Although folk traditions vary from place to place and from group to group, they help us feel part of a group. When we belong to a group, we learn the traditions of the group from other members.

Folklife is shared by persons with common backgrounds or interests. We may be members of folk groups based on a shared geography (region, place, home town), religion, ethnicity, place of work or occupation, interest or hobby, school, or even a shared stage of life, such as children's folklife or graduation parties.

Folklife takes many forms.

- THINGS PEOPLE DO (customs, games, dance, drama, celebrations, work-related skills);
- THINGS PEOPLE MAKE (food, art, architecture, crafts);
- THINGS PEOPLE BELIEVE (home remedies, luck charms, superstitions);
- THINGS PEOPLE SAY, SING, OR WRITE (stories, jokes, songs, sayings, riddles, rhymes, yearbook inscriptions).

Folklife is continually created and re-created. These examples are folklore because of the processes that create them and the meaning behind them. We don't learn folklife from books or formal classes but from listening to or watching other people. Folklife is the unofficial culture in all of our lives: it is not the school yearbook sent by the commercial company with the official school pictures, but rather the formulaic inscriptions written by teachers and students.

Here are some examples of folklife that you and your students may recognize:

- In South Georgia, for generations families have ground stalks of sugar cane into juice and boiled the juice into syrup when the weather gets cool. Cane grindings are social events for families, neighbors, and communities. We don't learn how to do this in school; we learn it by being part of a particular family or community tradition. (customs, foodways)
- A living nativity or Easter pageant is held at a local church, not based on a formal script but according to "the way its always been done." (drama)
- Children play handclapping games or chant jump rope rhymes learned from other children on the playground. (games)
- On October 31, young people dress in costume and walk the streets of their neighborhood to homes with carved pumpkins lit by candles, where they shriek "Trick or Treat" and expect to receive candy. (holiday celebrations)
- Young men practice football for hours every week, preparing for weekly contests with rival schools. They wear special clothing and charms or do certain behaviors for good luck, give each other nicknames, and develop locker room rituals before or after the game. (customs, beliefs)

- Someone gathers wild blackberries to make jelly or jam using recipes passed on from neighbors, friends, parents, or grandparents. (foodways)
- Members of religious communities sing hymns and spiritual songs by ear without ever learning to read music, or take a dish to pass for a potluck or dinner on the grounds. (music, foodways)
- On our birthdays, someone makes a cake with a candle for each year of our lives and when it is brought out everyone sings, "Happy Birthday"—a song everyone has learned by ear. We make a silent wish and try to blow out all the candles with a single breath. (belief, celebrations)
- Students create floats for the school homecoming parade or decorate their lockers with special objects and images, activities which are part of a long tradition of school folklife. (art)
- A dogtrot house with the open central breezeway, made by a local builder without formal training or blueprints, still stands on the home place. (architecture)
- A local fisherman makes fish traps or baskets out of chicken wire, a skill he learned from another fisherman. (crafts)
- Agricultural workers wrap fingers on their picking hand with duct tape to make harvesting tomatoes easier, an informally learned "trick of the trade." (work-related skills)

For a [Glossary of Folklife Terms](#), [What is Folklife Examples from South Georgia](#), and a [Select Bibliography of South Georgia and Regional Folklife](#), see the Appendix at the end of the workbook. For photos and a radio series on South Georgia folklife, see <http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP>. Other useful Web links are listed under Internet Resources at the end of this chapter.

FOLKLIFE IS . . .

1. Both old and new. Since much folklore is passed down through generations, it has roots in the past, but many traditions, such as hoax Internet virus warnings, are brand new and change all the time.

2. Shared by a group of people who have something in common: ethnicity, family, region, occupation, religion, nationality, age, gender, social class, social clubs, school, etc. Everyone belongs to a group of some sort; therefore, everyone has folklore of some sort, whether it is jokes or family stories or occupational tricks of the trade. One folk group most of us belong to is our family. Families often have special ways in which they celebrate birthdays, holidays, or weekends. Family folklore is probably one of the most accessible folk groups for many students to discover their own folklife.

3. Learned informally by listening, imitation, and example. A common term for this process is "oral transmission." For example, kids learn to make paper airplanes by watching other kids, not from reading books. The children's game of telephone illustrates the process of oral transmission, where someone whispers a message to one person, and it is passed on from person to person until the last one tells what he or she heard. Usually, the version the last person hears is changed (a variant of the original message).

4. Found in different versions and variations. For example, there are many different ways to make paper airplanes (variants) but the final products are still recognizable as paper airplanes.

5. Both complex and simple. Folklife may be a biscuit made from scratch or an elaborate wedding ritual.

6. Usually anonymous in origin. Sometimes we know that this is "Uncle Billy's barbecue sauce" or "Betty's song," but the original version or author is often lost over time through the process of oral transmission. No one knows, for example, who told the very first "knock knock joke."

7. Passed on because it has meaning and function within the community. If you were studying the folk traditions of a boat builder, you would not only look at the process of the building the boat but also at what motivates the builder. You could also look at why he/she uses a certain type of building material, who he/she builds for, why it is important to continue making the boat, and the elements that make it pleasing to the maker and the larger community.

FOLKLIFE IS NOT. . .

- 1. Learned through formal workshops, classes, books, or magazines.**
- 2. Something that is crude, primitive, or quaint.**
- 3. Written history or historical re-enactment (recreating the past).**
- 4. Elite or Popular Culture.**
- 5. Always good, true, and beautiful.**
- 6. Only something "other people" have.**
- 7. Dying out.**



Dr. Laurie Sommers observes fiddler Henry Rutland and guitarist Paul Massey play their instruments at the Tribute to Cook County Fiddlers held at Cook Middle School, funded by the Georgia Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. Photo by Diane Howard, 2002.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Folklife Bingo (Identifying folklife in students' lives)

Test the class by playing Folklife Bingo; see how many traditions they are able to fill in. Use it as a pre-test for students or as a warm-up exercise to introduce folklife. Students may also design their own bingo games as part of their assessment. A blank Bingo Worksheet is available on the Louisiana Voices website: <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (Unit 1).

Hand out [Folklife Bingo worksheet](#) (see below) and give a few examples to get the students started. You may wish to list the examples from this chapter. Students may need explanations of some categories and some contexts in which these traditions occur. See the "[Glossary](#)" (Appendix) for help with definitions.

You decide how challenging to make this activity. Students may work as a group or individually. They may fill the entire sheet or just one row to win. You and the students might discuss how many answers should come from interviewing others in the classroom or outside the classroom as homework. One method is to ask students to put a person's initials in the box or write a brief description. As with conventional bingo, all answers must be verified, which can lead to interesting discussion. "That's not the way it goes," someone might say. Or, "My family does that also!" Alternatively, students could create their own Folklife Bingo or create one for a different culture. Use red beans as markers or ask students to use markers or pencils. Younger students could create a tic-tac-toe board instead.

(Adapted permission from Unit 1, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit I).

Activity 2: The FOLKPATTERNS Card Game (Discovering folklife around us)

This activity is suitable for age seven and up. Certain cards may be more suitable for younger or older students. Teachers may read the cards for pre-readers and have the students respond orally.

1. Make the card game by photocopying and cutting up the cards. (See [FOLKPATTERNS Card Game worksheet](#) below.)
2. To play, have the group form a circle and place the cards face down in the middle of it.
3. Select a student to pick a card and answer the question on it. If he or she cannot answer it, ask for volunteers. There are no right or wrong answers! Continue the process until all the students in the circle have chosen a card and answered a question. Students may answer orally or in writing. Certain cards, such as "What is your favorite holiday; how does your family celebrate it" may be suitable for longer written responses.
4. If time permits, ask students to come up with additional example for some of the questions, or see how many different variations the class has of the same tradition. Talk about the many traditions we all have.

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Activity 3: All About Me (a FOLKPATTERNS activity in which students identify groups they belong to and folk traditions practiced by those groups):

This activity, suitable for grades seven and up, is intended to help students learn the concepts of “folk group” and “tradition.”

1. Have the students write their name on All About Me Worksheet below.
2. Talk about how everyone belongs to many different groups. Have the students name groups to which they belong. Examples: my classroom, my family, my ethnic group, my church, my neighborhood, my friends. Go over the definition of folk group and other key words found in the What is Folklife section at the beginning of this chapter.
3. Ask the students what these groups do, then make a list of the activities. (For example, for “my classroom,” activities could be: “we learn math,” “we say the pledge of allegiance,” “we say a school cheer,” “we jump rope at recess.” From these activities, reinforce which ones are traditions or folklife. Go over the definition of folklife in the Glossary and the What is Folklife section at the beginning of this chapter.

Examples:

My classroom	school cheers
My family	reunions
My ethnic group	special holiday foods
My church	gospel singing
My neighborhood	block parties
My friends	hopscotch, skateboarding

4. Using the All About Me worksheet found at the end of the chapter, have each student list four folk groups he or she belongs to and write out one tradition for each group.
5. Have each student share his or her list with the group. Discuss how important these traditions are in their lives.

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Activity 4: The Seasonal Round (Identifying community folklife according to seasons of the year):

This activity is suitable for middle and upper grades but could be adapted for younger students. It should be especially helpful in identifying seasonal customs or the basis for student research and writing.

Folklorists often group customary activities into two groups: those dealing with **rites of passage** or life cycle events (birth, coming of age, marriage, death) and those dealing with **calendar customs** or customs which occur at certain times or seasons of the year. This activity helps students identify folklife customs from both categories that occur seasonally in their lives or communities (hence the name “seasonal round”).

1. Using Seasonal Customs worksheet 1 (see below), students are given a model of seasonal activities and asked to fill in a few more from their own experience. The activities list provides examples especially common to the rural South.

2. Using [Seasonal Customs worksheet 2](#) (see below), students work in groups or individually to group customs according to the appropriate season.

(Adapted with permission from Unit IX, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit 9).

Activity 5: The Cultural Continuum (Placing folklife in the context of living cultures)

Folk or traditional culture is a process of learning by word of mouth and observation. We also learn from and interact with **popular culture** that daily inundates us from radios, televisions, magazines, and other mass media. Then, there's **academic or elite culture**, which is learned through formal institutions such as schools, colleges, museums, music conservatories, and art schools.

These three cultural processes are at work in each of our lives, constantly intermingling and exchanging influences. A museum buys a traditional white oak splint basket for its permanent collection and advertises an exhibit of traditional baskets in a popular magazine. A classical music composer borrows a folk melody for a symphony. A student tells a friend a joke he heard on TV, and soon versions of the joke are passed around the school. Most students probably do not know that virtually all pop music is deeply rooted in traditional music and that Georgia and the American South were influential seedbeds not only for rock and roll but for rhythm and blues, country and western, rockabilly, gospel, and jazz.

1. After you have introduced folklore concepts, have the class practice identifying folklore with the [Cultural Processes in Action worksheet](#) (see below). Culture may be classified into three categories, each of which is learned in a different way:

- **Elite** (or High or fine): learned formally through society's institutions such as schools, universities, museums, concert halls, books
- **Popular** (or Mass) Culture: learned through mass media such as television, radio, popular magazines, newspapers, movies
- **Folk** (or traditional): learned informally by being members of families and communities and participating in everyday activities.

It is helpful to think of this as a continuum: Folk.....Popular.....Elite, where the boundaries between these kinds of knowledge blur and overlap.

2. Test students' understanding of folklife with the items listed on the Cultural Processes in Action Worksheet (below), deciding which are folk, popular, or elite cultural expressions and which are mixtures. For example, Garth Brooks' pop country hit "Friends in Low Places" has its own folkloric element. The song has a secret stanza that is not on the recording, but insider fans know it and sing along with him in live concerts. This secret stanza represents a folk tradition attached to a popular culture song.

Note: this activity is best for middle and upper grades. Design a simpler version of this worksheet for younger students or ask them to design one as a test of what they have learned about folk, popular, and elite cultural processes. Discuss students' conclusions -- not everyone will agree.

(Adapted with permission from Unit 1, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit I).

WORKSHEETS

[Folklife Bingo](#)

[FOLKPATTERNS Card Game](#)

[All About Me](#)

[Seasonal Customs](#)

[Cultural Processes in Action](#)

[Activity 1 Worksheet]

Name: _____ Date: _____

FOLKLIFE BINGO

**FAMILY
FOLKLORE**

CRAFTS

FOODWAYS


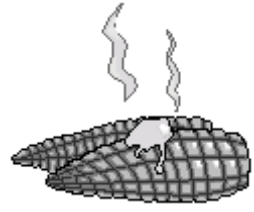

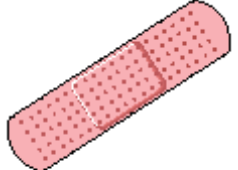

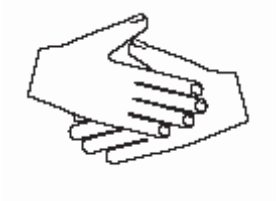
MUSIC

**VERBAL
ARTS**

Holiday Custom	Homemade Toy	Holiday Food	Instrument Used in Worship	School Slang or Jargon
Wedding Tradition	Religious or festive craft	Dessert	Camp or campfire song	Joke
Nickname	Craft sewed or stitched by hand		Country Music Instrument	Children's Rhyme
Family Story	Work-related (occupational) craft	Something sold at a farmer's market	Lullaby	Local expression
Home remedy	Something made for fishing or hunting	Wild Game or Fish Food	Religious Music or Song	Proverb

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[Activity 2 Worksheet]
FOLKPATTERNS CARD GAME

<p>Sing me a lullaby</p> 	<p>How do you eat corn on the cob?</p> 
<p>Give the group a school cheer.</p> 	<p>How do you get rid of a wart?</p> 
<p>Sing a jump rope rhyme</p> 	<p>Show us a hand clap game.</p> 

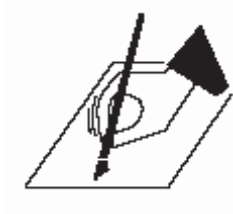
What do you do for good luck?



How do you celebrate a birthday?



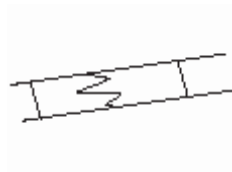
Have you ever signed an auto-graph book?



Do you know the story of your name or nickname?



What do you say when you step on a crack in the sidewalk?



What do you eat for breakfast on Saturday morning?



Do you know any funny songs that go to the tune of “Yankee Doodle”? Sing one for the group.



Have you ever made a scare-crow?



Tell the group a joke.



What nicknames do you have for your pets? Your family car?.



What do you do on Halloween?



How do you get well when you catch a cold?



How do you build a snowman?



What is your favorite holiday? How does your family celebrate it?



Where is the haunted house in your area? Tell the group about it



Tell how to play marbles or jacks.



How can you tell if it will rain?



What is your favorite holiday and how do you decorate?



What is the most unusual building in your community? Why is it unusual?



When do you sing songs?



How do you decorate a pie?



How do you decorate a cake?



<p>Describe a special quilt or blanket in your home.</p>	<p>What river, creek, or lake is in your community, and what do people do there?</p>
<p>Sing a song you learned from friends.</p>	<p>What do you eat on holidays?</p>
<p>What is your favorite place to eat and why?</p>	<p>What do you use to catch fish, and what is the biggest fish you have ever caught?</p>
<p>How do you decorate your bike or skateboard?</p>	<p>Tell a ghost story from your community.</p>



<p>Does anyone in your family or neighborhood preserve food by canning? What do they can?</p>	<p>How is barbecue prepared and served in your region?</p>
<p>How do you make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?</p>	



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[Activity 3 Worksheet]

About Me

My name _____

Folk Groups I Belong To:

Traditions I Like to Do:

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[Activity 4 Worksheet 1]
Seasonal Customs

Name _____ Date _____

What seasons or holidays are associated with the following customs?

- Sort the customs listed below according to the seasons in which they occur and write them in the correct boxes on **Seasonal Customs [Worksheet]**. Some customs may be associated with more than one season.
- Add at least two customs associated with a season or holiday from your own knowledge or research.

Cleaning house
Planting by the signs of the moon
Attending family reunions
Shooting fireworks
Cleaning graves
Making Homecoming floats
Picking blackberries
Wearing costumes
Hunting deer
Lighting candles
Wearing something green
Shelling peas
Throwing rice
meetings
Going to a dove shoot
Planting a vegetable garden
Eating fresh peaches

Going on a quail hunt
Celebrating a Seder
Making cane syrup
Canning fruits and vegetables
Giving up something
Curing meat
Attending a baseball game
Eating black-eyed peas
Participating in parades
Fishing for suckers
Baking a fruitcake
Attending graduation
Attending revivals or camp
Attending a football game
Quilting
Gathering tobacco

(Adapted with permission from Unit IX, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit 9).

[Activity 4 Worksheet 2]
Seasonal Customs

Write the customs listed on Page 1 of the **Seasonal Customs Worksheet** in the boxes below to show when they occur.

<p style="text-align: center;">Spring</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Summer</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fall</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Winter</p>

(Adapted with permission from Unit IX, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide* <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit 9)).

[Activity 5 Worksheet]

Cultural Processes in Action				
Do folklorists study this?		Which is it?		
Yes or no		folk	popular	elite
	1. Cane syrup making by families or local farmers			
	2. Jokes such as "dumb blonde" jokes told by students			
	3. Graffiti			
	4. Activities that bring good luck practiced by athletes			
	5. Building Homecoming floats			
	6. River baptism			
	7. Attending a Valdosta Symphony concert			
	8. Your grandmother's stories about her childhood			
	9. Painting of a local hunting scene by an artist trained in art school			
	10. Fish fries by the river bank			
	11. A hunter's skill in training a bird dog			
	12. A farmer's knowledge of weather signs			
	13. Professional rodeos			
	14. Country western music			
	15. A lullaby sung to a child			
	16. Quilt made in a quilting class			
	17. Brand name barbecue sauce sold at a local supermarket			
	18. A folktale read from a book by a local librarian			
	19. Jump rope rhymes chanted by children			
	20. Teenagers' scary stories such as "The Hook"			
	21. Wooden toys made by patterns from Popular Mechanics magazine			
	22. Garth Brook's "Friends in Low Places"			
	23. Making a wish blowing out birthday candles			
	24. An architect-designed log house built in 1990			
	25. Historical reenactments of military battles			
	26. Home altars to the Virgin of Guadalupe by Mexican Americans			
	27. Jokes sent by computer			
	28. A community mural painted by a professional artist			
	29. The board game Monopoly			
	30. Gospel music			

(Adapted from Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit 1, <http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Teacher Key for Cultural Processes in Action Worksheet

1. yes/folk
2. yes/folk
3. yes/folk
4. yes/folk
5. yes/folk
6. yes/folk
7. no/elite
8. yes/folk
9. no/elite
10. yes/folk
11. yes/folk
12. yes/folk
13. yes/no: popular, if this is something reflecting official rules of the professional rodeo circuit; folk if the focus is tricks of the trade learned from other rodeo participants.
14. yes/no: generally, country western is a type of commercial popular music disseminated by the mass media, although it does have roots in folk music. Some forms of country music, especially country gospel and old-time country, still are passed on orally and are shaped by local audiences and tastes, making these genres part of the folk category.
15. yes/folk
16. no/popular
17. no/popular
18. no/elite
19. yes/folk
20. yes/folk
21. no/popular
22. yes/no: see discussion in Cultural Processes above (both popular and folk)
23. yes/folk
24. no/elite
25. no/popular
26. yes/folk
27. yes/folk
28. no/elite
29. no/popular
30. yes/no; some gospel is now a form of commercially disseminated popular music with known composers and original compositions; much gospel music comes from oral tradition, with tunes or texts learned by ear disseminated in musical styles which reflect the tastes of particular cultural communities.

(Adapted with permission from Unit 1, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit 1)).

PRINT RESOURCES**

(**see **Appendix** for a [Select Bibliography](#) with books specifically related to South Georgia folklife):

** Note, many good books, including a number of those listed below, if not available locally, can be ordered through the CARTS Catalog, a resource collection for teachers <http://www.carts.org>.

Kozma, LuAnne Gaykowski. **FOLKPATTERNS Leader's Guide, A Cultural Heritage Project**. Michigan State University Museum and Cooperative Extension, East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1991. A handy guide to folklife projects, which includes activity sheets in folklife interviewing, family folklore, foodways, and heritage gardening. To order (\$12), contact Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Bulletin Office, Box 231, East Lansing, MI, 48844 or for online ordering contact <http://ceenet.msue.msu.edu/bulletin/ctlgmast.html>.

Sommers, Laurie Kay. **The Florida Music Train** (curriculum unit), Florida Folklife Program, 2002. This educational module includes an audio CD of archival, field, and studio recordings of Florida's traditional music; five lesson plans; a full color poster; and background information about the artists and musical traditions represented in the unit. The audio CD includes an extensive range of 23 selections that allows teachers to create countless more lessons.. Musical genres include blues, sacred harp, old-time, bluegrass, klezmer, a cappella gospel, as well as music from Florida's Greek, Seminole, Cuban, Bahamian, Mexican, and Haitian communities. Designed for use in elementary and secondary classrooms, the resource integrates music education with curricula in language arts and social studies. To order send \$50 with a check payable to the Friends of Historic Properties and Museums. Include your name, address, phone number, and email address with your payment and mail to the Florida Heritage Education Program, The Old Capitol, Room B-11, Tallahassee, FL 32301 (\$50 payable to the Friends of Historic Properties and Museums) or contact 850-487-1902.

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. **Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore**. Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990. An excellent book of strategies and lessons dealing with folklife and writing in the high school curriculum.

Winston, Linda. **Keepsakes, Using Family Stories in Elementary Classrooms**, Heinemann, 1997.

ON-LINE RESOURCES

Alabama Folklife Association has useful online publications, including a quilt exhibit catalog and a teacher's guide to the video *Sweet is the Day* about the sacred harp singing traditions of Sand Mountain, Alabama. A number of recordings of Alabama traditional music, suitable for educators interested in southern music traditions, have online soundbytes and liner notes. <http://www.alabamafolklife.org/>

A Teacher's Guide to the Kentucky Folk Festival, Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Arts Council, 2000, contains useful activities and overviews many of which are applicable outside of Kentucky, downloadable in PDF format: http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm

CARTS: Cultural Arts Resources for Teachers and Students, Website of the National Task Force on Folk Arts in Education, which links to national resources of the online "Culture Catalog," an excellent source for ordering materials. <http://www.carts.org>

Documenting the American South, Website of primary source material, including narratives, slave narratives, the Church in the Southern Black community, etc. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/>

Everybody Eats Bread: a lesson plan that looks at bread traditions cross culturally, now posted on the Fieldworking website. <http://www.fieldworking.com/drygoods/bread.html>

Florida Folklife from the WPA Collection: An excellent collection of Florida primary materials collected from 1937-1942 which contains much material also pertinent to south Georgia. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/flwpahtml/>

Folkstreams.net is an online site for webstreaming various excellent folklife documentaries, some with online teacher guide. <http://www.folkstreams.net>

Historic Chattahoochee Commission Folklife Project: a website which includes a good overview of the folklife of the Chatahoochee environs with photos and sound clips. See folklife links at <http://www.hcc-al-ga.org/>

Louisiana Voices: An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, An extensive web-based guide developed to help teachers meet standards, use education technology, and incorporate new assessment strategies through folklife and students' investigations of themselves and their community through fieldwork. Although written for Louisiana grades 4 and 8 classrooms, the guide is in the public domain and is adaptable for any region and any level. <http://www.louisianavoices.org>

Montana Heritage Project, Home of a statewide network of educators and students engaged in community documentation and heritage education, including the folklife component in the "Essay of Place." <http://www.edheritage.org>

National Endowment for the Humanities Edsitement: A site of highly recommended humanities lesson plans and curriculum. <http://edsitement.neh.gov>

Now What A Time: Blues, Gospel and the Ft. Valley (GA) Music Festivals, 1938-43, an online collection of the American Memory project, Library of Congress, with photos, manuscripts, and on-line recordings. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ftvhtml/ftvhome.html>

Oregon Folklife Program "Masters of Ceremony," Lessons based on folk artists' work and rites of passage. <http://www.ohs.org/exhibitions/moc/shell.htm>

Quilts and Quiltmaking in America, A new American Memory collection. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/qlthtml/qlthome.html>

Sounds of History, This "museum module" employs 150 sound excerpts from Smithsonian Folkways . Recordings and student activities so students may study the sounds of history and of their own communities and learn how folklorists and archivists work. The student section allows individual students to access the sounds by historical era and theme. <http://www.bigchalk.com>

South Georgia Folklife Project, Photos, a radio series, and other useful information on South Georgia traditions. <http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP>

Note

1. The material in this chapter is adapted liberally from the following sources: *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts), Study Unit 1, <http://www.louisianavoices.org>; *FOLKPATTERNS 4-H Leader's Guide*, Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, Cooperative Extension Service, and Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, MI. Copyright 1991 Michigan State University Board of Trustees, <http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>; What is Folklore handout by Jackie Thursby (Brigham Young University) for the National Council of Teacher's of English national meeting, Baltimore, 2001; and *A Teacher's Guide to the Kentucky Folklife Festival 2000*, Kentucky Folklife Program, http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm

CHAPTER FIVE

Fieldwork and Interviews in the Classroom

Compiled by Laurie Kay Sommers¹



Adam Hathaway, center, interviews Cook County native, Chet Powell, while Cook High School Assistant Principal Timmie Baker follows interviewing questions prepared by Hathaway. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter

- Provides teachers with a rationale for doing fieldwork project with students;
- Offers tips on how to design and carry out effect fieldwork projects, including specific suggestions for student interviews;
- Includes suggested activities, adaptable for various grade levels, which can be used to teach and practice fieldwork and interview techniques with your students;
- Complements other units whenever teachers use fieldwork or interview activities.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

What is fieldwork?

Folklore research on a specific group, topic, or theme is usually done through **fieldwork**, which entails going into a community and using observation and interviews to obtain first-hand information. Fieldworkers use tape recorders, cameras, note taking, and sketches. The term *documentation* refers to the collection and presentation of the research results through writing, tapes, and photographs.

Why do fieldwork and interviews? Building important skills

The Folkwriting approach encourages students to explore and write about the traditions or folklore of their own lives and community. Each unit includes lessons that involve student interviews. Interviews can be done with other students, with school staff, with parents or caregivers, or with others in the community. The teachers who developed Folkwriting did an interview as part of their training and preparation and were able to use this experience as they modeled interview techniques with their students. A number of excellent resources exist on line and in print (see [Print Resources](#) and [On-line Resources](#) at the end of the chapter).

Fieldwork methods engage students in valuable skill-building pedagogy that fits any curriculum. These skills include observing, questioning, listening, information processing; problem solving, communicating, reporting, recording, creating, assessing, revising, editing. By observing and documenting cultural expressions, students can step outside their own worldviews to study how other people conduct their lives.

Why do fieldwork and interviews? Character education

Georgia has mandated character education for state schools and has identified 27 “values” which are part of this effort. Fieldwork projects engage students in activities which encourage and reinforce a number of these values: honesty, fairness, respect for others, cooperation, courtesy, tolerance, punctuality, patience, creativity, and perseverance. Character education also relates directly to ethical behavior toward the interviewee (see below).

Ethics and Interview Projects

Fieldwork and interview projects teach students ethics in their dealings with other people. Students must learn to ask permission to interview, photograph, and record people; behave respectfully; conduct themselves politely; honor interviewees’ privacy; make and keep appointments; thank people; and act honestly. In addition, interviewees’ permission is needed to use fieldwork results in final products. At times, fieldwork might tread on family or community stories that people would like to be anonymous or perhaps not share publicly. Interviewers must respect these boundaries. If a public presentation is to be made, double check permission forms. Remind students that they cannot use their fieldwork for public presentations unless they have recorded or written permission and make this part of the assessment. When modeling and practicing with students, remember to include this step (see Worksheet section below for a sample [Consent Form](#)).

Informing Caregivers

Be sure to notify students’ families and caregivers if your class will interview people outside the classroom or conduct family folklore research. Briefly outline the proposed project, share some topics you’ll be covering, and ask them to contact you with any questions (see Worksheet section below for a sample [Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#)).

DESIGNING THE CLASS PROJECT

1. Design fieldwork to match your students, curriculum, and community. Adapt the steps and tools that you think will work best for each grade level and project you undertake. At times you may want students to use a short, casual approach to gather games, stories, or songs from other students and adults (See the Suggested Activities below for [FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Cards](#)); at other times you can teach higher-level inquiry skills, audiovisual equipment use, or technology and embark on more detailed fieldwork. For example, you may choose to hone students' listening and handwriting skills by using only a notepad and pencil for some initial fieldwork, or you may teach high-end technology through videography, digital cameras, and the Internet. Each fieldwork tool has its strengths and weaknesses. You can layer a fieldwork project with only a few steps or with many. Consider your school's resources, your students' abilities, and your curriculum. Students can also help decide what tools they would like to use and how detailed they would like the process to be. The student products that result from fieldwork will both influence the steps and tools you choose and be influenced by them. If you and students decide to produce a video, for example, more complex fieldwork is called for. To share results informally in class, however, students may ask a few questions and report findings casually.

2. Determine, whether students will work individually or in teams.

3. Decide upon documentation methods: note taking, tape recording, still photography, video recording, laptop computers, Palm Pilots. Consult your school media specialist as well as students in considering methodology. No matter what methods you choose—and you may choose more than one—modeling and practicing are essential (see Modeling and Practicing, below). This choice will be important in developing a project budget, which could be a math component for students. If you will need money for film or a tape recorder, for example, think of local funding sources, starting with the PTA, businesses, local media outlets, arts councils, or historical societies. Remember that fieldwork does not always require spending money, however. Students can use just pencil and paper.

4. Focus the project and help students identify someone to interview. Folklorists usually focus on "tradition bearers," or persons who practice or are knowledgeable about some community tradition. Possible interviewees include classmates, teachers, school staff, family members, neighbors, or other members of the community. Remember that everyone practices some sort of folklife in his or her everyday life. Local newspapers often provide excellent leads for people, places, and events.

5. With students, develop a project schedule and a checklist of things to do and remember during fieldwork (see Worksheet section below chapter for [Interview Checklist](#)).

6. Obtain permission from school administrators to conduct interviews and, if applicable, to leave campus for interviews.

7. Make sure students have the following basic supplies for a formal taped interview:

- Notebook and pencils
- Camera and film
- Tape recorder, fresh batteries, microphones (for external mike tape recorder), good quality cassette tapes (those 90 minutes or shorter with corner screws are best), and extension cord
- [Interview Report form](#) (see sample form in Worksheet section at the end of the chapter)
- Interview consent form (see sample form in Worksheet section at the end of the chapter)

TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION

Photography

Cameras for the Classroom

Teachers find that the new disposable 35-mm cameras work better than other inexpensive cameras and create better prints. So far, disposable slide film cameras are not marketed. Buy the highest ASA possible (400 ASA is ideal) and urge students to make sure they have as much light as possible before shooting and to avoid backlighting (shooting a subject in front of a window, for example). Build film processing into your budget and photography practice into your schedule. If you choose to emphasize the study of photography, find some single-lens reflex (SLR) 35-mm cameras that require adjustments and focusing. Try the school media center, local newspaper, high school art department, and parents. Folklorists often take both color and black and white photographs as well as color slides. The photos work well in publications, and slides are more affordable to process than prints and can be used easily in presentations. With computer scanners and color photocopiers becoming more affordable, you will be able to make excellent use of color photos. Digital cameras require a computer and are good ways to study technology and develop computer-based products.

Identify Your Photos

Whatever the camera, be sure to label prints, slides, and digital diskettes with pertinent information: date, time, place, photographer, subject (see Worksheet section below for a sample [Photo Log](#)). Designing and keeping logs is an important part of fieldwork. Label each slide or print to identify the corresponding photo log sheet. Write lightly in pencil on the back of prints or write on a label, then stick the label on the back of the photo. Make extra copies of good photos to give interviewees as a way of saying thank you. Make sure they have signed a permission form before being photographed (see Worksheet section below for a sample [Consent Form](#)). Digital photographs can be used for a computer slide show or multimedia stack, but they will not be useful as a permanent archival record.

Photography Tips

- Try to center the subject in the camera viewfinder.
- Experiment with different distances from the subject: how does this affect your picture?
- Use different camera angles to make the picture interesting: eye level, above, and below.
- Be aware of light and shadow: don't take a picture with someone right in front of a window.
- Tell a story with the camera: take close-up detail shots, action shots, pictures which illustrates something being made (like a recipe or a woodcarving) or an event happening (like a Homecoming Parade), pictures that set the scene, portraits of people you interview.
- For a good website on photo tips, see Kodak <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/nav/takingPics.shtml>

Videography

Video cameras have become ever smaller and more available. Planning how to record an interview, a craftsperson at work, or a traditional community event requires practice and forethought. In addition to mastering operations, students must calculate how many tapes the project will require, decide whether a team or individuals should tackle the video shoot, choose a tripod or hold the camera steady, check the sound for background noise or wind, watch for backlighting and other problems. Students should complete a [Tape Log](#) soon after taping while memories are fresh (see Worksheet section at the end of the chapter for a sample log form). *Learning from Your Community*, listed under Print Resources below, provides good tips for video projects. Editing video tape can be tedious, so involve a media specialist or other expert if

possible when developing a polished product. Perhaps local television stations or cable companies might donate engineers or time in their editing labs. Videotaping a slide show with student scripts is another way to go. Some schools are equipped to use video clips on classroom computers. Again, be polite. Share a copy of a product with informants or write thank-you letters.

Tape Recording

Various types of tape recorders abound, from boom boxes with built-in microphones to tiny hand-held recorders. Try to use recorders with standard-sized (not mini) cassettes; these cassettes are easier to edit, duplicate, and use for presentations. You can do a lot with an inexpensive cassette recorder if you also invest in an inexpensive hand-held microphone instead of relying on the built-in mike. The mikes plug into the recorder and come with small stands, which should be hand held or placed on a non-vibrating surface when students are interviewing. Be sure to use good quality tapes, preferably those with screws in the corner of the tape. It is worth the extra money!

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

The following section alerts teachers to possible problems associated with folklife fieldwork. Despite potential problems, remember that studying folklife is richly rewarding. Students learn important skills and viewpoints through studying folklife and conducting fieldwork.

Cultural Sensitivity

Folklife is inherently complex and touches on people's beliefs and way of life. Students should honor interviewees' beliefs, values, and privacy. They will learn that trust creates better results. For example, some people may deeply believe that a local legend is true, while others may dismiss it. Family stories often express family values. In defining family we need to expand our definition beyond the typical "nuclear" family to include extended family and friends of the family. Respecting interviewees' beliefs about their traditions is important. Potentially difficult issues in the local classroom include inclusion of Catholic and non-Protestant religious traditions in a heavily Protestant community; Confederate traditions and the Confederate battle flag; and religious beliefs about Halloween. Insiders' views of folklife differ from outsiders' views. Not everyone in a folk group will agree about a tradition; and not everyone will practice it identically. There is great diversity even within folk groups. Students of various ethnic, religious, or other folk groups may not know much about the folklife of the group. Make sure you are not assuming a student is an expert, for example, or marking a student as "different." Highlighting Jewish or Muslim traditions in a predominantly Christian classroom, for example, requires consideration and planning.

Public Presentation

Showcasing traditions raises other ethical issues. It is not always appropriate to ask students or other representatives of a particular folk group to publicly "display" traditions that are usually done in private among members of the group.

Prejudice

Folklife is not only a vehicle for positive and celebratory cultural expressions but also for more troublesome beliefs such as prejudice. Be aware that complex issues underlie folklife, BUT studying folklife also can help increase tolerance and cultural understanding by incorporating the traditions of all segments of the community and student body into the classroom.

HOW TO DO A FIELDWORK OR COLLECTION PROJECT: STEP BY STEP

There are three steps in a successful folklife collection project: Preparation, Fieldwork Interviewing, and Processing your materials. The following section outline procedures for each of these steps. These will need to be tailored to specific age groups and class projects.

STEP 1: Preparation

Contact the person to be interviewed in advance. Students or teachers may make the initial contact, depending on the project and the abilities of the students. Describe the purpose and nature of the interview, the approximate time it will take, how the interview will be used and for what purposes. Inform the person if you wish to record the interview and get their verbal consent. A formal [Consent Form](#) will need to be signed at the time of the interview. Answer any questions the interviewee may have about the interview process or the larger project. This can be done in person, by phone, or perhaps through a letter-writing assignment.

Arrange for the interview. Agree upon a quiet location where you won't be interrupted. The interviewee's home or another familiar location works best. Arrange a date and time; telephone the day before to remind the person of the session. As an alternative to interviews outside the school, have students interview school staff or other students.

Search for information about the subject. An interview can be part of a larger student research project. The most prepared students will ask better questions and do a better interview. Suggest that they consult with friends and relatives, visit the library, read newspapers, the Internet, and anything that might contribute to a better understanding of the subject and the issues to be discussed. This is an excellent opportunity for an interdisciplinary project between language arts and social studies.

Practice good listening skills with students. After hours of staring at television, computer screens, and video games, students may need to tune their ears. Improving listening skills is a key lesson learned in fieldwork. Interviewers learn more by staying silent than by jabbering or rushing interviewees. An assignment as simple as playing a short recorded story will test students' listening tolerance. Do they fidget, do eyes wander, do they relay what they heard? Discuss with students whether they enjoyed the experience and how it differed from watching a movie. Reading a story aloud is another way of measuring students' attention to listening.

Prepare the interview questions. What kinds of questions are needed to help define the subject or complete the assignment? A class or group brainstorming session is often a good way to develop a question list. Coach students to ask open-ended questions that require more than a one-word answer. Start questions with words such as "why," "how," "where," "what kind of." For a classroom activity in asking good questions, see "[That's a Good Question](#)" in the Worksheet section below.

Arrange questions in an outline format. Sometimes the interviewee is given a copy of the outline in advance of the interview. This will give him/her time to think about people, events, and dates that are not in recent memory.

Model and practice interviewing ahead of time! Carefully modeling and practicing fieldwork techniques with students will pay off far better than merely assigning students an interview. Interviewing is more unnerving than it seems, so practicing will reduce butterflies, improve diction and listening skills, and build confidence. Try a couple of techniques, such as asking students to critique your model interview of a student or another teacher, pairing students off to take turns questioning and answering, using the model scripts (see below) to prompt student critiques, and reporting on interviews conducted at home. Through practice, students learn to improve their questionnaires, listen to responses; follow up interesting leads, and share stories of their own to give the interviewee some examples and "prime the pump" to elicit answers. For the best results

and richest interviews, practice probing for details and asking follow up questions. Worksheets included at the end of the chapter includes two scripts that students may act out in class to introduce the concept of modeling. See "[How Not to Conduct an Interview](#)" and "[The Reluctant Guest](#)." You may also want to try the [FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Card](#) activity. Another useful resource is *Discovering Our Delta: A Learning Guide to Community Research*, an educational kit which includes a 26-minute video that follows five middle school students from the Mississippi Delta as they conduct research on their communities. Although suitable for all students, the rural southern setting makes it especially pertinent to rural South Georgia schools. The Student Guide (which is available on-line) has a very useful section on critiquing interviews with students. (<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>)

Get to know your equipment. If you are using school equipment, test any equipment just prior to the interview session. If you use batteries, install fresh ones. Make sure students do this with their own or borrowed machines as well. Have everyone bring spare batteries and at least one more blank tape than you think necessary.

Arrange for the interview. Agree upon a quiet location where you will not be interrupted. The interviewee's home or another familiar location works best. Arrange a date and time and telephone the day before to remind the person of the session. As an alternative to interviews outside the school, have students interview school staff and each other.

STEP 2: Fieldwork Interview

Bring a notepad, paper, and your question list.

If the interview is tape recorded, **begin your recording with an announcement:** "This is a tape recorded interview for the _____ School Folklife Project. My name is _____ and I am interviewing _____ about _____. Today's date is _____." Be sure to test the volume level and play back a short portion of the tape to make sure all the voices are loud enough.

Fill out the Interview Report Form (see Worksheet section below) during this first part of the interview to break the ice.

You can stop the session at any time if anyone needs a break.

Speak slowly and clearly.

Don't be afraid of silence. Sometimes people just need time to think about what to say next.

Don't interrupt! Write down questions that come to mind and refer to them later.

Ask one question at a time. Take your time; give the person a chance to think and add information before moving on to your next question.

Be a good listener! The interviewee may answer some of your questions in the course of the discussion. You may not need to ask every question on your list.

Follow up topics of interest that come up that you may not have thought of. Get as much detail and explanation as you can.

Write down names and places and confirm spellings at the end of the session.

End the interview at a reasonable time. Arrange to come back at another time if the interviewee seems tired.

After the interview, make sure to get a signed [Consent Form](#). Say thanks!

Be sure to send a follow-up thank you note. Giving your interviewee a copy of the fieldwork is a nice way to say “thank you.”

STEP 3: Processing

Note: This is an important step that ensures the usefulness of the tape as a record of local community traditions and engages students in important listening, spelling, and analyzing skills. Doing the interview is the fun part, but don't overlook these steps!

Listen to the tape and prepare a [Tape Log](#) (see Worksheet section below) with information about the contents of the tape, including a subject index or tape log which lists the topics covered in the interview. Key your log to the counter numbers if your machine has them.

Be sure to label your tape and tape box with your name, your interviewee, and the date of recording.

If appropriate to your project, transcribe your tape. Professional folklorists spend many hours transcribing field tapes, listening repeatedly to typed or written interviews word for word. A special tape player with earphones and a foot pedal is an invaluable tool, but few schools will have access to this equipment. Be realistic in deciding how much to transcribe. Students could listen to their field tapes, create a subject index, and choose a portion to transcribe. Students may want to type the transcriptions using computer and word processing software. This would make the editing process much simpler as they play and replay the recordings. A subject index can be as simple as a list of words listed in order that will help cue a listener.

The FOLKPATTERNS Activity: “[Transcribing a Tape](#)” which may be a useful summary and classroom tool, can be found in the Worksheet section at the end of this chapter.

Transcribing as soon after fieldwork as possible is helpful since the interviewer will remember the conversation more clearly. Again, be realistic about how much students can actually transcribe. A mere five minutes of conversation may take up pages when transcribed. So why transcribe at all? It is a good way to teach listening, proofing, editing and keyboarding skills. Students can see themes that emerge, analyze the text more carefully, and study the difference between oral and literary narratives. Results can be preserved in a local archive or in students' portfolios; used as scripts for radio programs or readers' theater, for example; given to interviewees as gifts; or added to exhibits. A transcription can also indicate where follow-up fieldwork is needed, either to clarify a point or deepen the project. When students return to interviewees with their transcriptions, they can verify the interview and strengthen their relationships with interviewees.

For a sample transcription, see Unit II of Louisiana Voices (<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>), the FOLKPATTERNS Transcribing a Tape worksheet at the end of the chapter, or Discovering Our Delta Student Guide (<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>).

Also, see the Journal for Multimedia History, Vol. 3, 2000. In the article "Miner's Work, Miner's Photographer: The Life and Work of George Harvan," a number of recorded interviews are both transcribed and available in audio form. This is a great way for students to listen to a conducted interview and to track the differences between spoken and transcribed words.

<http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/>

SAMPLE STUDENT PRODUCTS

Working with interviews allows students to develop skills in labeling, organizing, archiving, transcribing, contextualizing, editing, revising, and producing projects such as exhibits, publications, Web pages, scrapbooks, public programs, and so on. What can be done with interviews in the classroom? Sometimes fieldwork results give a clue how best to present findings. Sometimes you will know going into a project that you have to create an exhibit or a video to meet content standards. Sometimes students will know what message they want to convey through a presentation. Obviously, student products will vary from project to project, community to community. If you have undertaken very simple fieldwork and asked students to interview one another, the product can also be simple: essays, drawings, timelines, graphs, oral presentations, multi-media presentations, or group reports. Fieldwork that is more elaborate demands products that are more complex. Collaborations among classroom teachers, media specialists, and art and music teachers strengthen design and content of products. A list of a few folklife and oral history student products from around the country follows:

- Archival presentation of fieldwork to school or community
- Board game
- Brochure
- Classroom or school exhibit
- Community heritage night
- Computer QuickTime video clips
- Computer or conventional slide show
- Cultural map
- Diorama
- Drawings, paintings, collages
- Graphs, charts, timelines
- Magazine or other publication
- Multi-media presentations
- Newscast
- Oral and written reports
- Portfolios (of lessons, units, or a longer study)
- Radio program
- Readers' theater
- Residencies by tradition bearers and folk artists students identify
- School or town story day
- School or town photo day
- School history
- Scrapbooks
- Songs or poems written from fieldwork interviews
- Story quilt or mural
- Taped sound collage of "community sounds"
- Town model
- Video
- Walking tour brochure or audio cassette
- Webpage
- Writing workshop

AFTER THE PROJECT

Consider preserving your documentation in an archive.

Your Interview Report Form, Tapes, Tape Log, transcript if appropriate, and Consent Form make up your fieldwork documentation. Professional folklorists find many ways to use and preserve their documentation. You and your students will have to decide how best to process and preserve

your fieldwork. One of the most important ways to preserve fieldwork is to archive photographs, slides, tapes, field notes, and videos in a repository where the materials will be protected from disintegrating and where people may study them. Archiving requires careful logging, so this is where students' labeling of materials and securing consent forms really become important. Without a consent or permission form, materials cannot be made accessible to the public, nor can they be used to produce exhibits, publications, or programs, which are other major means of presenting fieldwork results. Whether they create a classroom archive, a school library archive, or a gift to the state or local historical society, students should learn something about the importance of preserving folklife fieldwork. Brainstorm a list with them about why preservation is important. Ask students to explore the on-line archives of the American Folklife Center and the American Memory project. Then return to the list of reasons to preserve fieldwork and add any new insights from students. Together discuss how the class would like to manage fieldwork notes.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Developing Listening Skills: As mentioned previously, the art of interviewing involves good active listening. Here are some activities to try with your students:

1. Play some traditional music and ask students to do one of the following: listen for a particular instrument, describe lyrics, draw a picture that conveys the song's meaning to them, write a short dialogue the song inspires, or write questions they'd like to ask the musicians. Many local musicians now have tapes or CDs. A good cassette sampler of Georgia traditional music is *Georgia Folk*, distributed by the Georgia Council for the Arts Folklife Program, 260 14th Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30318-5793 (404-685-2786). The on-line folklife collections of the Library of Congress' American Memory project include a number of audio files. This could be an interesting technology link, especially for older students, but be advised that these are all historic recordings and sound quality is not up to today's standards. See, for example, Now What A Time: Blues, Gospel and the Ft. Valley (GA) Music Festivals, 1938-43, (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ftvhtml/ftvhome.html>).
2. Set up a classroom listening center and require students to listen to tapes and log their responses. Include a variety of tapes—poetry, traditional narratives, professional storytelling, various types of music, history, and short fiction. Invite students to share their own tapes of favorite stories and music. Remember to screen them first. Add students' stories recorded in classroom presentations, as homework, or from fieldwork.
3. Record radio newscasts on audiocassettes and play them for the class. Play a newscast twice, then give a short-answer quiz of about five questions on the content. Recording the newscasts is easier than you might think. Most boom boxes record directly from the radio. Just drop in a cassette before the newscast (usually at the top of the hour on public and commercial stations) and press "record" and "play" at the same time. (Some machines allow you to record by simply pressing the "record" button.) Note: the 13-part radio series on South Georgia traditions, Wiregrass Ways, is available on-line at <http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP>. Click on the Radio Archives.

(Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit II).

Activity 2: Model interviews in the classroom

Script 2, How NOT to do an Interview

Objective: allows students to see the value of listening, courtesy, and preparation in conducting an interview. (see [Interview Modeling Exercise #2 How Not to Conduct an Interview worksheet](#) below)

Grade Levels: 6 and up (may be adapted as a model for younger children)

Procedure: Select two students to play the roles of "Fieldworker" and "Interviewee." Give each a copy of the script and ask them to play the roles in front of the class. They and the rest of the class are told that the fieldworker is interviewing a community member. After the interview, ask the class to explain what was wrong with the fieldworker's approach. Write the responses on the board as students offer them. Tip: Script may be adapted to a local setting. The script on the Louisiana Voices website, from which this was adapted, is set in Louisiana. See <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit II).

Script 1: The Reluctant Guest

Objective: To show students the value of asking follow-up questions and questions that elicit meaningful responses (see [Interview Modeling Exercise #1 The Reluctant Guest worksheet](#) at the end of this chapter).

Grade Levels: 6 and up (may be adapted as a model for younger children)

Procedure: In this interview the teacher should play the part of the reluctant guest. A team of students should act as reporters and together draft ten questions to ask the teacher about his or her role as a teacher. Students should question the teacher in front of the class. They are told they may ask follow-up questions based on the teacher's answers. The teacher should answer the questions offering as little information as possible, using one-word answers, for example. The rest of the class should take notes on the teacher's answers, critiquing the reporters' good points and mistakes. Start with the sample interview below to get students started on developing a list of questions and strategies for eliciting answers and following up leads. Ask students what they might do to elicit more interesting responses. Their responses should include the following: Ask the teacher to give specific examples. Ask open-ended "how" and "why" questions that require description and explanation, not just "what," "when," and "where" questions that draw only "data responses." Follow up missed leads, such as "the fire" or "the astronaut" and the "country musician."

(Adapted from Louisiana Voices Unit II, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>).

Activity 3: That's A Good Question

Objective: to model and practice good open-ended interview questions. [see [That's A Good Question Worksheet](#) below]

Grade Level: Grades 4 and up. Younger children may do better with the [FOLKPATTERNS Card Game](#) in Chapter 4 that already models questions on folklore topics.

Procedure: Give an assigned interview topic related to a specific lesson or let the students choose a topic of interest. Discuss open and closed questions (perhaps modeling with Script 1 above). This activity is especially useful to use as a brainstorming tool for a practice interview

questionnaire or to critique students' questioning skills. Compile sample questions individually, within student groups, or as a class.

Analyze the questions: What information did you find out? What is left out? Did your questions give you the kind of information you expected (why or why not)? What follow up questions might students use? What would be the best order for these questions in a questionnaire?

Students may follow-up by using questions generated to complete a [FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Card](#) (Activity 4 below), or doing a practice interview with a partner. Lead a discussion on the topic "What did they learn about their interview skills?" As an alternative, use a group questionnaire generated from this activity to model a practice interview in class, perhaps with an invited guest, a member of the school staff, or a student.

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Activity 4: Collect Folklore on Short-Interview Cards

Objective: To introduce students to collecting techniques, using questioning, notetaking, and summarizing skills

Grade level: Grades 3 and up

Materials: Pencils or pens and [FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Cards](#) (photocopies will work, too)

Time required: 30 minutes and up

Procedure: Have each member of the group choose a partner. Choose a folklore topic for the whole group or have each team of partners choose their own topic. Or, choose the same question for everyone to use, such as "What funny joke have you heard lately?" or "What rhymes do you know to count-out teams before playing a game?"

If necessary, demonstrate the technique for the entire group, having one or two students show how it is done.

Have one partner ask the other a question about that type of folklore. When the other partner responds, ask the first child to write down the reply.

Take the group through the questions on the rest of the card. Encourage them to ask other questions such as "Where did you learn that saying?" or "Who taught it to you?"

Have the partners switch and have the other student complete a **FOLKPATTERNS Short-Interview Card**.

When everyone in your group is finished, have the group read their cards aloud and share the fun of learning about each other's traditions. This is also a good way to begin a collection project or to generate leads on a particular topic.

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[program/folkpatterns/index.html](http://www.folkpatterns.org/program/folkpatterns/index.html). These materials may be copied for nonprofit educational purposes.)

Activity 5 Transcribing a Tape [see [Transcribing a Tape Worksheet](#) below.]

WORKSHEET LIST

- Model Interview Scripts: [The Reluctant Guest, How Not to Do an Interview](#) (also on-line at <http://www.louisianovoices.org> (See Unit II))
 - [That's a Good Question](#)
 - [Collect Folklore on Short Interview Cards \(FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Card\)](#)
 - [Transcribing a Tape](#)
 - [Consent Form](#)
 - [Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#)
 - [Tape Log](#)
 - [Photo Log](#)
 - [Interview Report Form](#)
- **Note: the above fieldwork forms are also available at <http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>
- [Interview Checklist](#)

[Activity 2 Worksheet]

Interview Modeling Exercise #1 *THE RELUCTANT GUEST*

Reporter: Do you like teaching?

Guest: Yes.

Reporter: What do you like most about teaching?

Guest: Students.

Reporter: What was your worst experience teaching?

Guest: The fire.

Reporter: How long have you been teaching?

Guest: A long time.

Reporter: Do you keep in touch with any of your students?

Guest: The astronaut and the country musician who won a Grammy.

Reporter: Well, thanks for your time.

Guest: Sure.

(Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit II))

Interview Modeling Exercise #2

HOW NOT TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

Fieldworker: Well, sorry I'm an hour late. I'm supposed to ask you some questions for my stupid class project, but I really don't want to do this thing.

Interviewee: Oh.... So, what would you like to know?

FW: Tell me your name again?

I: Gary Dubrovski.

FW: What?

I: Gary Dubrovski.

FW: Heck, I'm not going to even TRY to spell that right. Where're you from?

I: Cecil.

FW: Now that's a hick little town, isn't it. Are you married?

I: No.

FW: What's your wife's name?

I: I said I'm NOT married.

FW: Oh. What do you do?

I: Work at Del-Cook Lumber.

FW: Where are you from?

I: As I said, I'm from Cecil.

FW: So what do you do in Cecil?

I: Well, like I said, I work at Del Cook.

FW: Oh. I think working at Del Cook must be a boring job.....

I: Well, it pays the bills. My father worked there too, you know. He's the one who got me started wood carving, actually.

FW: Hey, gee, what time is it? I got a date. Can we do this later? This stupid project is taking up too much time. I'm done for now, you can go, OKAY?

(Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit II))

[Activity 3 Worksheet]

That's A Good Question

1. Write down a folklore topic that interests you.

2. What do you know about this topic right now?

3. If you were to ask questions of someone about that topic, what would you want to find out? Write down at least three things below:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
4. Now write questions beginning with these words that ask for the information you want to know.
When _____
Who _____
What _____
Where _____
Why _____
Which _____
How _____
5. Good! You made a great start. Now write as many more questions as you can. Remember to begin your questions with "who," "what," "where," "when," "why," "how," and "which." Now you are ready to try interviewing!

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FOLKPATTERNS SHORT-INTERVIEW CARD

Describe the folk tradition you asked about:

Where collected _____ Date _____

Person interviewed _____ Age _____

Address _____

Interviewer (you) _____ Age _____

Tell us more Fill in any other information you have on the person's background (such as ethnic group, religion, or occupation) and the situation where you collected the information.

Permission granted to collect this information.

Interviewers Initial's _____ Interviewee's Initials _____

4-H FOLKPATTERNS
Michigan State University Museum
East Lansing, MI 48824

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[Activity 5 Worksheet]

How to Transcribe Your Tape

Get out paper and pencil, or a typewriter or computer. Place a title at the beginning with the name of the person you interviewed, the date of the interview, and your name (sample: "Interview with Maria Hernandez, November 10, 1992, by Ana Hernandez.")

1. Start listening to the tape. Write down each word you hear. Stop the tape when needed. rewind occasionally and listen to the same section as you read along, making sure you wrote the words in the correct order. You may need to do this several times. If you can't understand the words, ask another person to listen or simply leave a blank space.
2. Use initials for each speaker. Maria Hernandez would be MH, etc. Each time a new speaker talks, use initials so readers can follow along.
3. You will notice that people talk much differently than they write. They begin new sentences without finishing the old one. They may add a lot of extra words (called "crutch words") such as "you know" and "yeah." If you think the words are crutch words and you want to leave these out of your transcript, say so at the beginning: "I removed crutch words and false starts from this transcript."

Some hints:

- When a sentence is not completed, put a dash at the end (-).
- To add your own comment or explanation, use brackets[].
- Sometimes sentences aren't complete. That's okay. Just write what you hear.
- Don't try to make it sound better by adding your own words or correcting grammar.
- Sometimes it's not easy to see where one sentence ends and another begins. Just write it the best way you can. The main idea is that the transcript is accurate and comes close to how the speaker really sounds.
- If you can't hear the words, leave a blank and come back to it later, or have someone else listen to the tape.

A sample transcript follows:

AH: Aunt Maria, well, I was wondering what kinds of vegetables you use in your chicken soup?

MH: I like to use celery, parsnips and carrots mostly, but I always use, see, like these here, I always use carrots. If we have potatoes, of course I throw those in.
[Tastes the soup].

AH: How do you cut up the vege—

MH: --Carrots—I always put carrots in, you know, in thick slices, but it doesn't much matter how I do the potatoes. No special way, really.

You'll find that transcribing a tape is an art in itself. No two people will transcribe the same tape the same way.

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[Worksheet]

CONSENT FORM

Thank you for participating in the _____ Project. By signing the form below, you give your permission to include any tapes and/or photographs made during the project in a public archive where they will be available to researchers and the public for educational purposes including publications, exhibitions, class presentations, educational media programs, and websites.

By giving your permission, you do not give up any copyright or performance rights that you may hold.

I agree to the uses of these materials described above, except for any restrictions, noted below.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Caregiver's Signature (if researcher is underage student):

Restriction description: _____

Please do not use my name in association with these materials: _____

(Adapted from Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage,
<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>)

LETTER TO PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Date:

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

Our class will be studying _____ during the next few weeks. Students will conduct primary research by interviewing people at school, at home, and/or in the community. They will be learning not only about various traditions and how people learn them and practice them, but they will also be learning to ask good questions, listen well, take notes, follow up on interesting points or missing information, follow directions that are sequential, and behave politely. Students may want to interview you, another family member, or a community member. They must get permission from those they interview if the student wants to share the results. Finally, they will compile their research and develop a final product and be graded on both.

Please contact me with any questions you may have about this project.

Thank you,

(Teacher's name)

_____ (Students name) have my permission to conduct folklore fieldwork research, interview community members, take photographs, and/or make records.

Parent or Caregiver

Date

(Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit II).

[Worksheet]

INTERVIEW REPORT FORM

Full name of person interviewed: _____

Nickname, if any: _____

Male _____ Female _____

Mailing address of person interviewed: _____

County: _____

Telephone number of person interviewed: _____

Birth date: _____

Birth place: _____

How many years living in this community? _____

Where else lived? _____

Names of family members (parents, husband/wife, children):

Occupation: _____

Additional skills and activities: _____

Education: _____

Ethnic background: _____

Religious affiliation: _____

Hobbies, interests: _____

Fieldworker's name: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Location of Interview: _____

COMMENTS, NOTES, OTHER INFORMATION: (Please use other side)

(Adapted from Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, <http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>)

[Worksheet]

PHOTO LOG

Name of photographer: _____

Date: _____

Names of persons photographed: _____

General description of subjects photographed:

Frame number: Description (who, what, when, where)

(Adapted from Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research, Smithsonian
Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage,
<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>)

[Worksheet]

TAPE LOG

Name of person(s) interviewed: _____

Fieldworker: _____

Date of interview: _____

Location of interview: _____

Other people present: _____

Brand of tape recorder: _____

Brand and type of tape: _____

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF TAPE QUALITY (background noise, etc.)

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF TAPE CONTENTS

TAPE INDEX
COUNTER NO.

SUBJECT

(Adapted from Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research, Smithsonian
Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage,
<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>)

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Before the Interview:

- Set the date, time, and place of the interview.
- Ask permission to use a camera and/or tape recorder.
- Explain the use of the Interview Report Form.
- Explain your project and what you will do with the information.
- Check your equipment (recorder, microphone, electrical cord, batteries, camera, flash)
- Bring extra tapes, film, and batteries.
- Write out your questions.

At the Interview:

- Set up the tape recorder and place the microphone close to the interviewee.
- Make sure there are no noises in the room.
- Start your tape with an introduction: "This is a tape recorded interview for the _____ School Folklife Project. My name is _____ and I am interviewing _____ about _____. Today's date is _____." Be sure to test the volume level and play back a short portion of the tape to make sure all the voices are loud enough.
- Label the tape with the date, person's name, your name, location.
- Thank the person and say "This is the end of the interview" when you finish.
- Have the person sign the Consent Form.

After the Interview:

- Send a thank-you letter.
- Jot down other questions you'd like to ask in a follow-up interview.
- Listen to and index the tape with the Tape Log.
- Identify photos with the Photo Log.
- Transcribe the tape (optional).
- Store the tape in a safe place or donate it to a library or museum.

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PRINT SOURCES

** Note, if not available locally, most of these books can be ordered through the Culture Catalog, a resource collection for teachers <http://www.carts.org>

Kozma, LuAnne Gaykowski. **FOLKPATTERNS Leader's Guide, A Cultural Heritage Project.** Michigan State University Museum and Cooperative Extension, East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1991. A handy guide to folklife projects, which includes activity sheets in folklife interviewing, family folklore, foodways, and heritage gardening. To order (\$12), contact Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Bulletin Office, Box 231, East Lansing, MI, 48844 or for online ordering contact <http://ceenet.msue.msu.edu/bulletin/ctlgmast.html>.

Matthews-DeNatale, Gail and Don Patterson. **Learning from Your Community: Folklore and Video in the Schools.** South Carolina Arts Commission, Folk Arts Program, 1991. This guide for grades 4-8 provides a sequence of classroom lessons that help students make videos about local culture and connect their life experiences and "history." It is based upon a folklorist's and a videographer's work with South Carolina students on the effects of Hurricane Hugo. Offers good tips about student collection and video projects.

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. **FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research**, 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002; written as a college writing text, has excellent ideas and activities. Also see website for ideas and activities: <http://www.fieldworking.com/home.html>

Tell Us How It Was—Stories of Rural Elders Preserved by Rural Youth (Rural School and Community Trust and What Kids Can Do, 2002). To order, contact Rural School and Community Trust, 1825 K Street NW, Suite 703, Washington DC, 20006, <http://ruraledu.org>; includes oral histories gathered by middle and high school students across the country, a how-to guide, samples of student work, rubrics, and activities.

Zeitlin, Steven J., Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker. **A Celebration of American Family Folklore.** Smithsonian Institution, 1982. Includes a family folklore interviewing guide (see online version below) and tips for interviewing as well as a good overview of family folklore.

ON-LINE SOURCES

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research (video can be ordered, teacher and student guides are online at this site): the community research methods demonstrated here are powerful tools for teaching and learning of language arts, social studies, music, art, mathematics, science, and home economics. The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000) <http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

Duke Center for Documentary Studies "Indivisible, Stories of American Community" website; a download-able "how to" booklet for doing and organizing community documentation projects (Putting Documentary Work to Work), including good advice for a non-professional on how to conduct interviews, kinds of equipment, where to get supplies, etc. The resources section also includes an Educator's Guide, particularly useful for a step-by-step guide to oral history collecting and working with and taking photographs. <http://www.indivisible.org/resources.htm>

Family Folklore Interviewing Guide on-line (from Zeitlin et al above), with sample questions, and useful tips on equipment, doing the interview, and ethics. <http://educate.si.edu/migrations/seek2/family.html>

Folklife and Fieldwork: An on-line publication of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, a handy guide to conducting fieldwork, including model interview and permission forms. Also see "**Documenting Maritime Traditions**," which is useful for any occupational or regional in-depth fieldwork projects, and Exploring Your Community poster for great classroom ideas. Search from <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife>

H-Oralhist, contains "Oral History Method and Guides."
<http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~oral/>

Journal for MultiMedia History, Vol. 3, 2000. In the article "Miner's Work, Miner's Photographer: The Life and Work of George Harvan," a number of recorded interviews are both transcribed and available in audio form. This is a great way for students to listen to a conducted interview and to track the differences between spoken and transcribed words.
<http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/>

Kodak. A website with tips on taking, displaying, and using photographs.
<http://www.kodak.com/US/en/nav/takingPics.shtml>

Louisiana Voices: An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions. An extensive Web-based guide developed to help teachers meet standards, use education technology, and incorporate new assessment strategies through folklife and students' investigations of themselves and their community through fieldwork. Although written for Louisiana classrooms, the guide is in the public domain and is adaptable for any region. Unit II discusses fieldwork, with useful links to a glossary of terms, on-line resources, a sample "parent letter," and activities for students to prepare them for doing interviews and fieldwork projects.
<http://www.louisianavoices.org>

Montana Heritage Project, Home of a statewide network of educators and students engaged in community documentation and heritage education, including an interviewing component in the "Essay of Place." <http://www.edheritage.org>

Step-by-Step Guide to Oral History by Judith Moyer (rev. 1999) is a comprehensive guide to conducting oral history projects. http://www.dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html

Note

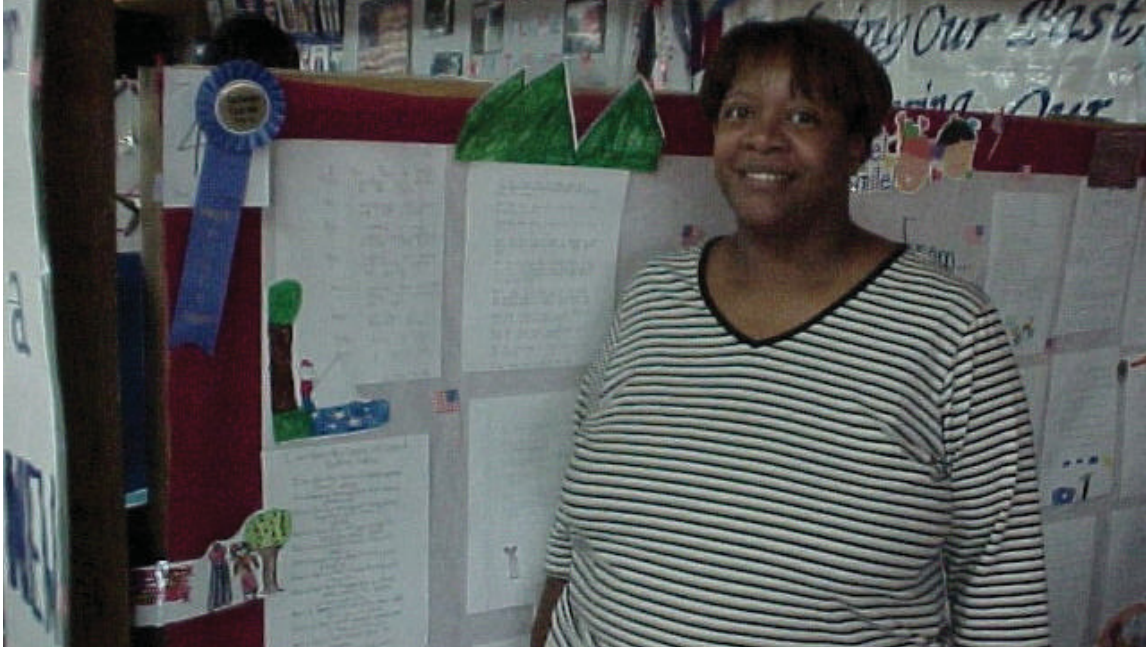
1. The material in this chapter is adapted liberally from the following sources: *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts), Study Unit II (Fieldwork Basics), <http://www.louisianavoices.org>; *FOLKPATTERNS 4-H Leader's Guide*, Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, Cooperative Extension Service, and Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, MI. Copyright 1991 Michigan State University Board of Trustees, <http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>; *Indivisible: Educator's Guide to Collecting Oral History and Making Documentary Photographs*, Duke University Center for Documentary Studies, <http://www.indivisible.org>; and *A Teacher's Guide to the Kentucky Folklife Festival 2000*, Kentucky Folklife Program, (http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm)

CHAPTER SIX

Folkwriting with Young Children

Vanessa Mitchell

Cook Primary School



Vanessa Mitchell accepts the First Place award at the 2002 Cook County Exchange Club Fair. Her students' poems and essays about places in Cook County are displayed. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

This chapter draws on the 2nd grade text *Spotlight on Literacy*, Elaine Mei Aoki, et al. (New York: MacMillan/McGraw-Hill, 1997), but other suitable literature may be used. The lessons in this chapter were written for the second grade classroom but may be adapted to other levels. Some of the lessons would be especially suitable for third grade social studies, with its emphasis on communities. Students first write about their special places, then go on a field trip and interview residents about a local custom, and, finally, create a driving tour of the county.

My Places Unit: My County as I See It

My Places Unit Lesson #1: Look at My Special Nook

Grade Level: 2nd but suitable for lower elementary

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to use all of their senses to write descriptive narratives of special places and to begin to develop a sense of the importance of place.

Content Standards:

Cook County Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

-Correctly forms letters and numbers;

-Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

-Writes complete sentences

-Uses correct capital letters

-Uses correct punctuation

-Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas

DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft

REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending

EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences

PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read and discuss "Charlie Anderson" by Barbara Abercrombie in the grade 2 language arts text *Spotlight on Literacy* (Macmillan/McGraw-Hill) or any other appropriate story about place. This story is about a cat that has a special place. Whenever discussing a story, you should be conscious of the questions you ask. Be sure to ask questions on all levels of **Bloom's Taxonomy** (<http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html>).

Activity 2:

Use the writing process to write about a special place.

Pre-writing: The whole class makes a brainstorm list of many, varied, unusual special places.

Drafting: Use [Power Writing worksheets](#) (three steps) to guide students to use all senses while writing about their special places.

Revising/editing: Use the writing rubric to aid with revising. Editing and revising are difficult skills for young children. Teacher modeling is crucial to facilitate student learning. Some suggestions for editing and revising are 1) use an overhead projector and edit/revise student's writing as a class, or 2) use peer revising/editing by pairing stronger and weaker students to revise/edit one on one.

Publishing: Students may write neatly or use computer to publish. Have students illustrate their stories in a variety of ways (photographs, crayons, water colors, clip art, etc.).

Activity 3:

Students will take pictures of their special places around the school. Refer to Chapter 5, "[Tips for Photography](#)." Disposable cameras can be a good resource for this activity.

After the pictures are developed, students use the writing process to write a descriptive narrative about their special place at school.

After stories are published, allow students to share and display the stories.

After displaying for a time, bind stories into a class book.

WORKSHEETS

[Step One: Power Writing \(Structure and Concept of Powers\)](#)

[Step Two: Power Writing \(Word Details with Two Powers\)](#)

[Step Three: Power Writing \(Sentence and Paragraph Development with Three Powers\)](#)

[Step Four: Power Writing \(Practice Using Three Powers\)](#)

[worksheet]

Step One: Power Writing

Structure and Concept of Powers

Power Writing is a process for helping any person from kindergarten age to adulthood develop and strengthen writing skills by providing a method that will amplify the process and will result in writing with literacy and logic. It is a tool for teaching students to write with success because students learn to focus, support, elaborate, and organize their ideas. With Power Writing, a teacher is able to teach basic and advanced writing skills to students of all levels.

A Power Writing paragraph has the main idea written in the first sentence. The next sentence has a supporting idea, followed by two sentences that each gives an elaborating detail. The second supporting idea is written in the fifth sentence. The next two sentences each give an elaborating detail about the second supporting idea. The last sentence of the paragraph is the closing sentence.

Power 1—Focus
Power 2—Support
Power 3—Elaborate



1 power sentence = **Main Idea**
2 power sentence = **Supporting Idea**
3 power sentence = **Elaborating Detail**
3 power sentence = **Elaborating Detail**
2 power sentence = **Supporting Idea**
3 power sentence = **Elaborating Detail**
3 power sentence = **Elaborating Detail**
1 power sentence repeated as closing sentence

Power 2 Transition Words

one	finally	moreover
first	second	furthermore
another	third	above all
the other	besides	to begin with
also	then	secondly
in addition	firstly	next

Repetition of a word, words, or ideas from the 1st Power.

Power 3 Transition Words

specifically	for example	to explain
for instance	in other words	to describe
restated	translated	actually
by the way	for instance	however
in the first place	meanwhile	on the other hand
yet	afterward	for example
furthermore	in the meantime	never the less
similarly	consequently	otherwise
as a matter of fact	better	yet

Repetition of a word, words, or idea from the 2nd Power.

[worksheet]

Step Two: Power Writing
Word Details with Two Powers

1 pets **Step One** Give pupils a set of three words in **1 2 2**. Pupils give the set orally, with the power, just as stated by the teacher.

2 dog

2 cat

1 food **Step Two** Give pupils the **1st** Power word. Pupils give two **2nd** Power words. Pupils give the complete set of **1 2 2**, orally, with the power.

2 _____

2 _____

1 _____ **Step Three** Give the pupils two **2nd** Power words. Pupils express the implied **1st** Power word. Pupils give the complete set of **1 2 2** orally with the power.

2 blackberries

2 mayhaws

1 _____ **Step Four** Give the pupils a **2nd** Power word. Pupils orally complete the entire set in **1 2 2** order.

2 black-eyed peas

2 _____

1 _____ **Step Five** Pupils create an entire set of **1 2 2** in that order, and tell the power of each word.

2 _____

2 _____

My two pets are in the yard. One is a dog. The other is a cat.

Step Six Write a **1st** Power sentence on an experience chart. A pupil reads it aloud after the teacher. Pupils contribute the **2nd** Power sentences one at a time. One pupil reads the first two sentences; another pupil reads all three sentences. Do one **Powergraph** per day. Use the powergraph sets for eventual reading exercises. Vary the patterning of each **1st** Power sentence.

[worksheet]

Step Three: Power Writing

Sentence and Paragraph Development with Three Powers

- O** My granny is a good cook. (background)
O She always has Thanksgiving dinner at her house for my family. (background)
1 My favorite foods my granny cooks for Thanksgiving are dressing, giblet gravy, and sweet potato pie. (main idea)
- 2** My granny makes her dressing with cornbread, celery, and onions. (major detail)
3 First, she crumbles old cornbread. (minor detail)
3 Next, she adds chopped celery and onion and bakes it in the oven. (minor detail)
- 2** Granny's special giblet gravy is so good on the dressing. (major detail)
3 There are lots of little pieces of liver, gizzard, and neck meat from the turkey in her gravy. (minor detail)
3 Also my granny chops up a boiled egg in the gravy. (minor detail)
- 2** I think the best part of the Thanksgiving dinner is my granny's sweet potato pie. (major detail)
3 She always makes the crust from scratch. (minor detail)
3 And she uses mashed up sweet potatoes she has left over from the day before. (minor detail)
- 1** I love to eat Thanksgiving dinner at my granny's house because she always has dressing, giblet gravy, and sweet potato pie. (main idea restated)
3 The cornbread dressing topped with lots of giblet gravy is great. (minor detail)
3 I just wish my mama would let me have two pieces of sweet potato pie for dessert. (minor detail)

My granny is a good cook. She always has Thanksgiving dinner at her house for my family. My favorite foods my granny cooks for Thanksgiving are dressing, giblet gravy, and sweet potato pie. My granny makes her dressing with cornbread, celery, and onions. First, she crumbles old cornbread. Next, she adds chopped celery and onion and bakes it in the oven. Granny's special giblet gravy is so good on the dressing. There are lots of little pieces of liver, gizzard, and neck meat from the turkey in the gravy. Also my granny chops up a boiled egg in the gravy. I think the best part of the Thanksgiving dinner is my granny's sweet potato pie. She always makes the crust from scratch. And she uses mashed up sweet potatoes she baked the day before. I love to eat Thanksgiving dinner at my granny's house because she always has dressing, giblet gravy, and sweet potato pie. The cornbread dressing topped with lots of giblet gravy is great. I just wish my mama would let me have two pieces of sweet potato pie for dessert.

[worksheet]

Step Four: Power Writing
Practice Using Three Powers

0. _____

0. _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

1. _____

3. _____

3. _____

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

*Sparks, J.E. *Write For Power*. Manhattan Beach, CA: Communication Associates, 1996.

*Note: The address for Communication Associations is PO Box 3382, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

Stories about place (available from the CARTS Culture Catalog, 800-333-5982, <http://www.carts.org>):

Collier, Bryan. *Uptown*. Henry Holt and Co., 2000. (grades K-4)

McLerran, Alice. *Roxaboxen*. Scott Foresman Publisher, 1992. (grades 1-3)

Schotter, Ronni. *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street*. Orchard Books, 1999. (grades K-8)

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

All Levels: Power Writing is a writing tool developed by J.E. Sparks as a result of his studying every non-fiction writer in the Great Books and noting how they put together their material. Sparks noted these writers simply presented a main idea and supported it with appropriate details. In order to eliminate the classical term logy of exposition—topic sentence, major and minor details—which could be too abstract for many students and thus interfere with their development of logical thought, Sparks applied a numerical value to words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. This approach has unlocked the process of writing for all types of learners, at all ages.

Please note that although this approach (Power Writing) is not highly endorsed by many “scholarly” composition theorists and practitioners, it is endorsed by teachers and classroom experts—those who teach students K-12 and higher—the act of writing. One college-level teacher who presents workshops to K-12 teachers as well as teaches college first-year composition students receives email requests weekly from K-12 teachers and administrators nation-wide for information about Power Writing.

Power Writing: Assigns a numerical value to words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs;
Starts at mastery of a 3-sentence paragraph and progresses through 12 stages to a 7-paragraph essay;
Teaches a student to communicate ideas through well-designed, simple, striking prose;
Sharpens a student’s writing skills with practical techniques for achieving brevity, unity, coherence, clarity, and action; and
Strives for 100% literacy.

Power Writing: Will review all of the grammar and punctuation a student needs to reach the goal of 100% literacy;
Will teach a student to use effectively 39 Sentence Patterns that will help him/her write precisely;
Will provide stage-by-stage personal guidance in development of a student’s individualistic style.

Power Writing is not an approach to teach writing solely to remedial or reluctant writers.

Middle School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by using appropriate literature and adjusting the length and style of writing required.

High School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by using appropriate literature and adjusting the length and style of writing required.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 2: Getting to Know Me

Grade Level: 2nd but suitable for lower elementary

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts

Time required: The time required for Lesson #2 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to develop an appreciation of self and a respect for individuality through writing about their names.

Content Standards:

Cook County Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas

DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft

REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending

EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences

PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read and discuss the story *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes which is a story about a young girl named Chrysanthemum and the attitudes people have about names (Greenwillow Press, 1991).

Activity 2:

Students write an acrostic poem of their names using the writing process. Students write the letters of their first names down the left side of a sheet of paper. Use the writing rubric to aid with revising. Editing and revising are difficult skills for young children. Teacher modeling is crucial to facilitate student learning. Some suggestions for editing and revising are 1) use an overhead projector and edit/revise student's writing as a class, or 2) use peer revising/editing by pairing stronger and weaker students to revise/edit one on one. Have students orally share their acrostic poems with the class.

Activity 3:

Listen to "I Am From" poems from Rural Voices Radio CD (Volume I or II) produced by National Writing Project and National Public Radio. These CDs contain examples of student poems from various National Writing Project rural school sites across the country (see Resources for ordering information). Or, if you have recordings of previous classes doing this assignment, play examples of these.

Read a few written examples of these poems. A sample composite poem taken from Cook County students is featured on the introduction to the Folkwriting website (<http://www.valdosta.edu/folkwritng>).

Discuss the poems.

Write "I Am From" poems using the writing process.

Pre-writing: Students may brainstorm a list of ideas for their poem. Possible prompts include:

- Things found in the house
- Things found in the yard
- Things found in the neighborhood
- Favorite special places
- Favorite foods
- Names of relatives and friends.

Drafting: Students should be given time in class to begin their poems. Some writing teachers tell their students the first of these drafts is a "sloppy copy." If students learn as beginning writers that the first draft is rough or sloppy, they will treat the revising stage as the time to rework their first attempts. Avoid letting students think of a freewriting pre-writing attempt as a first draft. Encourage them to mine the nugget or jewel ideas in the freewriting attempts and use them in a first draft.

Revising: Revising is a difficult skill for young children. Teacher modeling is crucial to facilitate student learning. Some suggestions for revising are 1) use an overhead projector and revise student's writing as a class, or 2) use peer revising by pairing stronger and weaker students to revise one on one. Students should be taught this step or they will assume the draft is ready to edit.

Editing: Editing is also a difficult skill for young children. Again, teacher modeling is crucial to facilitate student learning. Suggestions for editing are the same as for revising: 1) use an overhead projector and edit student's writing as a class, or 2) use peer editing by pairing stronger and weaker students to revise/edit one on one. A teacher may use the editing stage to help students learn grammar and punctuation skills. First, the teacher teaches a mini-

lesson to cover a specific grammar or punctuation rule then steps the students through applying the specific rule to their own writing assignments. This mini-grammar-lesson-approach with the immediate application is an effective method to teach the sometimes-boring mechanics of writing in the context of the students' own writing.

When students learn the rule and then apply it to their own writing, they learn the value of the rule and not simply the rule. Many teachers find that students have a positive attitude about writing and editing when the "fixing" is isolated to the editing stage. Students who are creative are free to think and write, knowing they will "fix" what's wrong in the editing stage. Even students who do not like to write will begin to like writing if the "fixing" is not stressed until this to this stage.

Publishing: Have students make tape recordings of their "I Am From" poems to be placed in the school or classroom Listening Center. The written form of the poems may also be published on a bulletin board, school website, or some other publication format.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

For a good lesson on use of acrostic poems (on which this lesson was based in part) see <http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/lessonplans/profbooks/acrosticwriting.pdf>

Rural Voices Radio Volumes I and II, for complimentary CD set contact the National Writing Project by email at nwp@writingproject.org or National Writing Project, University of California, 2105 Bancroft #1042, Berkeley, CA 94720-1042, 510-642-4545, <http://www.writingproject.org>
The website link to Rural Voices Radio includes several examples of student writing.

Henkes, Kevin. *Chrysanthemum*. Greenwillow Press, 1991. (also in *Spotlight on Literacy*, ed. Mei Aoki et. Al, New York: Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1997).

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Middle and High School Levels:

I Am From and acrostic poems can be used by any grade level. Acrostic poems can take the form of a list, a statement, or a question based on a word like the student's first or last name. Have students experiment with drafts in more than one form. The acrostic poem lesson Web link listed in "Resources" above gives some good strategies for using acrostic poems with older students. This lesson suggests that students begin with a personal inventory worksheet to generate ideas, words, and details that can be worked into the acrostic scheme. Have students brainstorm words, phrases, or details on a series of topics.

Possible brainstorming topics that link with folklore topics used in this workbook include favorite places, physical characteristics, hobbies, dreams and plans, favorite foods, family life and traditions, special objects or personal "treasures." Instead of focusing on the "right words," students should concentrate on finding a way to work phrases or favorite details from their inventory into poetic lines beginning with these words.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 3: Why Tikki Tikki Tembo?

Grade Level: 2nd but suitable for lower elementary

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts

Time required: The time required for Lesson #3 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to develop questioning and interviewing skills needed in research and writing about their names.

Content Standards:

Cook County 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

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Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

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Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas

DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft

REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending

EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences

PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 17: Information Processing

- Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHER

Names are a part of family folklore and are a good way to engage students in writing and interviewing about family names. (Be careful, however, to structure the assignment to include students who may be adopted or may not have a relative to interview. These students can interview a neighbor or caregiver about names.) Certain names may be traditional within certain families. For example, the first born son is always named "William," etc. There are unique family names that continue through the generations or stories about how someone got his or her nickname. Family names may have been changed during the course of immigration from another country, and there may be stories about this. Students may want to look into naming traditions of their own family and other cultures. Are there any special customs or practices associated with choosing or giving a child his or her name? (For example Alex Haley's *Roots*, Chapter 1, discusses a Mandinka (West Africa) naming tradition for the hero, Kunte Kinte.)

Also, don't forget to consult Chapter 5 for tips, techniques, and activities related to interview assignments.

(This information on names is adapted with permission from *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit III, lesson 3).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read and discuss "Tikki Tikki Tembo" by Arlene Mosel. This is a Chinese folktale about naming traditions (Henry Holt & Co., 1988).

Activity 2:

Give each student two index cards. Have them write a period on one card and a question mark on the other card. Ask questions and statements of the class. Have students hold up the appropriate card. After a few practices, choose a student to replace the teacher. The students take turns choosing one another while the teacher observes. The activity may take 10-20 minutes depending on your students. You be the judge.

Activity 3:

Say, spell, and use question words with the whole class. Then place students in small cooperative learning groups. Give each group a set of index cards containing question words why, what, who, when, which, and where. Place the index cards face down in the center of the group. Students take turns choosing a card and asking a question about "My Place" in your school's home county, using the question word on the card. The teacher should monitor and facilitate the group's activity. This is also a good time to do remediation with those students who cannot distinguish between questions and statements.

Activity 4:

Define open-ended and closed questions. Orally, have students practice open-ended and closed questions. Have each student write one open-ended and one closed question. Pair students and have them read and discuss one another's questions.

Activity 5:

Students write questions to be used in interviewing a relative about their names. Examples of interview questions include : Who named me? Is there anyone else in the family with the same name? Am I named after someone famous? If so, who? After questions are written, student pairs

practice interviewing each other. [FOLKPATTERNS Collection Cards](#), found at the end of Chapter 5, may be a useful tool here. Allow time for students to practice questioning skills. Don't rush to interview.

Activity 6:

Students will research their names on the Internet to find answers to the following questions:

What is the origin of your first name?

What does your name mean?

Are there any famous people who share your name? (see [Resources](#) for websites about naming.)

Activity 7:

Have students conduct their interviews. A [Sample Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#), included at the end of Chapter 5, is a useful way to notify and involve caregivers in the interview process.

Note, if the interview materials are to be published, students must use a [Consent Form](#) (sample located at the end of Chapter 5).

Activity 8:

After the interview, students will write a paragraph about their names, including how they feel about information gathered from the interview and research. Be certain to lead the students through the writing process stages as they write their paragraphs.

Activity 9:

Share the paragraphs with another class or display their paragraphs in the hallway.

WORKSHEETS

[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[FOLKPATTERNS Collection Cards](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

<http://www.behindthename.com> and <http://www.parentsoup.com/babynames> , good websites to research names.

Louisiana Voices: An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, Our Places Unit, Lesson #3, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit III, lesson 3).

Mosel, Arlene. *Tikki Tikki Tembo*. Henry Holt & Co., 1988. (also found in *Spotlight on Literacy*, ed. Mei Aoki et. Al, New York: Macmillan/McGraw Hill, 1997).

Wolfman, Ira. *Do People Grow on Family Trees: Genealogy for Kids and Other Beginners*, Bt. Bound, 1999. (Grades 1-8).

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary School Level: The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (now off-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos, toys, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: Students will not need all the activities in this lesson. You pick and adapt according to the needs of your students. (ex. Name essay instead of a paragraph). Consider literature or extensions with social studies which look in more detail at naming traditions cross-culturally. *Names/Nombres* by Julia Alvarez (in Holt-Rinehart Winston's *Elements of Literature* 1st Course) is a good story about names for middle grades. In the Folkwriting workbook, be sure to consult Chapter 5 for tips on interviewing. [That's a Good Question](#) can be a good activity for generating and critiquing students' interview questions.

High School Level: Students will not need all the activities in this lesson. You pick and adapt according to the needs of your students. Consider literature or extensions with social studies that explore naming traditions cross-culturally. For example, Alex Haley's *Roots*, Chapter 1, discusses a Mandinka (West Africa) naming tradition for the hero, Kunte Kinte. In the Folkwriting workbook, be sure to consult Chapter 5 for tips on interviewing. [That's a Good Question](#) can be a good activity for generating and critiquing students' interview questions.

Their Places Unit: The County as They See It



Old Adel Post Office, Cook County, Georgia, was the locus for a community mural and community news (not just the mail!). Postal workers are often great sources of information about the community. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001

Their Places Unit

Lesson #1: Seasonal Customs (Cane Syrup and Hotcakes)

Grade Level: 2 but appropriate for all three primary grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to develop and enrich students' writings through a real life experience in a local cane field.

Content Standards:

Cook County 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 14: Acquires information through reading, observing and listening

Standard 17: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Making cane syrup is an example of a **calendar or seasonal custom**, that is, a practice that occurs at the same time year after year. There are many other seasonal customs, some associated with changes in the weather throughout the year, others associated with holidays that always take place at particular times of the year. This lesson is based around cane syrup making and was taught in the late fall when syrup is made in South Georgia. You may wish to adapt this lesson to another seasonal custom that best suits your needs, your community, and (if a field trip is planned) the particular time of year you will be teaching. The [Seasonal Customs worksheet](#) (from Activity 4) at the back of Chapter 4 is a useful activity to help you and your students identify seasonal custom or customs as an introduction to this lesson or to prepare for extension activities with other customs in your community.

Cane syrup once was a cash crop for farmers in South Georgia. Around the region you can still find small producers making cane syrup. If you don't know a local producer in your area, try word of mouth inquiry with your students, neighbors, or school staff. Local farm markets and the state farmers markets in the area are also good places for finding local syrup and syrup makers. Pure cane syrup is the product of only cane juice being "cooked down." However, today most cane syrup sold is not "pure" but a blend of cane and corn syrups. Also, many changes have occurred in the process of making syrup, and documenting these changes through oral interviews would make an interesting class project that engages students in relevant State of Georgia curriculum themes such as time and chronology, information processing, human/environment interaction, and producer/consumer/work. For a geography link, students could also map the location of producers or map the farm where the syrup is produced.

Traditionally, cane grindings have been family gatherings during cooler fall weather. At one time, most farmers made syrup for their own use and perhaps to sell. These days there are fewer producers, but locally made syrup is still the sweetener of choice for biscuits and cornbread. Other older traditional recipes for cakes and cookies in the region also use syrup as a sweetener. These recipes and uses of syrup could also be part of a class project. The art of syrup making lies in the grade of cane grown in the field and in skillfully cooking the raw juice into syrup. There are interesting terms used to describe the syrup-making process which are examples of work-related or occupational folklife: what word or phrase is used, for example, when the syrup is ready to be emptied from the kettle or vat and bottled?

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

As an introduction to seasonal customs, use the list in Chapter 4, Activity 4, [Seasonal Customs Worksheet 1](#). Place cane syrup making in the proper season on part two of the worksheet, or use the activity as a springboard to identify other seasonal customs that the class will study.

Activity 2:

Have students pretend they have a relative from another state who knows all about making cane syrup. Write a letter to that relative telling him or her about your class study of community folklife and ask questions about cane syrup. Letters will be published by sharing and display. For review on practicing techniques for questioning, see [My Places Unit, Lesson #3](#) in this chapter. Be sure to use all stages of the writing process!

Activity 3:

Take students on a field trip to a local farm where cane syrup is made. Take pictures (See [Photography Tips](#) given in Chapter 5). Be sure you get permission ahead of time to take photos. If photos are to be published, obtain a [Consent Form](#) from someone in charge (see samples at the back of Chapter 5). Use the photos for a caption writing activity once back in the classroom. This activity could be expanded into a class exhibit displayed on a bulletin board or on a Webpage.

Activity 4:

Write a commercial convincing your school principal to buy your cane syrup. Be sure to include the name of your syrup and the cost. (Note: pricing multiple bottles could be the subject of a math lesson.) Students will be videotaped performing their commercials.

Activity 5:

Make a class KWL chart about cane syrup ([KWL Worksheet](#) found below). Teacher and students can visit the library and Internet to gather information for the KWL chart. Note: the “What we Know and Want to Know” sections of the chart can be completed prior to the field trip and Internet research; the “What we learned” section completed afterward.

Activity 6:

As a culminating activity, make hot cakes in class and serve with local cane syrup. Connect the study of cane syrup to local food traditions. As part of an in-class collection activity, have students use the Short Interview Cards (see Chapter 5) or index cards to collect information on if/how cane syrup is used by classmates. If students don't use cane syrup, what kind of syrup and sweeteners do they use? For what kinds of foods? Students could also use collection cards to collect a recipe using cane syrup from school staff, parents, or neighbors.

WORKSHEETS

[KWL chart](#)
[Seasonal Customs](#)
[Consent Form](#)



Gail Hughes, a member of the Cook County Historical Society, is interviewed by students in Vanessa Mitchell's class. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

[worksheet]
KWL Chart

What we Know	What we Want to Know	What we Learned

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Local cane syrup makers in your area

<http://www.sucrose.com/lcane.html> (a website on the commercial production of cane syrup)

<http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP> (see the Radio Archives for a 5 minute radio program on a South Georgia cane syrup maker in Willacoochee)

The Crypt: History and Genealogy of Camden and Charlton Counties, Georgia. Chesser Island, Okefenokee Swamp. http://www.camdencounty.org/history/chesser_island_2.html (photos of the historic Chesser Homestead in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, with several images of the old-time cane syrup making equipment)

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: Bring in raw sugar cane and cane syrup. You may also have someone visit class who knows how to make cane syrup.

Middle and High School Levels: You can adapt this activity by having students do more in-depth research on sugar cane and its impact on the history and economy of the state. The level of interviewing, writing and technology links can also be adjusted. Students may design a virtual Webpage exhibit with photos, captions, and text.

Their Places Unit

Lesson # 2: Hi Ho, Hi Ho, It's Off to Work They Go!

Grade Level: 2 but appropriate for all three primary grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #2 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to examine and write about the county or local community through interviewing family members concerning their occupations.

Content Standards:

Cook County 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 1: Identifies characteristics of neighborhoods and communities.

Standard 6: Producer/Consumer/Work: gives examples of producers and consumers in the community and gives reasons why people work.

Standard 14: Acquires information through reading, observing and listening.

Standard 17: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population; conduct interviews

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson focuses on occupations and work. Certainly, many curricula look at work as part of economics or geography. An alternative approach that can be used instead of or in combination with these approaches is to look at the culture of work. An especially interesting way for students to approach the topic of work is to focus on *traditions* associated with a particular job. Another term for this is **occupational folklife** or work-related skills: the knowledge, customs, traditions, stories, jokes, music, and lore of different jobs or occupations. Have you wondered about the gestures construction workers use to give directions over the din of giant machinery? Or have you picked up a handy classroom management trick from a fellow teacher?

A high school or college diploma alone does not give us the skills or knowledge to manage a classroom, work on a logging crew, or program a computer. We must learn from our colleagues, supervisors, and those we serve, and we must adjust to the unique folklife of each work setting. Every job has folklife, whether it is how an office worker decorates his or her work space with photos, cartoons, and photocopied sayings, or the way migrant workers heat up a burrito or taco on the dashboard of their car or truck for lunch on the job. Occupational folklife offers intriguing opportunities for students to learn how people keep learning throughout their lives, to explore the traditional culture that exists in any type of workplace, and to know their communities more intimately by exploring both the job and the culture of the workplace.

Here are some questions to think about: Is the workspace at home or in an office, indoors or outdoors? How big is the space? How is it arranged and decorated? What special skills does the job require that are taught by old-timers to new people? How are new workers "broken in"? Are there special words and phrases associated with the job that an outsider would not understand (for example, the term "catface" to describe the cuts in tree bark made by turpentiners as they "chip" the surface)? Are there stories about something that happened on the job or jokes about particular jobs? Does anyone at the work site make things out of recycled materials from the factory or office (for example, plastic bag wreaths placed on the front of garbage trucks or a special insignia painted on a fighter jet or a truck)? Do workers celebrate the end of the week, holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions? How has the job or business changed over time?

Certain occupations are associated with a special body of oral tradition, such as the work songs of railroad tracklayers, the tally chants of turpentine workers, and the verse of logger or cowboy poets. Sometimes workers may sing just to pass the time or use rhythmic chants or songs in jobs requiring coordinated work or timing, such as laying railroad track or fitness training and drills in the military.

Give some thought to the kinds of occupations that may be special to your community. Consider how signage, use of space, landscape, and soundscape are indicators of occupations. Look in the Yellow Pages for types of jobs. Identify someone with an interesting job who would be willing to visit your classroom.

[This section is adapted with permission from *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Biennu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit VIII).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read and discuss a story about occupations. Several multicultural options are listed under [Resources](#) below.

Activity 2:

Write “What Am I?” riddles using the writing process. As a subject for the riddle, have students pick an object used in some kind of work or job. Have students act out their riddle.

Activity 3:

Begin a discussion about occupational folklife by asking students to look around and find clues in the classroom and your workspace that would tell an outsider what your job is. How are seats arranged, bulletin boards decorated, spaces set apart for activities? What hangs on the walls or is written on the board? What stays the same all year? What changes? The level of detail for this activity will depend on the age of the students, but even young children should be able to observe some basic characteristics about your workspace (also their classroom). What questions would they like to ask you about your job and how you became a teacher?

Activity 4:

Students will develop questions and interview a family member, neighbor, or school staff person about his or her work place. The information will be used to write a short narrative paragraph. Chapter 5 provides an overview on how to do a classroom interview project. Consult [My Places Unit, Lesson #3](#) of this chapter for tips and techniques for teaching questioning to young children. Don't forget to get a [Consent Form](#) (at the end of Chapter 5) from the interviewee. [Letters to Parents and Caregivers](#) (see sample at the end of Chapter 5) are useful tools to explain the project and enlist cooperation.

Activity 5:

Invite the persons interviewed to a Work “Show and Tell” day and have students share what they learned about their work place. Then, have lunch together. Videotape the events of the day.

WORKSHEETS

[Optional Job Education Worksheet](#), more appropriate for grades 7 and up.

[Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5).

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant

- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Local Chamber of Commerce

Louisiana Voices Educators Guide, Unit VIII (The Worlds of Work and Play)

<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>

Stories about work that are available from the CARTS Culture Catalog, 800-333-5982, or order on-line (<http://www.carts.org>)

- *John Henry* by Julius Lester (Puffin, 1999), a nicely illustrated version of the legend of the steel driving railroad worker, suitable for grades 1-4.
- *Calling the Doves/El Canto de las Palomas* by Juan Felipe Herrera (Children's Book Press, 1995), a story about migrant farm workers, suitable for grades 1-5.
- *Uncle Jed's Barbershop* by Margaree King Mitchell (Aladdin Library, 1998), a picture book about an African American barber during the Depression, suitable for grades K-2
- *Love as Strong as Ginger* by Leonore Look (Atheneum, 1999), a young girl's view of her Chinese immigrant grandmother's work in the crab cannery, grades 2-5
- *Catching the Fire: Philip Simmons, Blacksmith* by Mary E. Lyons (Houghton Mifflin, 1997), the true story of Charleston, SC blacksmith and National Heritage Award winner from the National Endowment for the Arts, suitable for grades 3-6.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Editing and revising are difficult skills for young children. Teacher modeling is crucial in facilitating student learning. Some suggestions for editing and revising are 1) to use an overhead projector to edit and revise student's writing as a class; 2) to use peer revising and editing—pairing stronger and weaker students to revise and edit one-on-one. Also, be sure students have enough practice with asking questions: don't rush to the interview.

The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (no longer on-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos, toys, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by using appropriate literature and adjusting the length and style of writing required. Begin Activity 3 by illustrating occupational folklife: share some tricks of the trade that you learned from colleagues for use in the classroom. Older students may be able to make more in-depth questionnaires about the occupational folklife in their community. The [Job Education Worksheet](#), taken from Unit VIII of Louisiana Voices and designed for grade 8, can be a useful tool.

High School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by using appropriate literature and adjusting the length and style of writing required. Begin Activity 3 by sharing some tricks of the trade that you learned from colleagues for use in the classroom. Older students may be able to make more in-depth questionnaires about the occupational folklife in their community. The [Job Education Worksheet](#), taken from Unit VIII of Louisiana Voices, can be a useful tool. An interesting extension for older students would be to explore worker poetry. For some interesting Web links, consider the websites on cowboy and logger poetry. Instead of the riddle example, for instance, you may wish to work with students on writing their own worker poetry. For lessons and lots of cowboy poetry, including audio files of the annual Cowboy Poetry Gathering, see the Western Folklife Center Cowboy Poets on the Internet, <http://westfolk.org>.

[worksheet]
Job Education

Name _____ Date _____

As you interview people about their occupational (or work-related) folklife, ask them to list some things that they learned in school, college, or formal job training. Then ask them to list what they learned directly or by observation on the job or from colleagues, supervisors, or people they serve. How did learning in a formal academic setting differ from learning traditionally, by word of mouth and observation? How were they similar? You could draw a Venn diagram and use it to illustrate your findings.

Skills learned in school or Formal training	Skills learned informally on the job
How experiences differ	How experiences were similar

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Their Places Unit

Lesson # 3: The Games People Play

Grade Level: 2 but appropriate for all three primary grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #3 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compare and contrast county recreational life, past and present, through various writing activities.

Content Standards:

Cook County 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers/adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 1: Identifies characteristics of neighborhoods and communities.

Standard 14: Acquires information through reading, observing and listening.

Standard 17: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population; conduct interviews

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Traditional Games

Children live, play, and go to school in widely differing landscapes: asphalt playgrounds, busy streets, swamps, riversides, woods, and small town parks. They ride horseback, play pick-up basketball and Friday night football, make mud pies and catch mud puppies, fold cootie catchers, practice cheers, jump rope to complex rhymes, hunt squirrels, play hide and seek, take part in local parades. Children's folk games are a good way to introduce some of the basic concepts of folklife, because they are learned by watching, imitating, and listening (informal learning or what folklorist's call "oral transmission"); they are transmitted within folk groups and often have existed over considerable time (often children learn from other children or perhaps from an adult); and there are often different versions or variants of the same game.

On the playground or in the locker room, teachers hear students play games and play with words. Often recess sounds just as it did 20 or 40 years ago. Even young children like to look back to games they played when they were younger. Notice that these traditional games aren't purchased from Toys R Us or manufactured by Mattel. They aren't coached by a parent as part of formal Little League baseball or soccer. As you brainstorm with your class about games they learned from someone else, students will begin to understand that folklife is something that is part of their everyday life. By remembering and sharing games and memories of childhood play with your students, you will find a rich topic for student writing, build a strong bridge to the study of folklife in your community, and deepen trust and understanding in the classroom. Look for and use examples of play throughout the year in literature, history, arts, music, math, science, and foreign languages. Play is the universal language of young people.

Fieldwork and writing activities on children's games could focus on the following areas: name of the game, time of year usually played, playing area (indoor, outdoor, boundaries), rules and exceptions (How does play begin and end? How is score kept? Are verses or rhymes used?), equipment (Is any of this homemade?), and participants (How are teams chosen? Is someone designated "It"?).

(Adapted with permission from *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions* by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> (see Unit III, lesson 1)). This unit of *Louisiana Voices* in turn is based on the work that teacher and folklorist Elizabeth Simons has done with students. Find her extensive unit on play and games for high school students in *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read and discuss a story involving a game such as *Basketball: Pass, Shoot & Dribble* by Bryant Lloyd (Rourke Book Co., Inc., 1977) or *Miss Mary Mack, A Handclapping Rhyme* by Mary Ann Hoberman (Little Brown & Co., 1998).

Activity 2:

Introduce the concept of traditional games in the students' own lives by using the [Student Game List](#) worksheet as a brainstorming tool for the class. Even younger students should be able to list and describe games they play or played when they were younger, describe the places where the games are played, and draw a picture of the game. You may also wish to use the [FOLKPATTERNS Short-Interview Cards](#) (Chapter 5) to have students collect a game from

one another and then compile a composite class brainstorming list. Another useful activity is the [FOLKPATTERNS Card Game](#) (Chapter 4) that has individual cards for “Tell how to play marbles or jacks,” “Sing a jump rope rhyme,” and “Show a handclap game.” Teachers or students could improvise their own cards for other games (“Tell about the first game you remember playing when you were little”). Among young children, boys and girls often play different games, so teachers may want to take this into consideration when structuring the activity. Games played at recess are a good starting point for younger children as these often are learned by imitation and example from other kids. This activity will show students that they practice folklife in their everyday life.

Activity 3:

Have students use the interview process previously learned to interview a county resident about games he or she played as a child. Chapter 5 provides an overview on how to do a classroom interview project. Consult [My Places, Lesson #3](#) of this chapter for tips and techniques for teaching questioning to young children. Don’t forget to get a [Consent form](#) (see sample at the end of Chapter 5) from the interviewee. The information gathered will be used to compose a short narrative. [Letters to Parents and Caregivers](#) (see sample at the end of Chapter 5) are useful tools to explain the project and enlist cooperation.

Activity 4:

Ask someone from the local Department of Recreation or an athletic coach to visit your class. Have students prepare questions before the visit. The [Adult Game List](#) worksheet may be adapted as a summarizing activity about games the visitor played as a child. As preparation for the classroom visit, you may want to give the visitor the [Student Game List](#) worksheet ahead of time.

Activity 5:

Create a game. Write instructions telling a friend how to play your new game. Be sure to include things such as who starts the game, number of players needed, and how the game ends.

Activity 5:

Using information gained from both student interviewing and the class visitor, ask the students to write a composition comparing and contrasting recreation in the community today to recreation in the community in the past. Use [Power Writing](#) worksheets in My Places Lesson #1 of this chapter.

WORKSHEETS

[Student Game List \(see below\)](#)

[Adult Game List \(see below\)](#)

[Power Writing](#)

[FOLKPATTERNS Card Game \(see back of Chapter 4\)](#)

[FOLKPATTERNS Short-Interview Cards \(see back of Chapter 5\)](#)

[Consent Form \(see back of Chapter 5\)](#)

[Letter to Parents or Caregivers \(see back of Chapter 5\)](#)

[Worksheet]
Student Game List

Name _____ Date _____

1) Games

Write down all the games and kinds of play that you remember now or when you were younger. Don't forget pretend play, travel games, cards, and board games. You may use the back of this sheet.

2) Folk Groups

Write down the different groups of people you've played with, such as neighbors or school friends. These are what folklorists call folk groups.

3) Landscapes and Boundaries

List places where you have played games. Write or draw descriptions of some games, including where you played, boundaries, and where players move from start to finish.

4) Georgia kids at Play

On a separate sheet, draw a picture of a memory of childhood play or write a story about it. Share the written story or the story of your picture with a partner. Note any questions that your partner has. Teams may share their stories with the class.

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[Worksheet]
Adult Game List

Now that you and classmates have collected the names of lots of games that you play, interview some adults about what they played when they were young. When interviewing others, remember to be polite and thank them for their time. A suggested interview form to copy for each interview follows. Add other questions you'd like to ask. If you run across an unfamiliar game, ask about it and report back to the class. Choose at least one game to ask about in detail.

Name of Person Interviewed _____

Birth Year: _____ Male _____ Female _____

Birthplace: _____

Childhood Home (if different): _____

Games Played as a Child (list games, using a separate sheet if necessary):

Write a detailed description of at least one game you collect, include rules, number of players, boundaries, who played it, special memories (use the back of this sheet or a separate sheet)

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PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Louisiana Voices, An Educators Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, Unit III, Lesson I (Games and Play Today and Yesterday) <http://www.louisianavoices.org>

American Children's Folklore by Simon Bronner, a useful teacher's resource for all grades with examples of jump rope rhymes, games, taunts and replies, and instructions for constructing simple toys.

Step it Down: Games, Play-Songs, and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage by Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes, a teacher's resource with special relevance to Georgia, features 70 examples from Jones' childhood on the Georgia Sea Islands with simple instructions and a cassette.

Hopscotch Around the World: Nineteen Ways to Play the Game by Mary D. Lankford (suitable for grades K-4), a nice resource for providing cross-cultural perspective through examples of the game from around the world with descriptions, diagrams, and directions.

Student Worlds, Student Words by Elizabeth Radin Simons, the best book on folklife and writing units designed for the high school classroom, has a chapter on children's folklore, including games, which would be especially useful for the middle through upper grades. Elementary teachers may also glean some tips. See Chapter 5, "When I Was a Little Girl..." The Folklore of Childhood. Especially useful is a detailed list of children's games from both urban and suburban classrooms.

Basketball: Pass, Shoot & Dribble by Bryant Lloyd (Rourke Book Co., Inc., 1977).

Miss Mary Mack, A Handclapping Rhyme by Mary Ann Hoberman (Little Brown & Co., 1998).

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: Use all stages of the writing process. Don't skip pre-writing. Also, remember to allow students time to practice interviewing.

The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (now off-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos, toys, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: You may have students make the games they have created. The two worksheets, [Student Game List](#) and [Adult Game List](#), are from *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit III, Lesson 1, which looks at children's games in a lesson designed for middle school students. These forms are useful in adapting this activity to middle grades. Use the Student Game List worksheet as a pre-writing activity and the Adult Games List as the springboard for the interviewing activity.

High School Level: The two worksheets, [Student Game List](#) and [Adult Game List](#), are from *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit III, Lesson 1, which looks at children's games in a lesson designed for middle school students. These forms are also suitable for a high school project on children's games and folklore. Use the Student Game List as a pre-writing activity. Teacher Elizabeth Radin Simons, in her high school unit on children's folklore from *Student Worlds, Student Words*, notes that high school students are usually nostalgic about their childhood and truly enjoy writing about children's folklore. High School students should also be able to complete the three steps of folklore research: identifying (through group brainstorming), collecting, and analyzing. Folklorists are interested in interpretation: what does a particular type of folklore mean? What is its function or role in society? Possible functions of children's games, suggested in Chapter 5 of *Student Worlds, Student Words* and based on research by professional folklorists, are 1) Some folklore teaches the rules of society—values, attitudes, beliefs, and how to behave (much children's play has been analyzed in this way); 2) Some folklore offers relief from troubling matters; 3) Some folklore makes it possible to violate the rules of society; 4) Some folklore entertains; 5) Some folklore makes people feel closer together. After students have focused their topics, and done several interviews (perhaps with peers, a child still practicing the game, and an older person), they should complete an essay where they describe and analyze the function of the game or games they collected. For more ideas, see *Student Worlds, Student Words* Chapter 5, which describes a two-week high school writing unit based on children's folklore.



A homemade swing in Cook County awaits a child . Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Our Place Unit: Our County as We See It



A country store is often the local gathering place in a rural community. This “mall” is the most popular spot in the Chaserville community. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001

Our Places Unit

Lesson #1: Getting to Know the Community or the Town

(Note: This lesson can be repeated with each community or town.)

Grade Level: 2 but appropriate for all three primary grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 may be adjusted depending on need; however, one hour a day for five days is suggested.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to develop a written record of folklife in the towns or communities in a particular region.

Content Standards:

Cook County 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: Adapts or changes oral language to fit the situation by following the rules of conversation with peers and adults.

Standard 4: Recalls and interprets information presented orally.

Standard 5: Uses oral language for different purposes: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

Standard 6: Responds to questions on orally presented material.

Standard 8: Communicates effectively when using descriptive language, relating experiences, and retelling stories read, heard, or viewed.

Standard 9: Uses a variety of language patterns and sentence structures.

Standard 10: Uses increasingly complex sentence structures in oral communication.

Standard 12: Uses grade/age appropriate standard American English when communicating orally.

Standard 25: Recognizes EXPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 26: Recognizes IMPLICIT main ideas, details, sequence of events, and cause-effect relationships in fiction and nonfiction.

Standard 27: Identifies the main characters.

Standard 28: Identifies characters' actions, motives, emotions, traits, and feelings.

Standard 29: Draws conclusions, makes predictions, and comparisons.

Standard 35: Uses examples from literature to create individual and group stories.

Standard 37: Uses learned phonetic strategies to spell correctly.

Standard 38: Prints legibly:

- Correctly forms letters and numbers;
- Correctly spaces words and sentences.

Standard 40: Writes a minimum of three sentences about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes about self-selected topics (e.g., personal experiences, book rewrites) using pictures, letter/sound associations, and known words.

Standard 42: Writes in a variety of genres to include correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 43: Applies correct principles of grammar:

- Writes complete sentences
- Uses correct capital letters
- Uses correct punctuation
- Applies correct rules of usage and expression.

Standard 44: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PRE-WRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses pre-writing ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 2nd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 1: Identifies characteristics of neighborhoods and communities.

Standard 14: Acquires information through reading, observing and listening.

Standard 17: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population; conduct interviews

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Getting to Know My Community—A Sense of Place

In this lesson, students will gather information about their town or county. The lesson culminates in a video “documentary” of students’ readings about the county or about the various communities in the county. The taped readings are the publishing stage of the writing process. For younger students, teachers will need to videotape student readings or have another adult do the taping. Teachers may wish to adapt the lesson to an audio format and do a radio feature or audio tour. As an alternative to video, students can also use drawings or cameras (many disposable cameras are inexpensive and produce quite good quality) and create a website, poster, brochure, or exhibit.

Sense of place is a major theme in literature, writing, and social studies. Helping students gain a sense of place in their own community and region deepens their connection to community and opens them to the notion that everyone has a unique sense of place. We all experience a place differently. If any students are new to your community, their sense of place may be strongly associated with another place. While they will get to know your community well during this lesson and the others in this unit, allowing them to reflect on another place for some activities below will enrich the lesson for all. Students who participate in this kind of “place-based” learning routinely meet or exceed the most rigorous educational standards. You don’t have to be the expert or from the community yourself—students can use their own experience, their own powers of observation, and their own interviews. Members of the community and school staff can be valuable classroom resources.

What makes your community, county, or neighborhood special? What do students know about their county or community? How would an outsider view your community? What can neighbors learn from each other? What can students learn from members of the community? Folklife, geography, ecology, history, economics, literature, and verbal arts are all entwined in defining what makes a place special. “Sense of place” may be examined through various lenses, or cultural perspectives, listed in below. You will want to pick and choose the topics most appropriate to your classroom needs.

Looking at Place with Cultural Perspectives

Language (What languages are spoken by the town’s residents?)

Occupations and occupational folklife (work-related skills: the knowledge, customs, traditions, stories, jokes, music, and lore of different jobs or occupations. Note: [Their Places Unit, Lesson #2](#) of this chapter deals with this topic in more detail)

Foodways (Are there food items the area is known for? In South Georgia, for example, Cordele is the watermelon capitol; Sylvester the peanut capitol; Alma the blueberry capitol; and Colquitt the mayhaw capitol. What is sold at local roadside stands? What events take place in which food or food preparation is important?)

Geography, ecology, and environment (Where is the town located? What is the population? Climate? What are some of the important landforms like rivers, ponds, swamps, springs, caves, sinkholes? What plants and animals are found in the area? What are the important man-made features in the community, 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 do different places in the community sound like? Are they natural sounds or human-made sounds? Send your students on an audio expedition, with tape recorders or paper and pencil, collecting and/or describing different sounds of the community.)

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, birthday). Are there local radio stations? What kind of music is played?)

Religions (What religions are practiced? Where are religious activities held? What events are associated with places of worship or religious beliefs?)

Settlement history and patterns (Find out where the town's founders came from and where some current ethnic groups in town came from. Where did they/do they live? What brought them here? What did/do they do for a living?)

Crafts, decorative arts, and material culture (Younger students may be especially interested in home-made toys, for example. What about 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 gravestones decorated in local cemeteries?)

Customs, celebrations, and festivals (What are the major events in the county, the town? Is there a town festival, homecoming or reunion, county fair? When do pageants, parades, or processions take place?)

Oral narrative genres (Are there jokes about your town? Stories of how it got its name? Stories about special, unusual, or scary places or about famous or interesting characters who live or lived there? Are there stories related to things people do, like work in farming, the timber industry, a local business? 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 (see the [All About Me](#)—activity #3—at the back of Chapter 4 to get students thinking about the different groups they and others in the community belong to, such as groups based on religion, age, occupation, “dominant” culture, “minority,” etc.)

Seasonal Activities (What events always occur at particular seasons of the year? Note: [Their Places Unit, Lesson #1](#) of this chapter deals with cane syrup making in South Georgia. Also, see Activity #4, [The Seasonal Round](#), in Chapter 4)

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ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

(Pre-writing) Select from the “Cultural Perspectives” listed above those themes most suitable for your classroom and your curriculum needs. Through what “lens” do you want your students to focus their writing and interviews? What do you want them to find out? Have students brainstorm a list of specific topics, ideas, and feedback relevant to your county or one of the communities in

your county, depending on your preferred focus for the lesson. One interesting first step could be to brainstorm a list of the communities or neighborhoods within your county to see if students know of places not listed on official county maps.

Activity 2:

Once they have been introduced to the lenses or topics to be pursued, have students develop a list of questions about the community in preparation for a classroom visit by a member of the community. If students need work on forming questions, now is the time to practice. The following procedures repeat those given in [My Places Unit, Lesson #1](#) of this chapter. Give each student two index cards. Have them write a period on one card and a question mark on the other card. Ask questions and statements of the class. Have students hold up the appropriate card. After a few practices, choose a student to replace the teacher. The students take turns choosing one another while the teacher observes. The activity may take 10-20 minutes depending on your students. You be the judge.

Activity 3:

Say, spell, and use question words with the whole class. Then place students in small cooperative learning groups. Give each group a set of index cards containing question words why, what, who, when, which, and where. Place the index cards face down in the center of the group. Students take turns choosing a card and asking a question about the community under study, using the question word on the card. The teacher should monitor and facilitate the groups' activity. This is also a good time to do remediation with those students who cannot distinguish between questions and statements.

Activity 4:

Define open-ended and closed questions. Orally, have students practice open-ended and closed questions. Have each student write one open-ended and one closed question. Pair students and have them read and discuss one another's questions. Allow time for students to practice questioning skills. Don't rush to interview.

Activity 5:

Invite a community leader such as chamber personnel, member of the historical society, or formal school principal, to visit the class. Give the speaker a list of questions before his or her visit. Ask if he or she can bring or show photos, toys, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children. Allow time for students to ask questions that may not have been answered by the speaker. Be sure to have the speaker sign a [Consent Form](#) (see forms at the back of Chapter 5). Be sure to send a thank-you note.

Activity 6:

Students interview someone who lives in the community or county under study. Depending on how this unit is structured by an individual teacher, teachers may wish to divide students into teams to study a particular community or neighborhood, or the entire class will gather information on the same community. Students may use the same questions asked in the classroom practice, or teachers may work with them to generate some new or follow-up questions. Remember, however, that even the same questions may produce different stories, memories, or information from a different person. Don't overlook school personnel as resources for these interviews as well. Chapter 5 provides an overview on how to do a classroom interview project. Don't forget to get a **Consent Form** from the interviewee. Remember to write thank you letters. Also, remember to inform parents or caregivers of what is taking place (**Consent Form** and [Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#) at end of Chapter 5.).

Activity 7:

Using the information gathered from the in-class and individual interviews, students write a profile of the community, using Power Writing techniques and the writing process (for more on Power Writing, See My Places Lesson #1 of this Chapter, [Power Writing worksheets](#). Make a video documentary of the community by taping the students as they read their papers and share their

interviewing experiences. Remember to get signed **Consent Forms** before videotaping students if your school doesn't have blanket consent forms that cover this kind of activity.

After completion of this unit, take a driving tour of the county or community to let students take pictures of the places they have learned about. Have lunch at a park in the county. Display the pictures.

WORKSHEETS

[Power Writing](#) (see this chapter, My Places Unit, Lesson #1)

[Consent Forms](#) (end of Chapter 5)

[Letter to Parents and Caregivers](#) (end of Chapter 5)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no

Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot) yes no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Chamber of Commerce or local Historical Society

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/cityscapes/default.asp> (Georgia Department of Community Affairs Website): links to profiles of selected Georgia cities.

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/snapshots/default.asp> (Georgia Department of Community Affairs Website): links to profiles of selected Georgia counties, each with the following information: community profile (when county formed, county seat, incorporated cities, total area, history including the name of the county and some of the major towns, points of interest). Demographics (population of major towns, % black, white, Hispanic, etc.), economy, government.

Matthews-Dentale, Gail and Don Patterson. *Learning from Your Community: Folklore and Video in the Schools*. South Carolina Arts Commission, 1991, good resource for a more ambitious video project.

London, Peter. *Step Outside, Community-Based Art Education*, Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1994; teacher ideas for combining student art with writing about community places and events.

Exploring Your Community poster text, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/>; ideas for teachers on community-based projects for the classroom.

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit IV of the Louisiana on-line folklife curriculum looks at region, geography, ecology, and folklife, and sense of place in lessons designed for grades 4 and 8. <http://www.louisianavoices.org>,

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>, the National Geographic website has age specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which link this lesson nicely to Georgia standards in social studies and geography. See for example Standard 1, Exploring Physical and Human Characteristics of Earth's Spaces (identifying landforms, population, climate,

etc. on the local level); Standard 2, Over the River and through the Woods: Traveling by Memory (a mapping exercise using the local community); Standard 18, Your Changing Town (discussing why cities change over time).

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: You will need to direct the making of the documentaries. Documentaries may be about 30 minutes.

Middle and High School Levels: Your students may be able to take total control of the making of the documentaries. Older students can expand their look at the community to include more depth or breadth of topic. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs County Snapshots website (see Resources above) is a good starting point for student-driven research using the Internet. What is missing about your town from these community profiles? What is “the rest of the story?” What more would you like to know about these or other topics? What would a local version of a community profile look like? What would new students of coming in want to know about the community?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Welcome to the Neighborhood

Judith Phillips

Cook Primary School



Carter's, a local restaurant famous for its fried chicken, is a favorite place for many Cook County folks. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

We all know that each country of the world has customs that most foreigners will never know. Even different sections of one country can be different from other sections. But can neighborhoods also be so different from each other that they appear to be different “worlds”?

Originally written for the 4th grade gifted social studies classroom, the lessons in this chapter have been adapted for 3rd grade in keeping with the local community emphasis of the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies standards. The main objective of this chapter is for students to think about their own neighborhoods and customs within them. The students interview a “long timer” in a neighborhood to find the customs that may be unique to that neighborhood and turn this information into a booklet that is a newcomers guide to the neighborhood(s).

My Places Unit: Welcome to the Neighborhood



Some students have rich memories of hunting or fishing at special place. This cabin by a pond in Cook County is one of these places. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

My Places Unit

Lesson #1: My Special Place

Grade Level: Though this lesson was used with gifted 4th graders, it is appropriate for grades 3-6.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 1 is 3 to 4 class 45 minute periods, depending on whether students are already familiar with letter writing skills.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to use the writing process to describe the unique or special places of their hometown, and use this description in a letter.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes a short paragraph about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes in a variety of genres to produce paragraphs and compositions:

- Personal narratives
- Imaginative stories
- Responses to literature
- Content area pieces
- Correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 42 : Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, and usage and mechanics:

- Writes complete sentences;
- Uses correct capitalization and punctuation;
- Uses correct word structure;
- Identifies types of sentences according to purpose: declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory
- Identifies the parts of a sentence in various sentence patterns (Simple subject and predicate);
- Forms singular, plural, and possessive nouns;
- Applies standard conventions of American English in subject-verb agreement;
- Demonstrates knowledge of nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives in writing simple sentences.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

4th Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes selections (compositions) of three or more paragraphs about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes in a variety of genres to produce paragraphs and compositions:

- Personal narratives
- Imaginative stories
- Responses to literature
- Content area pieces
- Correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 42: Applies correct principles of grammar , parts of speech, usage, and mechanics.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

3rd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

Standard 25: Uses various print and non-print reference sources to locate information.

Standard 34: Makes predictions and comparisons based on factual information.

4th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 34: Makes predictions and comparisons based on factual information.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Community culture is all around you and forms a rich resource for student writing projects. When schools base their teaching on the culture, history, ecology, and economy of the communities they serve, and fully engage members of the community in the work of the school, schools and communities improve together. Students who participate in this kind of "place-based" learning routinely meet or exceed the most rigorous educational standards. You don't have to be the expert or from the community yourself—students can use their own experience, their own powers of observation, and their own interviews. Members of the community and school staff can be valuable classroom resources.

In the introduction to his "Essay of Place" instructional unit for the Montana Heritage Project (<http://www.edheritage.org>), Michael Umphrey writes that some "places are part of the landscapes in our minds. When we are homesick, we remember them. Sometimes we feel an urge to go to them. When we think of important events, times full of life, we see in our minds the places where they occurred, which are inseparable from what happened. Other places are storied with events of national significance, so the entire country remembers important events by remembering the place where they occurred. Gettysburg, Wounded Knee. Pearl Harbor. Thousands of people visit such places so that they can forge a personal connection with events that matter. At such places, monuments and signs and plaques usually re-tell the story. And yet other places have more personal meaning. The place where a brother died, or the place where a friend shared a secret, or the place where you thought through a hard problem and decided to change your life. In these places, no memorials make the story public, but the story is real and important, nonetheless" (Umphrey 1996).

What local places are significant to your students? The My Places unit starts with identifying and describing significant or curious places in your community that have personal meaning to a particular student: historic buildings, local cemeteries, places with local legends, local eateries and gathering spots, gardens or parks, scary places, places where children go to get away from adults, places where you can find interesting plants or animals, places where your family goes for picnics or reunions, favorite hunting or fishing spots, a special place you go with friends to be happy together. Consider not just the grand old buildings in town, but places important to different segments of the community. These different segments may be represented by students in the class. Some of the most culturally meaningful places may not be the ones with official historical markers or elegant exteriors. Instead, they may be special because of the events, activities, or memories associated with them. [Note: Background for Teachers draws from Michael Umphrey's "Essay of Place," referenced above, and from the Exploring Your Community Poster from the American Folklife Center and the Rural Schools and Community Trust <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/>]

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Introduce the idea of significant places to your students by asking them to think of a place that is important or special to them in some way. The place must be in your county. This should be the kind of place they would like to share with a special relative or friend who is coming to visit. As a pre-writing activity, students list these special, unique, or important places, either individually or in a group brainstorming activity. These places can be very specific (my bedroom, tree-house) or more general (state park, the fairgrounds). but they must be places that have special, personal meaning to the individual student. Use the list of ideas from the Background to prime the pump.

Activity 2:

Students will write a draft descriptive paragraph about one of the places on his or her list. The description will include sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches that are associated with that place. Students should also explain why that place is important or special. If students need practice with description, try modeling the activity with group brainstorming about the classroom, or take a walk outside and describe the playground. As a prewriting activity, adapt the [Sensory Card](#) used in Chapter 9 to a special place.

Activity 3:

Students exchange paragraphs with a partner or small group for some peer feedback. What questions do peers have about this special place? Are the descriptions so good that they can feel, hear, see, touch and smell what they place is really like? What areas need more detail or description?

Activity 4:

If necessary, introduce or review the proper form for writing a letter, (one of the types of writing required for Georgia QCC 3rd grade. Language Arts Standard 41). After the period of feedback, students will revise their place descriptions in the form of a letter in which they imagine that they have moved away and will never see their special place again. How would they feel? How would they recreate the place in words? Why was it so special? What memories are associated with it? As a extension, students may send the letters to other members of the class (by e-mail if appropriate to the grade level, or regular mail) or perhaps exchange letters with another class doing the same project. Alternatively, the teacher may introduce or review freestyle poetry or some other writing genre, and students may write about their special place.

Activity 5:

Students will take turns reading their writing to the class.

WORKSHEETS

[Sensory Card](#) (see Chapter 9 Our Places, Lesson #1)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**Language Arts**

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT**Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)****4 = Excellent**

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Umphrey, Michael, "The Essay of Place," (1996), the Montana Heritage Project has useful ideas for educators, sample projects, and the model Writing the Essay of Place.

<http://www.edheritage.org/>

Exploring Your Community poster text, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/> (ideas for teachers on community-based projects for the classroom)

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit IV of the Louisiana on-line folklife curriculum looks at region, geography, ecology, and folklife, and sense of place in lessons designed for grades 4 and 8. <http://www.louisianavoices.org>

National Geographic website has age-specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which link this lesson nicely to Georgia standards in social studies and geography. For example: Standard 4--Your Special Town. <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>

London, Peter. *Step Outside, Community-Based Art Education*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1994; teacher ideas for combining student artwork and writing about community places and events.

Schotter, Ronni, *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street*, Orchard Books, 1999; a young girl is given a homework assignment to write about her street, but she finds it boring until she gets some advice from her neighbors. A wonderful book to inspire creative writing, suitable for K-8.

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: Students who are shy can ask another person to read his or her paper, or if letters are "mailed" to classmates, students may read the letter they receive.

Middle School Level: Students should be required to write in paragraph or essay format for the activities. See, for example, The Essay of Place lesson from the Montana Heritage Project, an excellent model for a 7-step essay, using the writing process and different approaches to place. The website includes examples of student writing: <http://www.edheritage.org>. The National Geographic website, listed above under "Resources" also has level specific lessons which deal with place.

High School Level: Students should be required to write in paragraph or essay format for the activities. See, for example, The Essay of Place lesson from the Montana Heritage Project, an excellent model for a 7-step essay using the writing process and different approaches to place. The website includes examples of student writing: <http://www.edheritage.org>. The National Geographic website, listed above under “Resources” also has level specific lessons which deal with place.



Poems written by Judy Phillips' students on display at the Cook Primary and Elementary School booth at the 2001 Exchange Club Fair. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 2: Neighborhood Customs

Grade Level: Though this lesson was used with gifted 4th graders, it is appropriate for grades 3-6.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 1 is at least three 45-minute class period.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce concepts of community culture and customs and to help students to identify examples in their own lives. They will write about their neighborhood, using the writing process.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

4th Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes selections (compositions) of three or more paragraphs about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes in a variety of genres to produce paragraphs and compositions:

- Personal narratives
- Imaginative stories
- Responses to literature
- Content area pieces
- Correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 42: Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, usage, and mechanics.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence, adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Standard 58: Uses research process by:

- Choosing topic
- Formulating questions
- Identifying key words
- Selecting sources
- Skimming
- Paraphrasing
- Taking notes
- Organizing
- Presenting

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards^{3rd} Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 13: Recognizes how human actions and physical environments affect one another.

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

What makes your community, county, or neighborhood special? What do students know about their neighborhood? How would an outsider view your community? What can neighbors learn from each other? What can students learn from members of the community? Later in this unit students will do an interview, paying particular attention to community culture and neighborhood customs. What is meant by these terms? Students will need some guidance.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum standards for 3rd grade focus on human characteristics of communities. Folklife is a central part of these human characteristics, and, like other aspects of community life, folklife is often shaped by the environment or context in which it occurs.

This unit focuses particularly on customary folklife. Customs are things people do, learned informally through oral transmission, by growing up in a particular group or place. Since neighborhoods are urban, rural, and suburban, customs may differ from one to the other, although there are certainly generalized similarities with the customs of a particular region, or among particular folk groups.

The following list, taken from “[What is Folklife](#)” in the **Appendix** of this workbook, can serve as a general guide (it is certainly not inclusive!). The list is geared toward southern regional traditions that one might encounter in South Georgia. Students may think of more regional traditions and share their ideas with the class.

THINGS PEOPLE DO (CUSTOMS)

Religious Rituals: processions, Blessing of the Fleet, traditional wedding marches and customs, (pinning money on the bride and groom), naming ceremonies, chanted sermons, river and lake baptisms, wakes, funerals, religious pageants, Watch Night.

Traditional Occasions: Dinner on the grounds, fish fries, cane grindings, dove shoots, turkey shoots, pond drainings, graveyard cleanings, religious events, funerals and wakes, memorial days, family and community reunions, barbecues, garage sales, flea markets, church anniversaries and homecomings, Homecoming parades, holiday celebrations such as Easter egg hunts, Christmas parades, July 4th fireworks, Chinese New Year's Dragon Dance, rites of passage such as quinceañeras, sweet sixteen parties, bar mitzvahs, graduation, baptisms, funerals, weddings.

Games: variations of hopscotch, jumping rope, Red Rover, 7-Up, gossip, handclapping songs, marbles, string games, competitions (hog catching, preach-off).

Dance and Movement: two steps, waltzes, breakdowns, square dance and calling, Gullah-Geechee ring shout, polkas, line dances.

Agricultural Customs planting, cultivation, and harvesting lore and practices; farmstead and plantation layout, tobacco auctions.

Other Work-Related Skills: railroading, logging and sawmills, truckers, piloting (boats and crop dusters), ranching, rodeos, shrimpers, hunting/fishing guides, bee keeping.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Read *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street* by Ronni Schotter (Orchard Books 1999), in which a young girl is given a homework assignment to write about her street, but she finds it boring until she gets some advice from her neighbors. Or read *Uptown* by Bryan Collier (Henry Holt & Co., 2000), in which a young boy takes us on a personal tour of his neighborhood, New York City's Harlem, or another piece of suitable literature about a town or neighborhood. These books (all available from the CARTS Culture Catalog at <http://www.carts.org>) are about urban neighborhoods, so there will be points for comparison and contrast with rural areas such as South Georgia.

Practice active listening, a skill students will need for interviewing later in the unit. (For more on listening, see [Activity 1](#) in Chapter 5).

Have students listen and take notes about what they have heard or read: What things about the place, neighborhood, or town in the reading are interesting?. How are they described? What else would students like to know? Lead a discussion of how this neighborhood or town is different or similar to their neighborhood?

Activity 2:

In groups or individually, have students brainstorm lists of about the neighborhood they are most familiar with (for newcomers, this may not be their current neighborhood). The teacher should model examples from the class reading or from his or her own experience. Sample questions below can be used to stimulate student ideas. Group A deals more with geography, economy, and environment; Group B deals more with customs and folklife. Teachers may wish to add or subtract questions to either list. Be sure to include some from Group B if you want to include neighborhood customs in the activity.

GROUP A:

- What is the name of the neighborhood? How did it get its name? Are there any places children have named?
- What grows in the neighborhood? (trees, flowers, vegetables, weeds, nothing?)
- What kind of neighborhood is it (rural, urban, suburban)? What kinds of buildings does it have? What do people do there?
- What things are man-made? What are landforms and part of the environment, such as a river , spring, swamp, creek, hill??
- Who lives in my neighborhood ? What different ages, races, ethnic groups?

GROUP B:

- What basic needs can you satisfy in your neighborhood without getting into a car?
- What games are played in the neighborhood?
- What brings people together in the neighborhood? (parties, garage sales, barbecues, fish fries, parades, holidays, festivals?)
- Are there any unusual or interesting places, landmarks, buildings?
- Are stories told about these places?
- Are there any decorations in the neighborhood (in yards, holiday decorations, signs)? Do the decorations change at different times of the year?
- What makes your neighborhood different from those around it?

[Adapted with permission from Unit IV, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with

funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts):
<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>] (see especially the Spirit of Place worksheet)

Activity 3:

Compile a group list of neighborhood customs. Summarize with a discussion about the similarities and differences between neighborhoods. How does folklife help to give neighborhoods their sense of place? Every neighborhood has stories and customs associated with it. As an extension to this lesson, compare/contrast neighborhood features of rural, urban, and suburban neighborhoods (see QCC Standard 20), exchanging lists with a class whose school is in a different neighborhood than yours or perhaps with students in a sister city. “Brainstorming a Regional Cultural Exchange” (found in Louisiana Voices Unit IV, listed under Resources below) gives a more detailed model for such an exchange. A [Venn Diagram](#) would be a useful summative tool for this activity, comparing and contrasting the characteristics of different neighborhoods (see worksheet section below).

Activity 4:

Students imagine that they have been asked to write the text for a marker to be placed in their neighborhood, describing the neighborhood and its customs. What would they include? As a technology link, students may look at texts for actual markers in their community (see Resources below). Use the writing process to guide students through a summary paragraph or a descriptive piece about one particular aspect of the neighborhood, following up on the descriptive writing of My Places. Use peer editing to improve rough drafts for a final version of the marker.

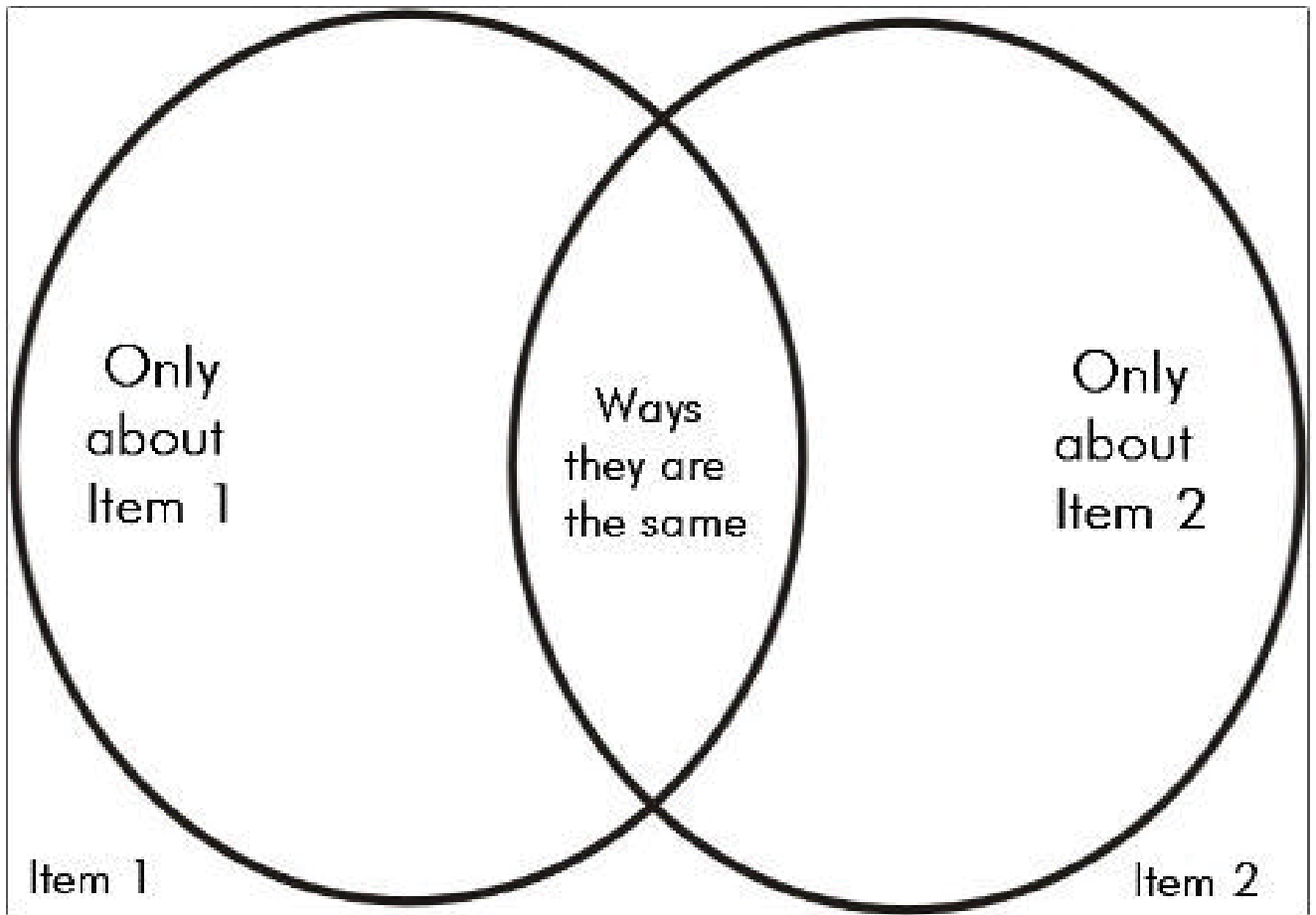
WORKSHEETS

[Peer Editor’s Worksheet](#) (see end of Chapter 2)

[Venn Diagram](#) (see below)

My Venn Diagram

[worksheet]



My Venn Diagram

The Venn Diagram is an organizational tool made of two overlapping circles for charting similarities and differences between characters, stories, or other elements.

Directions:

1. Read or think about two different topics or items.
2. Write the characteristics of Item 1 in the first space on the left.
3. Write the characteristics of Item 2 in the last space on the right.
4. Write the characteristics that both items have in common in the space in the center.
5. Analyze the data you have entered.
6. Write your conclusions below or on a separate page.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Georgia Historical Society has links to Georgia's official historical marker program so you can see the kinds of markers that already exist in your community; for older students, there is a marker prospectus and marker guidelines; also links to all known historical markers in the State of Georgia, <http://www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/gahistmarkers/>

Umphrey, Michael, "The Essay of Place," (1996), the Montana Education Project has useful ideas for educators, sample projects, and the model Writing the Essay of Place.

<http://www.edheritage.org>

Exploring Your Community poster text, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/> (ideas for teachers on community-based projects for the classroom)

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit IV of the Louisiana on-line folklife curriculum looks at region, geography, ecology, and folklife, and sense of place in lessons designed for grades 4 and 8. See especially the Spirit of Place activity and Brainstorming a Regional Cultural Exchange.

<http://www.louisianavoices.org>

The National Geographic website has age-specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which link this lesson nicely to Georgia standards in social studies and geography. See, for example, Standard 1, Exploring Physical and Human Characteristics of Earth's Spaces (identifying landforms, population, climate, etc. on the local level); Standard 4, Your Special Town, Standard 6, Cultural Symbols and the Characteristics of Place.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>

Collier, Bryan. *Uptown*. Henry Holt & Co., 2000.

Schotter, Ronni, *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street*, Orchard Books, 1999, a young girl is given a homework assignment to write about her street, but she finds it boring until she gets some advice from her neighbors. A wonderful book to inspire creative writing, suitable for K-8.

(*Note: the previous two books are available from the CARTS Culture Catalog, <http://www.carts.org>]

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary School Level: Georgia's 4th Grade Social Studies QCCs stress different regions in the U.S. Consider examining the Southeast, as represented by the local community, in comparison with other cultural regions. The Louisiana Voices "Brainstorming a Regional Cultural Exchange" (Unit IV) would be a good starting point for this approach.

Middle and High School Level: This lesson is suitable for upper grades, with more sophisticated comparison and age appropriate writing expectations. Louisiana Voices The Spirit of Place (Unit IV) could guide high school students into some interesting neighborhood-based writing.



A dinner on the grounds or potluck is the feature of many family reunions, church events, and other activities in the neighborhood. Photo by Laurie Sommers, 2000.

Their Places Unit: Getting to Know the Neighborhood



Community elders gather to share news and stories at Peanut City, a Cook County roadside stand that sells fresh local produce and boiled peanuts. With their lifetime of experience, elders are a rich subject for student interviews. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Their Places Unit

Lesson # 1: Newcomer's View of the Neighborhood

Grade Level: Though this lesson was used with gifted 4th graders, it is appropriate for grades 3-6.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 1 is at least three 45-minute class period.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to teach interviewing techniques with emphasis on questioning skills.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

4th Grade Language Arts

Standard 4: Recall, interpret, question and summarize information presented orally.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3^d Grade Social Studies Standards:

Standard 23: Describes local community with regard to origin, growth, and change over time: natural resources, history, goods and services, jobs, government.

Standard 27: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population; conducts interviews.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

4th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 29: Gathers information through reading, listening, observing and surveying.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit focuses on a community interview. Students will work with an older adult who can speak about neighborhood change. To study community folklife, students need more information than their memories or experience provide. Folklorists gather much of their information through interviewing. Students can be taught to interview also. Chapter 5 of this workbook details how to set up a class interview project. One of the keys to a successful interview (and to students getting good information for writing activities) is to practice and model skills in forming and asking appropriate questions. Here is a brief overview, as suggested by Elizabeth Radin Simons in her book *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990):

1. Students should discuss what type of information they want to gather and dictate sample questions to the teacher or to a student recorder. Each student should contribute a question or two.
2. The class should decide which of these questions to include in the final questionnaire. Lead the students to realize which questions will produce the kinds of answers they are seeking; questions that can be answered "yes" or "no" should be avoided.
3. Lead the students to include name of interviewer and interviewee, date and place of the interview, topic, and a leading question that begins the interview (What was the neighborhood like when you first moved here?).

4. After the questionnaire has been completed, pairs of students should practice interviewing each other.
5. Ask two student volunteers to interview each other in front of the class, with everyone watching and taking notes, or, as suggested in this unit, do a practice interview in class with a guest speaker from the community. After the practice interview, the questions and interviewing technique should be discussed and adjusted.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Using [Our Places Lesson #2](#) (in this chapter) as a springboard (questions about neighborhood customs), have students generate questions to use in a practice interview. Students should come up with who, when, where, what, how questions to ask someone who has lived for a long time in a neighborhood about their neighborhood and its customs. The “[That’s A Good Question](#)” activity and worksheet, found at the end of Chapter 5, may be a useful tool for getting students to think about framing questions. Teachers may need to work on open versus closed questions as outlined in Background above.

Role-playing with the model interview scripts included at the back of Chapter 5 may be useful to get students thinking about ethics and politeness ([How Not to Conduct an Interview](#)) and asking open-ended and follow up questions ([The Reluctant Guest](#)). These scripts can be easily adapted to a specific topic and grade level.

Follow the procedure outlined above for teaching the practice interview. If possible, try to pair students from different neighborhoods. If suitable to your grade level, have students practice filling out the [Interview Report Forms](#) in pairs (see back of Chapter 5). Also practice signing the consent forms.

For more information on class interview projects and interview procedures, see Chapter 5. If younger students are still having trouble with forming questions, see [Chapter 6, My Places Lesson #3](#).

Activity 2:

Invite someone who is new to the school (e.g. new administrator or other school employee) and have students ask who, where, when, why, how questions about the person’s old neighborhood. These questions must include but are not limited to the questions from Activity 1. The teacher may wish to fill out the [Interview Report Form](#) and discuss the consent form with the guest, but students should all contribute questions.

WORKSHEETS

(All found in the back of Chapter 5)

[The Reluctant Guest](#)
[How Not to Conduct an Interview](#)
[Consent Form](#)
[Interview Report Form](#)
[That’s a Good Question](#)

PERFORMANCE STANDARD

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

RESOURCES

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>).

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990).

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (now off-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos, toys, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle and High School Levels: This activity is suitable for middle and upper grades. Encourage students to use “probes” or follow-up questions during the practice interview.

Their Places Unit: Lesson # 2: Interview Preparation

Grade Level: Though this lesson was used with gifted 4th graders, it is appropriate for grades 3-6.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 1 is at least one 45-minute class period.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to teach interview procedures and prepare students to complete a community interview on their own. Background research into the local community may also be incorporated into this lesson as preparation for the interview.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

4th Grade Language Arts

Standard 4: Recall, interpret, question and summarize information presented orally.

Standard 39: Writes selections (compositions) of three or more paragraphs about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes in a variety of genres to produce paragraphs and compositions:

- Personal narratives
- Imaginative stories
- Responses to literature
- Content area pieces
- Correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 42: Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, usage, and mechanics.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

4th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 29: Gathers information through reading, listening, observing and surveying.

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

Standard 30: Locates and utilizes information from a variety of sources.

Standard 31: Uses features of books to gather information.

Standard 32: Arranges time-related event into chronological order.

Standard 34: Analyzes and interprets photographs to answer selected questions.

Standard 35: Organizes information into useable and efficient forms, e.g., graphs, charts, tables, outlines.

Standard 47: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

In this lesson, students will expand their approach to “neighborhood” to include change over time. The focus of this lesson can be the interview itself, or, as part of the interview preparation process, you also may wish to include some background research on community history and discuss the reasons neighborhoods, like all communities, change over time. Old pictures may be

especially useful instruction tools. Consult the Internet or the school or local library. A local historical society may prove a good resource. Also, the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, local Main Street directors (a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), and preservationists at the Georgia Regional Development Centers all may have information on the history of neighborhoods, downtowns, and specific buildings in the community. The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation has a wonderful Heritage Education program which can provide excellent models and consultation services (see [Resources](#) below).

Here are some sample questions to get students thinking about change:

How long have you lived or worked in the community?
What was this neighborhood like when you first moved here?
Did you move here with your family?
Were there many people here?
Where did the children go to school?
Where did the children play?
What stories can you tell me about this neighborhood?
Do you have old photos of the neighborhood that you can share with me?
What were your neighbors like?
How many businesses were here when you came to this neighborhood?
What businesses are no longer here?
Why are there more (or fewer) businesses here now?
Identify retailers who have worked in the neighborhood over a period of years.
What do you think of the neighborhood today?

(Questions in the Background for Teachers are adapted from the lesson Cultural Symbols and the Characteristics of Place, National Geographic Xpeditions website, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>).

Don't forget to include questions about neighborhood customs introduced in Chapter 7 [Our Places Lesson #2](#) and practiced in the previous lesson.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students conduct background research on the local community as preparation for this activity. A number of possible resources are listed below. Students will summarize findings in outline form. This step is at the teacher's discretion

Activity 2:

Students identify an appropriate person to interview about changes in a neighborhood over time. If possible, this person should be long-time resident who has lived in the student's neighborhood for 20 or more years. Choosing a person from the same neighborhood as the student will facilitate the study of change over time. Students can choose elderly relatives, neighbors, important local persons, etc. Students can also interview school personnel if appropriate. Send home [Letter to Caregivers](#) (sample at back of Chapter 5) and explain the interview assignment.

Activity 3:

This lesson is completed in class. Class will review types of questions that solicit informative answers and develop a class questionnaire for use in their own interview. The focus of this interview should be continuity and change in a local neighborhood. See sample questions in the Background above.

Activity 4:

Make sure students have all the necessary forms: the Consent Form and Interview Report Form.

WORKSHEETS

(All found in the back of Chapter 5)

[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#)

[Consent Form](#)

[Interview Report Form](#)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT**Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning****4 = Excellent**

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Rubric for Writing:**4 = Excellent**

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Very few errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Local historical society and local history room at the public library

Doing History; visit On Your Own section of this website for short essays designed to help beginning historians conduct and organize history research, <http://www.dohistory.org/>

Project History, Teaching with Georgia's Historic Places, A Guide for K-12 Teachers (Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and Georgia State University, 1995), a guide to help teachers make better use of local historic and cultural resources, with emphasis on historic preservation. Contact 404-656-2840.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs County Snapshots, general overviews of the key features of each Georgia County, <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/snapshots>

Main Street program in your community (a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, see link to Georgia Trust)

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, with links the Main Street Program and the Trust's Heritage Education Program, <http://www.georgiitrust.org/about.html>

State Historic Preservation Office, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, <http://www.gashpo.org/>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Middle and Upper Grades: students at these levels should be able to incorporate more research skills.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #3: Student Interviews

Grade Level: This lesson was originally written for 4th grade gifted students; however, it is appropriate for grades three through six. Because of the 3rd grade Community emphasis in Georgia, standards below are listed for 3rd grade.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 3 varies.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to use the interview process correctly when interviewing a person in the neighborhood. The interview process may also include photography. Students will analyze change over time in a written report.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: COMMUNICATE effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources to communicate discoveries that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Language Arts

Standard 4: Recall, interpret, question and summarize information presented orally.

Standard 12: Blends sounds orally to make words.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 23: Describes local community with regard to origin, growth, and change over time: natural resources, history, goods and services, jobs, government.

Standard 27: Develops a class or small group list of questions and seeks answers from a school or home population; conducts interviews.

Standard 47: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs.

4th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 29: Gathers information through reading, listening, observing and surveying.

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

Standard 30: Locates and utilizes information from a variety of sources.

Standard 31: Uses features of books to gather information.

Standard 32: Arranges time-related event into chronological order.

Standard 34: Analyzes and interprets photographs to answer selected questions.

Standard 35: Organizes information into useable and efficient forms, e.g., graphs, charts, tables, outlines.

Standard 47: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit includes a photography component if students have access to cameras. Students may take photos as part of the interview activity. It may be advisable with inexperienced younger interviewers, however, to separate the photography and interviewing activities. Students could photograph their neighborhood at another time, for an overnight homework or weekend homework assignment.

The following background section discusses fieldwork and photography in the classroom. [It is taken from Chapter 5 of this workbook, where all credits are listed, including Unit II of Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide. [<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>] Folklife research on a specific group, topic, or theme is usually done through **fieldwork**, which entails going into a community and using observation and interviews to obtain first-hand information. Fieldworkers use tape

recorders, cameras, notetaking, and sketches. The term **documentation** refers to the collection and presentation of the research results through writing, tapes, and photographs.

Cameras for the Classroom

Teachers find that the new disposable 35-mm cameras work better than other inexpensive cameras and create better prints. So far, disposable slide film cameras are not marketed. Buy the highest ASA possible (400 ASA is ideal) and urge students to make sure they have as much light as possible before shooting and to avoid backlighting (shooting a subject in front of a window, for example). Build film processing into your budget and photography practice into your schedule. If you choose to emphasize the study of photography, find some single-lens reflex (SLR) 35-mm cameras that require adjustments and focusing. Try the school media center, local newspaper, high school art department, and parents. Folklorists often take both color and black and white photographs as well as color slides. The photos work well in publications, and slides are more affordable to process than prints and can be used easily in presentations. With computer scanners and color photocopiers becoming more affordable, you will be able to make excellent use of color photos. Digital cameras require a computer and are good ways to study technology and develop computer-based products.

Identify Your Photos

Whatever the camera, be sure to label prints, slides, and digital diskettes with pertinent information: date, time, place, photographer, subject (see back of Chapter 5 for a sample [Photo Log](#)). Designing and keeping logs is an important part of fieldwork. Label each slide or print to identify the corresponding photo log sheet. Write lightly in pencil on the back of prints or write on a label, then stick the label on the back of the photo. Make extra copies of good photos to give interviewees as a way of saying thank you. Make sure they have signed a permission form before being photographed (see back of Chapter 5 for a sample [Consent Form](#)). Digital photographs can be used for a computer slide show or multimedia stack, but they will not be useful as a permanent archival record.

Photography Tips

- Try to center the subject in the camera viewfinder.
- Be aware of light and shadow: don't take a picture with someone right in front of a window.
- Tell a story with the camera: take close-up detail shots, action shots, pictures of people you interview, pictures which can be the illustrations for your interview

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

If photos and cameras are to be part of the assignment, make sure students are familiar with how to work their cameras. Suggest tips for photography as appropriate to the skill levels of your students (see above). The *Indivisible Educator's Guide*, listed under [Resources](#) below, suggests making "practice viewfinders" with squares cut in index cards so students can practice "seeing" as a camera does. Also see Photo Tips above.

Activity 2:

Introduce the focus of the photo assignment: a photo story of their interview and the neighborhood. Students will take photos of the person, their home, and the neighborhood. Encourage students to take a walking tour of the neighborhood with their interviewee after the interview and photograph points of interest and things that came up in the interview. It may be difficult for younger students to concentrate on taking notes and taking photos simultaneously.

Activity 3:

Students will use their questionnaire to interview a longtime citizen of a neighborhood in the community. If cameras are used, they also should create “photo stories” of their interview. Be sure they have the interviewee fill out the [Interview Report Form](#) and the [Consent Form](#). Have them use the [Interview Checklist](#) to mark off all the needed steps. Adapt the form to your particular assignment as needed.

Activity 4:

Students should write up findings from their interview notes in class as soon as possible after the interview. They will use their background research, the results of their interviews, and their own knowledge of the neighborhood to write reports on how certain feature of their neighborhoods have changed over a period of years and how the perceptions of the people they interviewed differed from their own. Publish the results through oral versions of the written reports given in class.

WORKSHEETS

[Consent Form](#) (see end of Chapter 5)

[Interview Report Form](#) (see end of Chapter 5)

[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see end of Chapter 5)

[Interview Checklist](#) (see below)



Judy Phillips interviews Vanessa Mitchell during a Folkwriting Workshop led by writing consultant Sandra Worsham. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

[Worksheet]

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Before the Interview:

- Set the date, time, and place of the interview.
- Ask permission to use a camera.
- Explain the use of the Interview Report Form.
- Explain your project and what you will do with the information.
- Check your equipment (batteries, camera, flash)
- Bring extra film and batteries.
- Write out your questions.

At the Interview:

- Have the person fill out the Interview Report Form.
- Thank the person and say “This is the end of the interview” when you finish.
- Have the person sign the Consent Form.

After the Interview:

- Send a thank-you letter.
- Identify photos with the Photo Log.
- Summarize your interview in an outline.

(Adapted with permission from *FOLKPATTERNS 4-H Leader's Guide*, Michigan 4-H Youth Programs, Cooperative Extension Service, and Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, MI. Copyright 1991 Michigan State University Board of Trustees, <http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>. These materials may be copied for nonprofit educational purposes.)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Fieldwork Rubric

(Note: This is a generalized rubric designed for projects in which interviews are recorded and those where only note-taking is used. The instructor or other students may be the “audience” evaluators)

Performance Element	Accomplished ____ Points	Developing ____ Points	Beginning ____ Points	Total Points
Preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly identifies what to collect and/or study. • Chooses appropriate method of documentation and prepares needed materials and tools. • Completes items in Interview Checklist that are relevant to preparation stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies some irrelevant points to study or items to collect. • Method of documentation is not most appropriate; prepares some materials and tools. • Omits some relevant items in Interview Checklist.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrectly identifies what to collect and/or study. • Chooses inappropriate method of documentation, fails to prepare materials and tools. • Omits most relevant items in Interview Checklist.. 	
Practicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiently practices using the equipment that will be used. • Practices interviewing informants. • Plans and practices videotaping; checks for background 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices using the equipment a little, mastery not attained. • Practices interviewing informants a little. • Practices videotaping insufficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to practice using the equipment. • Fails to practice interviewing informants. • Fails to practice videotaping. 	

	interference.			
Conducting Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects appropriate notebooks, forms, surveys and/or checklists. Ask meaningful questions, records accurately. Takes high-quality photographs, labeled properly. Tape records at appropriate volume, with no interfering noises. Completes Tape Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects most fieldwork tools. Asks mostly meaningful questions, recording mostly accurate. Takes some high-quality photographs, labeled adequately. Tape recordings lacking in quality, some noise. Tape log incomplete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects inappropriate or inadequate fieldwork tools. Asks poor questions, takes inadequate Notes. Takes insufficient photographs, labels them inadequately. Tape recordings of poor quality. Tape log incomplete. 	
Processing Fieldwork Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archives recorded materials where they will be protected. Labels materials carefully, files consent forms with materials. Transcribes tapes accurately; proofs and edits transcriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archives most recorded materials where they will be protected. Labels some materials inaccurately, files most consent forms Transcribes some tapes inaccurately, proofs and edits most transcriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archives few recorded materials where they will be protected. Labels most materials inaccurately, files few consent forms Transcribes most tapes inaccurately, proofs and edits few transcriptions. 	
Presenting Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows instructions for presenting findings. Conveys a message through creative presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat follows instructions for presenting findings. Conveys a message through mundane presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to follow instructions for presenting findings. Fails to convey a message through creative presentation. 	

Audience Feedback

The Audience evaluates the student's fieldwork according to how carefully and accurately the student can prepare carefully, practice needed skills, conduct fieldwork, process and archive materials properly, and present the findings.

Audience Comments

(Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator’s Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>)

RESOURCES

For a good website on photo tips, see Kodak <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/nav/takingPics.shtml>
Click on “Guide to Better Pictures”

Indivisible, the Duke Center for Documentary Studies community documentation site, has an Educator’s Guide link from their web site which includes some useful activities for working with photographs and taking documentary photos. <http://www.indivisible.org/resources.htm>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Caregivers need to go with their child to the interview. Make sure there is a note of explanation sent home to parents about the interview (see [Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) at the back of Chapter 5), along with the [Consent Form](#).

Middle School Level: Student could record interview and work on more professional approaches to photos. The documentary photo aspect to this assignment could be expanded: the Duke Indivisible website listed above is a good resource.

High School Level: Student could record interview and work on more professional approaches to photos. The documentary photo aspect to this assignment could be expanded: the Duke Indivisible website listed above is a good resource.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #4: Photo Tour of County Neighborhoods

Grade Level: This lesson was originally written for 4th grade gifted students; however, it is appropriate for grades three through six. Because of the 3rd grade Community emphasis in Georgia, standards below are listed for 3rd grade.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 4 is one to two 45 –minute periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to use the writing process to write photo captions for student photos of local neighborhoods.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes a short paragraph about a topic.

Standard 41: Writes in a variety of genres to produce paragraphs and compositions:

- Personal narratives
- Imaginative stories
- Responses to literature
- Content area pieces
- Correspondence (including writing letters and addressing envelopes).

Standard 42 : Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, and usage and mechanics:

- Writes complete sentences;
- Uses correct capitalization and punctuation;
- Uses correct word structure;
- Identifies types of sentences according to purpose: declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory;
- Identifies the parts of a sentence in various sentence patterns (Simple subject and predicate);
- Forms singular, plural, and possessive nouns;
- Applies standard conventions of American English in subject-verb agreement;
- Demonstrates knowledge of nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives in writing simple sentences.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

3rd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

Standard 25: Uses various print and non-print reference sources to locate information.

Standard 34: Makes predictions and comparisons based on factual information.

4th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 29: Gathers information through reading, listening, observing and surveying.

Standard 20: Describes and classifies the physical and human characteristics of urban, rural, and suburban communities.

Standard 30: Locates and utilizes information from a variety of sources.

Standard 34: Analyzes and interprets photographs to answer selected questions.

Standard 35: Organizes information into useable and efficient forms, e.g., graphs, charts, tables, outlines.

Standard 47: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students complete a photo log for each photo (see [Photo Log](#) at back of Chapter 5).

Activity 2:

Edit photos from interview sessions. Students should choose the ones that give a visual version of their interview. Use the writing process to create captions for each photo. Consider the following:

- Description of contents of the photo: what story does this tell?
- Place photo taken
- Date photo taken
- Name of photographer

Activity 3:

Edit the captions as part of the writing process. The [Peer Editing Checklist](#) (Chapter 2) may be a useful tool.

Activity 4:

Publish the photos and captions in the main hall in an exhibit entitled “Welcome to the Neighborhood”.

WORKSHEETS

[Photo log](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

The National Geographic website has age specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which link this lesson nicely to Georgia standards in social studies and geography.. See for example Standard 6, Cultural Symbols and the Characteristics of Place for grades 3-5; <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>,

NOTES TO TEACHER

Middle School Level: Students may write a story that ties the photos together. The National Geographic “Cultural Symbols and the Characteristics of Place” lesson listed in Resources above is adapted for grades 6-8 and provides a nice extension for this activity.

High School Level: Students may write exhibit labels to go along with the captions. Exhibit labels often have word limits of 100 to 150 words. A related lesson on cultural geography for grades 9-12 can be found on the National Geographic Xpeditions website (see Resources above), Standard 6, The Evolution of Cultural Landscapes.



Sign on county road in Cook County placed on private property as an attempt to keep the neighborhood clean. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Their Places Unit: Welcome to the Neighborhood



Local convenience stores, such as this one in Cecil, Georgia, have supplanted earlier general stores as a gathering place for local residents, a place to post flyers about local events, and perhaps even a lunch counter featuring the skills of local cooks. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Our Places Unit

Lesson #1: Mapping Neighborhood Customs

Grade Level: This lesson was originally written for 4th grade gifted students; however, it is appropriate for grades three through six. Because of the 3rd grade Community emphasis in Georgia, standards below are listed for 3rd grade.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 1 is two class periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to compile customs as they pertain to local neighborhoods and begin mapping skills by identifying neighborhood locations on appropriate city or county maps.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes a short paragraph about a topic.

Standard 42 : Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, and usage and mechanics:

- Writes complete sentences;
- Uses correct capitalization and punctuation;
- Uses correct word structure;
- Identifies types of sentences according to purpose: declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory;
- Identifies the parts of a sentence in various sentence patterns (Simple subject and predicate);
- Forms singular, plural, and possessive nouns;
- Applies standard conventions of American English in subject-verb agreement;
- Demonstrates knowledge of nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives in writing simple sentences.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING -Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

3rd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 12: Determines the purpose of a map by examining title and content.

Standard 23: Describes the local community in regard to origin, growth and change over time

- location/geography (natural resources)
- history of local community
- goods and services produced
- types of jobs
- government (organization and purpose)
- provision and funding of public services, and
- impact of technology/tools.

Standard 24: Gathers information through reading, listening, observing and surveying.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Make a large map of the county with an overhead and large bulletin board paper to reproduce the map. County maps can be downloaded from the Internet (see [Resources](#) below). Students will

look for neighborhood names and general neighborhood locations that are represented in the student interviews.

Activity 2:

Students divide into groups according to neighborhoods studied. Student groups will develop a master list of customs identified in Chapter 7 [Our Places Lesson #2](#) (their observations of their own neighborhood) and those identified in their interview. To continue the continuity and change theme, the list could be divided into “Customs Then” and “Customs Now.” A [Venn Diagram](#) also would work well with this concept.

Activity 4:

Students will write the customs in abbreviated form on index cards. Place the cards on the map.

Activity 5:

Publish the map through a display in the school.

WORKSHEETS

[Photo Log](#) available in back of Chapter 5

[Editor’s Checklist](#) available in back of Chapter 2

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) available in back of Chapter 2

[Venn Diagram](#) (see My Places unit Lesson #2 in this chapter)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

None.

RESOURCES

Historical Atlas of Georgia Counties downloadable by county;

<http://www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/histcountymaps/>

Georgia Maps, a site for all sorts of downloadable maps of Georgia. Under “Political” the individual counties section allows you to select and download county maps. There are also some individual city maps on this site; <http://www.cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/gamaps.htm>

Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, Unit IV, includes a worksheet for creating a cultural map (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

The Smithsonian Folklife Program Borderlands Education Kit (designed for a festival program on the US/Mexico border) has a variety of useful on-line materials for teachers at <http://www.folklife.si.edu/bordersandidentity/>. See in particular Part 5, Borders and Identity in Your Community for an outline on community documentation and a cultural mapping activity.

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: Make sure that students understand the location of the neighborhoods discussed in their interviews. Students may complete a simple version of this mapping unit that will create room decorations suitable for viewing on Parents' Night. Most parents will enjoy viewing their child's work as well as the other children's.

Middle School Level: Students use level-specific mapping skills. Students might produce a cultural map of one of the neighborhoods and include locations of tree houses, bike trails, or some other customary feature particular to the area. Display the maps in the hallway on a bulletin board.

High School Level: Students might produce a more complex cultural map of one of the neighborhoods. Students at this level may be able to work with technology using the Louisiana Voices cultural map creating tool, listed in Resources above. This unit is good to help older students develop a sense of belonging in a community or region. It also encourages students to look and think beyond themselves as they learn about others in the community



This Road Network map helped students learn about the county and how to locate specific places and communities. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Our Places Unit

Lesson #2: “Welcome to Neighborhood” Brochure

Grade Level: This lesson was originally written for 4th grade gifted students; however, it is appropriate for grades three through six. Because of the 3rd grade Community emphasis in Georgia, standards below are listed for 3rd grade.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson # 2 is two 45-minute class periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to publish neighborhood customs a brochure.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards

3rd Grade Language Arts

Standard 39: Writes a short paragraph about a topic.

Standard 42 : Applies correct principles of grammar, parts of speech, and usage and mechanics:

- Writes complete sentences;
- Uses correct capitalization and punctuation;
- Uses correct word structure;
- Identifies types of sentences according to purpose: declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory;
- Identifies the parts of a sentence in various sentence patterns (Simple subject and predicate);
- Forms singular, plural, and possessive nouns;
- Applies standard conventions of American English in subject-verb agreement;
- Demonstrates knowledge of nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives in writing simple sentences.

Standard 43: Communicates ideas by using the writing process:

- PREWRITING -Generates ideas
- DRAFTING -Focuses on topic and uses prewriting ideas to complete first draft
- REVISING - Expands use of descriptive words, improves sequence ,adds variety of sentence types, and organizes writing to include a clear beginning, middle and ending
- EDITING -Begins each sentence and proper noun with a capital letter, uses correct spelling, uses appropriate punctuation, and uses complete sentences
- PUBLISHING -Shares writing with others.

3rd Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 12: Determines the purpose of a map by examining title and content.

Standard 23: Describes the local community in regard to origin, growth and change over time

- location/geography (natural resources)
- history of local community
- goods and services produced
- types of jobs
- government (organization and purpose)
- provision and funding of public services, and
- impact of technology/tools.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Group students according to the neighborhoods represented on the county map. Each group will write a “Welcome to the Neighborhood” brochure for that neighborhood.

Activity 2:

Have students compile the brochures into a booklet about the community that new students and their families can get from the school office when they move into a new neighborhood. Use the [Things I've Learned Worksheet](#) as an organizing tool or a summary activity for the unit.

WORKSHEETS

[Things I've Learned](#)



Judy Phillips shows travel brochures designed by her students to Jere Anna Hargett, Assistant Superintendent of Cook County Schools. Photo by Diane Howard, 2002.

Things I've Learned Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

New Things I Learned About My Community	Things That Give Me a 'Sense of Place'

I hear these sounds in my community:

Three celebrations in my community:

I see these things in my community:

Some Surprises:

People have these jobs in my community:

Some questions I still have:

(Adapted with permission from Unit IV, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Scoring Rubric for "Welcome to the Neighborhood" Brochure

95-100 **Writing samples will exhibit most or all of these:**

- Topic is full of rich details
- Organized so that reader moves in a purposeful way through the piece
- Use of varied sentence patterns
- Creative and colorful language
- Mistakes do not interfere with content

85-94 **Writing samples will exhibit most or all of these:**

- Topic is well developed
- Contains a clear beginning, middle and end
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Mistakes do not interfere with content

80-84 **Writing samples will exhibit most or all of these:**

- Topic is clear but not fully developed
- Clear beginning, middle and end but not polished
- Experimentation with language and sentences
- Novel use of words and combinations
- Mistakes may interfere with content

75-79 **Writing samples will exhibit most or all of these:**

- Topic is clear but undeveloped
- Loose organization
- Variety of vocabulary and sentence patterns is minimal
- Mistakes interfere with content

70-74 **Writing samples will exhibit most or all of these:**

- Topic is nominally developed
 - Basic organization
 - Simple words and sentences
 - Mistakes interfere with content
-

RESOURCES

Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, see especially Unit IV, <http://www.louisianavoice.org/>

Local Chamber of Commerce for examples of existing brochures

Microsoft Publisher or Adobe Pagemaker are possible software programs for making brochures.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Students will be able to write a simple version of the brochure with supervision.

Middle School Level: Teacher may want students to include photos and illustrations.

High School Level: Students will be able to work independently to complete the steps of the writing process and publish a brochure. By using publishing software, students will be able to produce professional looking brochures. Perhaps the Chamber of Commerce could give this brochure to newcomers in the county.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Exploring Holiday Traditions

Trina Brown

Cook Middle School



Thanksgiving or Christmas Parades with local school marching bands are seasonal events in many towns. Cook County Hornets perform for the parade crowd. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Many of the lessons found elsewhere in this unit work well with this age group (for example, personal and place names, bio poems, I Am From poems, local heroes, scrapbooks, etc.). The lessons in this chapter were originally developed for a 7th grade language arts classroom using Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The chapter focuses on Christmas and other winter holidays but can easily be adapted to other seasonal observances and works of literature. In these lessons students will use community and personal celebrations of winter holidays to produce the kind of work that is engaging and interesting to them.

My Places Unit: Holiday Traditions in *A Christmas Carol*

Grade Level: 7 but appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 is approximately 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to research and write about (winter) holiday traditions in the student's family and community, and in other cultures.

Content Standards:

Cook County 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes .

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 7: Writes simple and compound sentences and avoids run-on sentences and nonfunctional fragments.

Standard 9: Applies standard rules of capitalization.

Standard 10: Applies standard rules of punctuation.

Standard 11: Spells frequently used words and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 27: Describes cultures and values represented in literature.

Standard 28: Describes the influences of human experiences on literary works.

Standard 31: Reads a variety of materials for information and pleasure.

Standard 32: Expands reading vocabulary.

Standard 38: Interprets written instructions.

Standard 40: Makes comparisons, predictions, and generalizations and draws conclusions.

Standard 41: Recognizes relevance of data.

Standard 43: Applies reading strategies to specific content and subject matter.

Standard 46: Paraphrases and summarizes information without plagiarizing.

Standard 47: Locates and uses information in card catalogs periodical indices, microforms, and multi-media electronic technologies.

Standard 48: Gathers information by interviewing.

Standard 49: Uses a research process that includes selecting a topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, summarizing, and presenting.

Standard 50: Selects relevant information about a subject from various sources.

Standard 52: Documents sources with reference citations.

Standard 53: Organizes retrieved information using strategies such as note-taking, graphic organizers, SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Review, Report), and outlining.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can include peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include a unifying idea and supporting details .

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, description, narration, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, business, academic, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 72: Uses dialogue in writing.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 75: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly misused words (e.g., your, you're).

Standard 76: Uses available electronic communications and technology in writing.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 6: Explain how social institutions (religion, government, and economics) influence attitudes and behavior of people.

Standard 20: Analyzes interpretations of the same event from multiple types of sources.

Standard 23: Formulates questions related to topic

Standard 27: Collects evidence using appropriate reliable data.

Standard 31: Shows respect towards others.

Standard 32: Works within a group following set rules of procedure to complete an assigned task.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Celebrations and festivals are rich topics for study because they often include oral narratives, customs, beliefs, objects, foodways, music, dance, drama, all of which can be the subject for student writing and research. This lesson is designed to accompany Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, although it can stand alone or serve as a template for the study of other seasonal events and celebrations in the community, the family, or cross-culturally. The [Resources](#) section below includes books on a number of different kinds of celebrations and holidays.

Dickens' classic and the majority culture in the United States each focus on the Christian holiday of Christmas. In an increasingly multicultural classroom, not all students will celebrate Christmas. In order to be more inclusive, consider looking at the history and customs of winter holiday traditions rather than the exclusive study of Christmas. Holiday traditions such as these are often important expressions of cultural identity for the groups and individuals that celebrate them. By focusing on customs and holiday traditions as the cultural expressions of folk groups (family, ethnic, and religious groups all apply here), students will be encouraged to look at holiday traditions with a cultural perspective. Even within the Christmas tradition, many variations occur from family to family, ethnic group to ethnic group, region to region.

The following is a beginning list of winter holidays, a period when people around the world have dealt with the darkest time of the year with ritual and celebration. These and other celebrations may be found among your students or may be the subject of cross-cultural comparison. Consider Social Studies links with 6th grade studies of the Americas, Oceania, and Europe, 7th Grade Studies of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, and studies of migration and ethnic groups in the U.S.

- Winter solstice
- Christmas (celebrated differently by many different ethnic groups: two Latino examples are listed below)
- Las Posadas (December 16-24, a pre-Christmas celebration in Mexican tradition which reenacts Mary and Joseph's search for lodging (posada) on their way to Bethlehem)
- Three Kings Day (Catholic feast of the Epiphany-January 6- which in Latin America (including Mexico and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean) is the traditional day of gift giving)
- St. Lucia Day (Sweden, December 13, a festival of light)
- Hanukkah (the 8-day Jewish Festival of Lights that takes place in November and December)
- Kwanzaa (African American holiday whose name comes from the Swahili word meaning "first fruits of the harvest;" celebrated December 26-January 1)
- Diwali (Hindu fall/winter festival of lights associated with Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity)
- Junkanoo (a Christmas and New Year's festival widespread in the British Caribbean with roots in West Africa and in British mumming and May Day masquerades)
- Birth of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu (A Shinto festival celebrated on December 8 in Japan)
- Festival of Sada (a Zoroastrian festival held in Iran on or near December 12 symbolizing light conquering darkness and good over evil)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Have students think about the word tradition and what it means. (***Tradition--A cultural expression that a folk group continues to pass on or practice. Traditions may be old or***

newly emerging.) Chapter 4 has an overview of folklife traditions and possible activities. See, for example, the [Seasonal Round](#) in which students identify seasonal traditions, customs, holidays in their own life and the community. The Seasonal Round prompts students to organize traditions by the calendar year (what folklorists call calendar customs), which would be a good segue into a focus on winter holidays. The [All About Me](#) activity prompts students to think in terms of folk groups significant to their lives and the traditions associated with them.

Activity 2:

A Christmas Carol includes many examples of folklife in literature. Christmas traditions described in the narrative include childhood memories of Christmas past, and descriptions of traditions in the Christmas present of Dickens' time. Have students identify and list Christmas traditions in the story, noticing the variety of traditions involving food, dancing, music, customs, beliefs, objects, etc.

Activity 3:

Using the writing process, students each write about a childhood memory of one of their most memorable Christmases or winter holidays past. Unlike Scrooge, not all these memories may be happy. Be sure to prompt students to use descriptive language and sensory details when describing childhood holiday memories. Use the [Editing](#) and [Peer Editing Checklists](#) at the back of Chapter 2.

Activity 4:

Have each student list three winter holiday traditions from his or her family. Research the origin of each tradition in preparation for writing an essay of specified length. Some suggested resources are listed below; this is a good activity for technology links and Web search skills. On-line encyclopedias also have information on some holiday traditions. Decide how complex to make the research process (selecting a topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, summarizing, and presenting) and the number and type of sources required. The teacher may want to model the process by discussing the origin of one of the traditions in *A Christmas Carol*, emphasizing how our celebrations reflect influences from different cultures. Note: some family traditions may be idiosyncratic to a particular family. In this case, students may need to interview an appropriate family member to determine the origin. Interview procedures are discussed in Chapter 5. [FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Cards](#) (found in Chapter 5) may be useful instead of a full-blown interview.

Activity 5:

Using the writing process, have students expand on these lists by writing a composition on family holiday traditions and their origins. Students should share their rough drafts in a small group or with a partner for peer feedback. Use the Editing and Peer Editing worksheets at the back of Chapter 2.

Activity 6:

Using a world map, create a class customs map identifying the traditions celebrated and their countries of origin.

Activity 7:

As a social studies extension, students may choose or be assigned another wintertime celebration to research for a comparison/contrast paper, or perhaps twin "I Am From Poems," one from a personal perspective and another from the perspective of someone who celebrates a different cultural tradition.

WORKSHEETS

[FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview Cards](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[The Seasonal Round](#) (see back of Chapter 4)

[All About Me](#) (see back of Chapter 4)

[Peer Editor's Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)
[Editor's Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Standard 3:** LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.
Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.
Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Holiday Traditions Assessment Rubric

Ideas and Content _____20pts.

- tells about a single personal experience
- shows why the experience is important
- uses vivid sensory details
- includes dialogue as appropriate
- has an attention-getting beginning and a satisfying ending

Sentence Fluency _____20pts.

- includes transitional words and phrases to show relationships among ideas and maintain coherence within and between paragraphs
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- sentences are clear and avoid clutter

Organization _____20pts.

- displays a clear chronological order of events
- presents a single focus in each paragraph
- uses paragraph breaks to show changes in time and place
- uses paragraph breaks to show change of speaker in a dialogue

Voice _____20pts.

- uses own, unique style
- writes honestly, as if the reader was standing right there; doesn't try to impress the reader
- writes with confidence and enthusiasm

Conventions _____20pts.

- contains no more than two or three minor errors in grammar and usage
- contains no more than two or three minor errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

Total Score _____100pts.

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no

Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot) yes no

RESOURCES

Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol*.

World of Wonder, Exploring the Realms of History, Science, Nature, and Technology, "A Celebration of Light." Newspapers in Education, November 2001, Triefeldt Studios, Inc. Distributed by United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit IX, the Seasonal Round, focuses on traditions associated with the seasonal calendar and the life cycle (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>).

Zeitlin, Steven J., Amy J. Kotkin and Holly Cutting Baker. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*, (Smithsonian Institution, 1982), a good teacher resource for family folklore of all kinds, but especially family stories. The Family Customs chapter includes examples of a number of family Christmas stories from across the U.S. A helpful family folklore interviewing guide and questionnaire is included. The guide and questionnaire are also available on-line: <http://educate.si.edu/migrations/seek2/family.html>

How Stuff Works, the Complete Guide to Christmas Traditions is a student-friendly Web site organized by questions about various well-known Christmas traditions and their origins. <http://www.howstuffworks.com/christmas.htm>

Georgia Virtual Learning Resource Bank has wonderful links for teachers organized by discipline and across levels (<http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/>). See especially the ABC's of the Writing Process (<http://www.angelfire.com/wi/writingprocess>).

Selected Print Resources on Holiday Celebrations (adapted from Louisiana Voices Unit IX, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>):

Ancona, George. *Fiesta USA*. Lodestar Books, 1995. Photos with some text on four Hispanic celebrations in the U.S.*

Anderson, David. *Kwanzaa: An Everyday Resource Guide*. Gumbs and Thomas Publishers, 1992. Teacher resource with activities, music, literature on celebrating Kwanzaa.*

Bruhac, Joseph, et al. *Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back: A Native American Year of Moons*. Paper Star, reprint, 1997, A picture book of poems based on different Native American traditions for each of the 13 moons of the year, grades K-4.

Krasno, Rena. *Kneeling Caribou and Dancing Giants: Celebrating Filipino Festivals*. Pacific View, 1997. From Christmas to Ramadan, the incredibly diverse cultural groups of the Philippines have many celebrations, grades 4-12.*

Luenn, Nancy. *Celebrations of Light: A Year of Holidays Around the Year*. Atheneum, 1998. Bold illustrations and short explanations of a celebration of light for each month, grades 4-8.

McKissick Museum. *Jubilation! African American Celebration in the Southeast: An Educator's Guide*. University of South Carolina, 53 pp., 1993. Published for an exhibit, this guide can stand alone and includes lesson plans, photos, and lists of resources. Available from the museum, USC, Columbia, SC 29208, 803/777-7251.

Salinas-Norman, Bobbi. *Indo-Hispanic Folk Art Traditions I* (Albuquerque: Piñata Publications, 1900), a book of culturally-based, year-round activities with an emphasis on Christmas. Designed to promote awareness and understanding of this important holiday as it is celebrated in Indo-

Hispanic communities. Contains recipes, craft projects and even ideas for creating and performing plays and costumes. Special deluxe edition printed in Spanish and English

Santino, Jack. *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life*. University of Illinois Press, 1994. Good teacher resource that older students can use for research on old and new holidays, including several Louisiana celebrations.*

Santino, Jack. *New Old-Fashioned Ways: Holidays and Popular Culture*. University of Tennessee Press, 1996. A teacher resource examining the many ways popular commercial culture influences traditional holidays.

Slovenz, Madeline, et al. *Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's New Year*. Scholastic reprint, 1991. Vivid color photos follow a boy through a New York City Chinese New Year celebration, K-5.*

Sommers, Laurie Kay with Casa de Unidad. *Fiesta, Fe, Y Cultura: Celebrations of Faith and Culture in Detroit's Colonia Mexicana* (Casa de Unidad and Michigan State University Museum, 1995), a bilingual book with many historic and contemporary photos on three Catholic Mexican feast days: Day of the Dead, Las Posadas, and the Feast Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Although grounded in the Detroit community, there is useful background here on these celebrations. To order contact the MSU Museum at 517-355-2370 and ask for folk arts publications.

Wilkinson, Philip. *A Celebration of Customs and Rituals of the World*. Facts on File, 1996. A vast array of historical and contemporary celebrations and life cycle events from every corner written for young adults with a voice that avoids ethnocentrism.

Wilson, Charles, et al. *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. University of North Carolina Press, 1989. This large, accessible volume covers hundreds of topics, including regional celebrations and seasonal customs, useful for older students and teachers, available in many public libraries, 1,656 pages,.

*These resources are available from CARTS Culture Catalog, 800/333-5982

(<http://www.carts.org>)

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: This lesson may need to be modified by using appropriate literature and adapting the writing required. See Resources above for some suggested literature. Chapter 6, Their Places includes a unit on cane syrup making, another wintertime custom.

Middle School Level: This lesson may be used in all middle school classes. To add a collection component, students collect childhood memories of holidays past from each other, school staff, family members, or persons in the community. See Chapter 5 or Lesson 3 of this chapter for interview procedures.

High School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by adjusting the length of the assignment and the style of writing required and offers logical links to high school social studies units on Comparative Religions and Ethnic Studies. To add a collection component, students collect childhood memories of holidays past from each other, school staff, family members, or persons in the community.

Their Places Unit: Winter Holidays in the Community



Margo Harris and Trina Brown serve themselves chicken salad and sour cream pound cake, prepared by Christie Garcia from her grandmother's recipes. At Christmas, the Garcia family makes tamales, a tradition of Christie's husband's family. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Their Places Unit

Lesson # 1: Community Research

Grade Level: 7 but appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts, Social Studies, and Character Education

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 is approximately 120 minutes, longer if field trips and out-of-class interviews are included.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to help students develop character education core values by becoming aware of their community needs and using the writing process to report on local community service activities.

Content Standards:

Cook County 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.)

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 7: Writes simple and compound sentences and avoids run-on sentences and nonfunctional fragments.

Standard 9: Applies standard rules of capitalization.

Standard 10: Applies standard rules of punctuation.

Standard 11: Spells frequently used words and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 28: Describes the influences of human experiences on literary works.

Standard 38: Interprets written instructions.

Standard 40: Makes comparisons, predictions, and generalizations and draws conclusions.

Standard 41: Recognizes relevance of data.

Standard 43: Applies reading strategies to specific content and subject matter.

Standard 46: Paraphrases and summarizes information without plagiarizing.

Standard 47: Locates and uses information in card catalogs periodical indices, microforms, and multi-media electronic technologies.

Standard 48: Gathers information by interviewing.

Standard 49: Uses a research process that includes selecting a topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, summarizing, and presenting.

Standard 50: Selects relevant information about a subject from various sources.

Standard 52: Documents sources with reference citations.

Standard 53: Organizes retrieved information using strategies such as note-taking, graphic organizers, SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Review, Report), and outlining.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can include peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include a unifying idea and supporting details.

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, description, narration, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, business, academic, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 72: Uses dialogue in writing.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 75: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly misused words (e.g., your, you're).

Standard 76: Uses available electronic communications and technology in writing.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 6: Explain how social institutions (religion, government, and economics) influence attitudes and behavior of people.

Standard 23: Formulates questions related to topic

Standard 27: Collects evidence using appropriate reliable data.

Standard 31: Shows respect towards others.

Standard 32: Works within a group following set rules of procedure to complete an assigned task.

Standard 36: Participates in planning for effective civic actions and demonstrates effective civic actions.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Character Education Standards

This lesson incorporates a number of the 27 character traits listed in the standards.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is designed to accompany the study of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, focusing on the themes of aid to the less fortunate and community service, but it can easily stand on its own or accompany other suitable literature. With the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum emphasis on Character Education, studies of local community service organizations will encourage students to think about a number of the twenty-seven character traits emphasized in these standards (for example, courage, loyalty, tolerance, patriotism, compassion, generosity, kindness, cheerfulness, courtesy, cooperation, honesty, fairness, sportsmanship, patience, diligence, perseverance, self control, virtue, respect for the environment, respect for the Creator). A focus on service rather than the religious context of "Christmas" will create a more inclusive classroom environment for those who don't celebrate Christmas.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

As a pre-writing activity, have students make a list of their interests and skills. Include favorite activities in and out of school, the causes they feel strongly about, and any volunteer work or service organization involvement.

Activity 2:

Have students think about (holiday) activities for the needy in the community. Discuss these activities and how students might become involved with these efforts.

Activity 3:

Brainstorm with students about places to contact regarding community services and/or holiday activities for the needy: city hall, park district, churches, clubs, schools, businesses, social services, etc. Consider inviting representatives from these organizations to class. Students already may be involved in these organizations, as may members of the school staff, in which case they can be used as resources. Sample questions should elicit basic information but also a personal experience story: what is a particularly memorable moment, funny story, inspiring person they have met, while working at this organization (during the holidays). This activity could be done as a recorded interview with students identifying and pulling out the interesting "stories" in the interview, or more informally with observation, questioning, and notetaking. For interview procedures, see Chapter 5 and/or the next lesson. Students should write a draft summary of what they learned during the question and answer session.

Activity 4:

If field trips are an option, visit a local food bank, homeless shelter, soup kitchen or some other appropriate organization to gather additional first-hand information.

Activity 5:

Using the writing process, students play the role of news reporter and write a feature story about the activities in their community and what they can do to help bring holiday happiness to others. If the local newspaper covers this kind of activity, bring relevant articles to class as models or as examples to critique. A [KWL worksheet](#) (see below) may be a useful tool to organize student ideas and questions. Be sure the feature includes who, what, when, where, why, and how, but don't forget the human interest. Students could include a brief biography someone involved in this organization (a client, staff, or volunteer) and a story about this person's involvement. Students should share drafts for peer editing before final editing.

Activity 6:

Publish in the school paper or contact the local paper about including a special section with the student feature stories.

WORKSHEETS

KWL worksheet_(see below)

[Peer Editors Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)

[Editor's Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)

KWL Chart

What we **Know**

What we **Want to Know**

What we **Learned**

What we Know	What we Want to Know	What we Learned

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Standard 2:** LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.
- Standard 3:** LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 4:** Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 7:** GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.)

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Community Research Writing Rubric

Ideas and Content _____20pts.

- contains an engaging introduction that identifies the topic
- develops a writing topic appropriate to the assignment
- fulfills the writer's general purpose and specific goals
- states ideas clearly and elaborates on them with specific supporting details and examples
- includes an effective conclusion

Sentence Fluency _____20pts.

- includes transitional words and phrases to show relationships among ideas and maintain coherence within and between paragraphs
- uses a variety of sentence structures
- sentences are clear and avoid clutter

Organization _____20pts.

- includes a well-developed introduction, body, and conclusion
- demonstrates proper and effective paragraphing
- uses a logical, effective organizational strategy

Voice _____20pts.

- uses own, unique style
- writes honestly, as if the reader was standing right there; doesn't try to impress the reader
- writes with confidence and enthusiasm

Conventions _____20pts.

- contains no more than two or three minor errors in grammar and usage
- contains no more than two or three minor errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation

Total Score _____100pts.

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

RESOURCES

Local community service organizations

Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol*.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Elementary school students can ask questions of a class visitor about how people in the community help the less fortunate.

Middle School Level: This lesson may be used in all middle school classes.

High School Level: This lesson may be easily adapted by using by adjusting the length of the assignment and the style of writing required. In a brief essay, have students write about a time when someone showed that they cared for and supported someone who was different or who needed a helping hand. This person could be a family member or someone in the community. They can write about their own experience or the experience of someone they know, or about an incident in the news.

Our Places Unit: Our Holiday Traditions



Christie Garcia and her sister, Puddleville Catering, prepare a Southern dinner-style lunch for teachers at a writing workshop. Included on the menu is ham, a traditional Christmas dinner item for many Cook County folks. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Our Places Unit

Lesson #1: Collecting Holiday Recipes

Grade Level: 7 but appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 is approximately 120 minutes plus an outside interview.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to develop interviewing skills as the basis for a cookbook of holiday recipes.

Content Standards:

Cook County 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 7: Writes simple and compound sentences and avoids run-on sentences and nonfunctional fragments.

Standard 9: Applies standard rules of capitalization.

Standard 10: Applies standard rules of punctuation.

Standard 11: Spells frequently used words and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 27: Describes cultures and values represented in literature.

Standard 28: Describes the influences of human experiences on literary works.

Standard 31: Reads a variety of materials for information and pleasure.

Standard 32: Expands reading vocabulary.

Standard 38: Interprets written instructions.

Standard 40: Makes comparisons, predictions, and generalizations and draws conclusions.

Standard 41: Recognizes relevance of data.

Standard 43: Applies reading strategies to specific content and subject matter.

Standard 46: Paraphrases and summarizes information without plagiarizing.

Standard 48: Gathers information by interviewing.

Standard 50: Selects relevant information about a subject from various sources.

Standard 52: Documents sources with reference citations.

Standard 53: Organizes retrieved information using strategies such as note-taking, graphic organizers, SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Review, Report), and outlining.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can include peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include a unifying idea and supporting details.

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, description, narration, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, business, academic, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 72: Uses dialogue in writing.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 75: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly misused words (e.g., your, you're).

Standard 76: Uses available electronic communications and technology in writing.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 7th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 6: Explains how social institutions (religion, government, and economics) influence attitudes and behavior of people.

Standard 19: Analyzes artifacts.

Standard 20: Analyzes interpretations of the same event from multiple types of sources.

Standard 23: Formulates questions related to topic

Standard 27: Collects evidence using appropriate reliable data.

Standard 31: Shows respect towards others.

Standard 32: Works within a group following set rules of procedure to complete an assigned task.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is designed to accompany the study of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, but other appropriate literature on seasonal customs, holidays, or celebrations may be used. In this lesson, students learn interviewing procedures and interview someone in the community about a holiday tradition.

Since a holiday meal plays a prominent role in *A Christmas Carol*, one good option is to have students interview someone about holiday foodways. See [Chapter 9, Our Places](#) unit, for a recipe unit focusing on family meals and culminating in a class cookbook. Students could also focus on the food traditions of someone in the community from a different ethnic background, linking to Georgia Quality Core Curriculum themes of migration and immigration, or an elder in the community to look at Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies strand on time chronology and continuity and change using holiday celebrations. An additional approach is to have students follow up on their own childhood memories of holidays past with those of someone their parents' or grandparents' age, focusing more generally on holiday stories and customs through childhood memory stories.

ACTIVITIES

Teacher should introduce the concept of foodways and work with the class as a whole or in small groups to identify examples of foodways in *A Christmas Carol*. Please see Chapter 9, Our Places Unit for background information on foodways, interview procedures, and class cookbook writing activities.

WORKSHEETS

Seasonal Events Fieldwork Checklist (see below)

Seasonal Events Fieldwork Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

Task: You are a reporter who must interview a person who knows about a seasonal event or celebration in your community. You will be assessed on your ability to complete the steps of the interview process listed below.

Directions: Make an X to show that a task was accomplished. First, use this checklist to assess your own performance. Then have a peer assess your performance. Last, your teacher will assess your performance.

Quality Features	Self	Peer	Teacher
Identify someone to interview.	_____	_____	_____
Collect all necessary equipment (notepad, pencil, camera, tape recorder, film, tapes, batteries, etc.)	_____	_____	_____
If working in teams, choose roles such as recorder, photographer, interviewer, etc.	_____	_____	_____
Create a project timetable.	_____	_____	_____
Prepare and use consent forms.	_____	_____	_____
Listen carefully to interviewees.	_____	_____	_____
Take notes, make sketches, formulate and ask questions.	_____	_____	_____
Record information on appropriate forms or worksheets.	_____	_____	_____

 (Adapted with permission from Unit IX, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts). Rubric created with "The Rubricator" software package by Strategic Learning Technologies, used with permission, <<http://www.rubrics.com>> 888/881-7979.)
<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Seasonal Events Checklist above can also be used for assessment

Please see Chapter 9, Our Places for additional rubrics

RESOURCES

Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol*.

Also please see Chapter 9, Our Places

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Please see Chapter 9, Our Places.

CHAPTER NINE

Students Writing About Everyday Lives

Margo Harris

Cook Middle School



Margo Harris (left) practices interviewing Trina Brown at a writing workshop. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Before joining this folkwriting project, Margo Harris had used many folkwriting activities in her classroom with amazing success. The students not only enjoyed the projects but also learned to love writing. Students wrote things outside of class and brought them for her to read. Students delight in writing about their everyday lives, their families, their histories, and their beliefs. Indeed, students lose their dread of writing when they are allowed to write about what they know. A number of lessons are designed to work with the 8th grade language arts text *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* (Holt Rinehart Winston, 1997). This chapter emphasizes descriptive writing about place, childhood memories, a bio poem, character education, character traits, local heroes, treasured objects, and a student interview project culminating in a classroom cookbook. The students are to keep a folklore journal that will not serve as a portfolio and not be graded. Instead, the journal will be a personal archive for students to store the writings and projects they have completed during the Folkwriting units. All projects must be added to the journal, and the project rubrics include points for including the projects in the journal.

My Places Unit: Who Am I?



Many students have memories of going to the Dixie filling station to buy worms or crickets before going to a favorite fishing hole. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

My Places Unit Lesson #1: Bio Poem

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible

Time required: The time required is approximately 30 minutes, longer if linked to a larger biography activity.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose an original poem using an established Bio Poem format. The lesson also may be used as part of biography study related to Social Studies topics.

Content Standards:

Cook County Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Language Arts Standards

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 14: Identifies well-known and influential Georgians from the colonial era (men, women, and minorities);

Standard 16: Identifies major events and related personalities of the American Revolution,

Standard 34: Identifies influential Georgians from Reconstruction through World War II;

Standard 37: Identifies the important events and personalities in the Civil rights movement in Georgia.,

Standard 40: Identifies influential Georgians of the modern era (women and minorities as well as men).

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

The Autobiographical Poem

This lesson on writing autobiographical poems was designed for the language arts classroom, but as discussed below, it could also serve as a prelude to the study of biography, especially the biographies of important persons as part of the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th grade Social Studies standards. See sample standards listed in the box above. This approach also could work in conjunction with the Their Places lessons on Character Traits ([Their Places, Lesson #1](#) of this chapter) and My Personal Hero ([Their Places, Lesson #2](#) of this chapter).

Pam Chandler, who teaches sixth-grade at Sequoia Middle School in Redding, California, has her students read biographies and implements some ingenious related activities. "I incorporate reading biographies into my reading class for several reasons," she says. "First, I try to expose my students to as many genres as possible. Second, I teach a core class that includes reading, English, and social studies. I try to integrate across the three curriculum areas as much as possible. Third, I believe it is important for students to realize that heroes and other people of importance were not born with all they needed to be successful."

"A bio-poem is a form of poetry using a prescribed or structured format," explains Chandler. "Although it follows a 'formula,' this form still allows for creativity on the part of the writer." She gives students the following instructions: "On each line of your poem provide only the information requested for that line. For lines 4 through 9, you should begin the line with the underlined words given; you supply the information in the parentheses. You may complete the line with single words or with phrases. Your object is to show the depth of your understanding about the character."

- Line 1-- First Name**
- Line 2-- Title given to the character**
- Line 3-- Four words that describe the character**
- Line 4-- Lover of (three items, objects or ideas)**
- Line 5-- Who believes (one idea or concept)**
- Line 6-- Who wants (three things)**
- Line 7-- Who uses (three things)**
- Line 8-- Who gives (three things)**
- Line 9-- Who says (a direct quote)**
- Line 10-- Last name or synonymous descriptor**

Following is an example of a bio-poem:

***Pam
Teacher
Strong, caring, dedicated, curious
Lover of her children, learning, and her students
Who believes all children can learn
Who wants a safe world for her children, her students to love to learn, and
to have more time to write
Who uses her education, her experience, and the support of her family
Who gives her leadership to her students, her tenderness to her children,
and her love of reading to her students
Who says, "A good book opens the door into another world."
Chandler***

To familiarize students with the bio-poem before they create one for the subject of a biography, Chandler has her students write poems for themselves. "To make it more interesting, I create a master where the center of the paper is lined text surrounded by 2 to 3 inches of blank space," she said. "Students write their bio-poems in the center area. Then they illustrate their poems around the outside of the text box. I show them how they can hide part of their drawing behind their writing. I illustrate this by using some type of full-page illustration. I cover the center with another sheet of paper so that parts of different objects are hidden behind the paper. This gives kids more of an idea of what I am asking them to do. They create some very interesting pieces this way."

"In addition to using bio-poems to represent a person from a biography, I use them with students in doing a character study," explained Chandler. "My favorite book to use for this is *The Pinballs*, by Betsy Byars. Kids really relate to the characters. (Note: background section from Pam Chandler's Bio-Poem material on the Education World website, http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr230.shtml).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

The teacher explains the format of the Bio Poem and shares a personal example of a completed

Bio Poem.

Activity 2:

Students compose a Bio Poem using personal and individual information.

Activity 3:

Students edit their work individually.

Activity 4:

Students peer edit each other's work. This works well in groups of three. Each paper is peer-edited twice, thus most mistakes are caught by peers rather than by the teacher, facilitating student learning (see peer editing worksheet).

Activity 5:

The student will enter their revised and edited Bio Poem into a folklore journal and will have the opportunity to share the Bio Poem with the class.

Activity 6:

If using this lesson in conjunction with a the study of biography, perhaps as suggested above with a social studies link to Georgia QCC 8th grade Social Studies standards, student composes a Bio Poem about the another individual under study and repeats the writing process outlined above.

WORKSHEETS

[Autobiography Poem Format](#) (see below)

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) (see end of Chapter 2)

The Autobiographical Poem

Line 1-- First Name

Line 2-- Title given to the character

Line 3-- Four words that describe the character

Line 4-- Lover of (three items, objects or ideas)

Line 5-- Who believes (one idea or concept)

Line 6-- Who wants (three things)

Line 7-- Who uses (three things)

Line 8-- Who gives (three things)

Line 9-- Who says (a direct quote)

Line 10-- Last name or synonymous descriptor

[from Pam Chandler's Bio-Poem material on the Education World website,
http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr230.shtml].

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.
(this standard applies especially if extending this lesson with biography research)

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

“Bio Poem” Rubric

_____ Development of Rough Draft (4 points)

_____ Completion of all eleven lines of Bio Poem format in final draft
(11 points. 1 point per line)

_____ Completion of final draft in pen and in cursive handwriting (2 points)

_____ Inclusion of Final Draft in Folklore Journal (3 points)

_____ **Total Score of 20 Points**

RESOURCES

See “The Bio-Poem”, by Pam Chandler as well as a grab bag of other ideas for integrating biography in the classroom such as monologues, timelines, etc. Also links to on-line biographies.

http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr230.shtml

Georgia Virtual Learning Resource Bank has wonderful links for teachers organized by discipline and across levels <http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/>). See especially the ABC’s of the Writing Process (<http://www.agnefire.com/wi/writingprocess>).

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The vocabulary in this activity may need to be modified for students in the lower grades.

Middle School Level: This activity may require more in-depth explanation with students in the lower middle grades. See discussion about social studies links and biography under Background for Teachers above.

High School Level: This activity is suitable for high school students. See discussion about social studies links and biography under Background for Teachers above.

My Places Unit

Lesson #2: My Favorite Place in the County

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible

Time required: The time required is approximately 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose a five-paragraph essay describing a favorite place located within the county.

Content Standards:

Cook County Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subject-verb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include unifying ideas and supporting details (may include topic sentence and clincher sentence).

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, narration, description, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

What local places are significant to your students? This lesson encourages students to identify places in their community that have personal meaning: historic buildings, local cemeteries, places with local legends, local eateries and gathering spots, gardens or parks, scary places, places where children go to get away from adults, places where interesting plants or animals can be found, places where families go for picnics or reunions, favorite hunting or fishing spots, a special place to go with friends to be happy together (adapted from the Exploring Your Community Poster from the American Folklife Center and the Rural Schools and Community Trust (<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/>)).

These places are often special because of memories or stories associated with them that make them meaningful. Folklorists call these autobiographical accounts of memorable events **personal experience narratives**. These are stories often retold that become formulaic over time with the retelling. Sometimes they reflect the worldview of a community or folk group.

Sense of place is a major theme in literature, writing, and social studies. Helping students gain a sense of place in their own community and region deepens their connection to community and opens them to the notion that everyone has a unique sense of place. We all experience a place differently. If any students are new to your community, their sense of place may be strongly associated with another place. While they will get to know your community well during this unit, allowing them to reflect on another place for some activities will enrich the lesson for all. Students who participate in this kind of "place-based" learning routinely meet or exceed the most rigorous educational standards. Since they are "experts" on the subject, their community, they are able to concentrate on the writing process; therefore, they become better writers. Writing becomes a pleasure instead of a dreaded assignment for most students. To use this lesson as springboard for social studies content about place, see Chapter 7 of this workbook and the resources listed below.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

The teacher will have students close their eyes and take an imaginary trip to their favorite place in the county. The place must have a story or memory associated with it. For pre-writing, students will recall and write a list of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings of their favorite place. One pre-writing approach is the Sensory Place Card in which students write the name of their place in the center of an index card or sheet of paper. In one corner they should write a smell they associate with that place; in another, a taste; another, a sound; and in the last a sight (see the favorite recipe [Sensory Card worksheet](#) in Our Places Lesson # of this chapter for a variation.) Students should also explain briefly *why* that place is their favorite place (what's the story?).

Activity 2:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process (draft, revise, edit) in order to compose an essay describing his or her favorite place. Be sure to include the story of the place (the student's personal experience narrative) into the essay. During peer editing of the rough draft, ask the peer readers to consider the following questions to check for sensory details:

1. What two adjectives best describe the main impression of the place?
2. What words in the essay suggest or reinforce this main impression?
3. Will more details give a stronger sense of place? Where?
4. What senses are used in the imagery of the place? What words or sentences help develop this imagery?
5. Are there details that do not contribute to the main impression? What are they?
6. Is there some logical order to the presentation? What is it? Can it be improved? How? Where?

Activity 3:

Each student will provide an illustration of his or her favorite place. Students may bring a photograph or a hand-drawn illustration to the next class session to attach to the essay. (For a lesson on photographing a favorite place, see Chapter 7 [Their Places Lesson #3](#) of this workbook.)

Activity 4:

Each student will share his or her essay in a small group of two to four students.

Activity 5:

The student will enter the essay and illustration into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

[Editor's Checklist](#) and [Peer Editor's Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)
Sensory Card (Our Places Lesson #1 of this chapter)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of

life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a

variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other

conventions of English.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

My Favorite Place Essay Assessment Rubric

_____	Involvement in pre-writing exercises and activities	(5 points)
_____	Development of Rough Draft	(10 points)
_____	Completion of self-editing activities	(5 points)
_____	Completion of peer-editing activities	(5 points)
_____	Completion of all five paragraphs in final draft paragraph)	(10 points – (2 points per
_____	Inclusion of illustration	(5 points)
_____	Completion of final draft in pen and in cursive handwriting	(5 points)
<u> </u>	Total Score out of a possible 50 points	

RESOURCES

Umphrey, Michael. "Essay of Place" (1996) from the Montana Heritage project is an excellent model for a 7-step essay, using the writing process and different approaches to place. The website includes examples of student writing: <http://www.edheritage.org>.

Exploring Your Community poster text, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/> (ideas for teachers on place-based projects for the classroom).

The CARTS (Cultural Arts Resources for Teachers) Newsletter is on-line: see Writing About Place for useful activities: <http://www.carts.org> (go to the Resources link).

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit IV of the Louisiana on-line folklife curriculum looks at region, geography, ecology, and folklife, and sense of place in lessons designed for grades 4 and 8. <http://www.louisianavoices.org>. See especially the Spirit of Place activity. Chapters 7 and 10 of *Folkwriting* use a variation of this lesson.

The National Geographic website has age specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which link place description to social studies themes about the characteristics of place. <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>.

Schotter, Ronni. *Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street* (Orchard Books, 1999); a young girl is given a homework assignment to write about her street, but she finds it boring until she gets some advice from her neighbors. A wonderful book to inspire creative writing, suitable for K-8. Available from the CARTS Culture Catalog, <http://www.carts.org> or 1-800-333-5982.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of this activity may need to be modified for students in the lower grades.

Middle School Level: The length of this activity may need to be modified for students in the lower middle grades. To extend this lesson, consider using Umphrey's *Writing the Essay of Place* model listed above in **Resources**. The 7-step essay includes ecology, folklife, and history components. Develop this activity into an Our Places or Their Places unit that looks at historic places in the local area in relation to time periods or themes under study in the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Social Studies Standards. For additional social studies extension ideas related to this lesson, see Chapter 7 of *Folkwriting*.

High School Level: This activity would not need to be modified in order to be acceptable for high school students. It could be expanded into a unit by using Umphrey's *Writing the Essay of Place* model listed above in **Resources**.

My Places Unit

Lesson #3: A Child's Memory

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible

Time required: The time required is approximately two 90-minute class periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose a five-paragraph essay describing a childhood memory.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subject-verb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 13: Expands listening vocabulary.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 20: Analyzes literal, inferential, and critical questions.

Standard 21: Discusses various literary forms (short stories, novels, epics, folk tales, poems, dramas, essays, and myths).

Standard 23: Uses literary elements and techniques such as plot, setting, theme, character, characterization, conflict, figurative language, and point of view to analyze literature.

Standard 24: Answers literal, inferential, and critical questions about literature.

Standard 27: Explains how cultures and values are represented in literature.

Standard 28: Analyzes the influences of human experiences on literary work.

Standard 29: Responds creatively to literature (e.g., drama, art, multi-media projects, and essays).

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include unifying ideas and supporting details (may include topic sentence and clincher sentence).

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, narration, description, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson explores the idea of childhood memories based on the following two short stories: "Broken Chain" by Gary Soto and "The Secret Heart" by Robert P. Tristram Coffin,

adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* (Holt Rinehart Winston, 1997). Other suitable literature about childhood memories may be substituted.

Childhood memory activities are especially valuable in helping students of all ages understand that we all “have” folklore: everybody has a story to tell.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

As a class, the students will read the short story “Broken Chain” and the poem “The Secret Heart”, adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* and published by Holt Rinehart Winston and will focus on the childhood memories that provide the basis of the two selections.

Activity 2:

After answering basic reading comprehension and literary questions about the two selections (see sample reading question under Worksheets below), the teacher will have students close their eyes and take a quick trip back to their childhood. Students will recall the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings of their childhood.

Activity 3:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process in order to compose an essay describing a childhood memory.

Activity 4:

Each student will share his or her essay in a small group of two to four students.

Activity 5:

The student will enter the essay into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

Sample reading questions:

Reading Question 1: “Broken Chain” by Gary Soto
Adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* published by Holt Rinehart Winston
(1997)

1. What concerns Alfonso most about his looks? (His crooked teeth)
2. How do Alfonso and Sandra meet? (They meet when Alfonso helps Sandra’s brother down from a barb wire fence.)
3. Why does Ernie question Alfonso about his date? (Ernie is worried that he may be interested in the same girl as Alfonso.)

4. What excuse does Ernie give Alfonso for not lending out his bike? (He has plans to go frog hunting)
5. Who lends a bicycle to Alfonso? (Ernie)

Reading Question 2: “The Secret Heart” by Robert P. Tristram Coffin
Adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* published by Holt Rinehart Winston
(1997)

1. What rhyme pattern is used in “The Secret Heart”? (rhyming couplets)
2. What is the definition of a symbol? (According to *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* published by Holt Rinehart Winston, a symbol is a person, a place, or a thing that has meaning in itself but that stands for something else as well.)
3. What does the secret heart symbolize? (The father’s love for his son)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

“A Child’s Memory” Essay Assessment

_____ Involvement in pre-writing exercises and activities
(5 Points)

_____ Development of rough draft
(10 Points)

_____ Completion of self-editing activities
(5 Points)

- _____ Completion of peer-editing activities
(5 Points)

 - _____ Completion of all five paragraphs in final draft
(15 Points – 3 points per paragraph)

 - _____ Completion of final draft in pen and in cursive handwriting
(5 Points)

 - _____ Inclusion of final draft in folklore journal
(5 Points)
-
- _____ **Total Score out of a possible 50 Points**
-

RESOURCES

“Broken Chain” by Gary Soto, “The Secret Heart” by Robert P. Tristram Coffin, adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* and published by Holt Rinehart Winston (1997) (for book information, visit <http://www.harcourt.com/about/hrw.html>)

Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, Unit V, Lesson 7 focuses on personal experience narratives, with worksheets and technology links. (<http://ww.louisianavoices.org>)

Janisse Ray’s *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* (Milkweed Editions, 1999) is a memoir of growing up in Baxley, Georgia, with many rich regional references and childhood memories, suitable for upper grade levels.

Sandra Worsham’s *Essential Ingredients, Recipes for Teaching Writing* (ASCD, 2001), a workbook drawn from the life experience of an award-winning high school English teacher, includes a wonderful childhood memory activity suitable for all ages (available from ACSD’s online store: see <http://www.ascd.org>)

NOTES FOR TEACHER

Elementary Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified.

Middle School Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified for students in the lower grades.

High School Level: The reading selections may be modified for students in the high school grades.

Their Places Unit: Who Are They?



Poems and essays written by Trina Brown's and Margo Harris' students on display at the Cook Middle School booth at the 2001 Exchange Club Fair. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #1: Character Traits

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible; Character Education

Time required: The time required is approximately two 90-minute class periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose a six-line poem describing a desired character trait.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subject/verb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 13: Expands listening vocabulary.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 20: Analyzes literal, inferential, and critical questions.

Standard 21: Discusses various literary forms (short stories, novels, epics, folk tales, poems, dramas, essays, and myths).

Standard 22: Answers literal, inferential, and critical questions about literature.

Standard 23: Uses literary elements and techniques such as plot, setting, theme, character, characterization, conflict, figurative language, and point of view to analyze literature.

Standard 24: Answers literal, inferential, and critical questions about literature.

Standard 27: Explains how cultures and values are represented in literature.

Standard 28: Analyzes the influences of human experiences on literary work.

Standard 29: Responds creatively to literature (e.g., drama, art, multi-media projects, and essays).

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 75: Uses available electronic techniques in writing.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This activity uses a literary poem as a springboard for discussing character traits; however, there are also forms of folklife that praise or pay tribute to individuals and address character traits. These include home altars, gravestone inscriptions, roadside and other impromptu public memorials which often include poetry about the deceased (for example, roadside shrines at the scene of an accident), graffiti, and certain ballads, raps, and *corridos* (traditional Mexican ballads often about heroic figures). Published funeral eulogies by community leaders, and the roasts and toasts of retirement dinners also include discussions of character traits. Consider using this kind of community-based material in addition to or instead of literature in school textbooks. Students can do gravestone rubbings and collect inscriptions at a local cemetery (see <http://www.louisianavoices.org>, *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit IX, Lesson 3 "The Stories They Tell: Graveyard Data Collection Worksheet"); research public displays of praise or memorial in the community; write, display, and present tributes about someone students' admire (see also the following lesson on Personal Heroes) or, to link with Georgia 8th Grade Social Studies Standards, write about a historical or contemporary figure studied in class (Note: many of these ideas come from Davis, Amy and Jill Rossiter, comp. *What's Your Name? Rhymes & Rhythms from Pennsylvania's Neighborhoods*, (Institute for Cultural Partnerships, <http://www.culturalpartnerships.org>)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

As a class, the students will read Edna St. Vincent Millay's poem "The Courage That My Mother Had," adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* (Holt Rinehart Winston 1997) or some other suitable literature which deals with character traits. If using "The Courage that My Mother Had," students will answer basic reading comprehension questions. Suggested questions include

- What is the definition of rhythm? (rise and fall of the voice produced by repeated sound pattern)
- What rhyme pattern is used in "The Secret Heart"? (ABAB)
- What object did the mother leave to the speaker of the poem (a golden broach)
- What does the speaker wish her mother had left her? (her courage)

Activity 2:

As a pre-writing activity, students brainstorm traits such as courage, faith, patience, etc. that they feel are important in all people. Students will have the opportunity to share their lists so that other class members can add to their personal lists.

Activity 3:

After creating a personal list, each student will choose the trait that he or she feels is the most important or most desired. After choosing the trait, each student will choose a local person that they believe best exemplifies the selected trait.

Activity 4:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process in order to compose a poem of any style that describes the person and trait that he or she admires.

Activity 5:

Each student will share his or her poem with the class or with a small group of classmates.

Activity 6:

The student will type his or her poem electronically.

Activity 7:

The student will enter the poem into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

none

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**Desired Trait Poem Assessment**

- _____ Development of Rough Draft
(5 points)
 - _____ Completion of at least six lines in final draft
(12 points – 2 points per line)
 - _____ Completion of final draft on computer
(5 points)
 - _____ Inclusion of Final Draft in folklore journal
(3 points)
 - _____ **Total Score out of a possible 25 points**
-

RESOURCES

“The Courage that my Mother Had” by Edna St. Vincent Millay, from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* (Holt Rinehart Winston 1997) and teacher-produced example of poem.

Davis, Amy and Jill Rossiter, comp. *What’s Your Name? Rhymes & Rhythms from Pennsylvania’s Neighborhoods*, (Institute for Cultural Partnerships), includes the following unit suitable for middle and high school: Everyday Heroes, What do graffiti, monuments, eulogies, and praise songs have in common? Available from Institute for Cultural Partnerships, 3211 North Front Street, Suite 104, Harrisburg, PA 17110, 717-238-1770, <http://www.culturalpartnerships.org>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified for students in the lower grades. Teachers may also want to determine the exact kind of poem that students are to write (rhyming pattern, freestyle, etc.)

Middle School Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified for students in the lower middle grades. Teachers may want to determine the exact kind of poem that students are to write (rhyming pattern, freestyle, etc.), and then complete the worksheet.

High School Level: The reading selections may be modified for students in the high school grades.

Their Places Unit Lesson #2: My Personal Hero

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible; Character Education

Time required: The time required is approximately two 90-minute class periods.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose a five-paragraph essay describing a personal hero.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subject-verb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include unifying ideas and supporting details (may include topic sentence and clincher sentence).

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, narration, description, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

Character Education (this lesson addresses many of the twenty-seven character traits listed in these standards)

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

On page 109 of their curriculum guide, *What's Your Name? Rhymes & Rhythms from Pennsylvania's Neighborhoods*, (Institute for Cultural Partnerships), compilers Amy Davis and Jill Rossiter write the following about lessons relating to personal heroes: "One intention of this activity is to encourage students to critically review the popular notions of "hero"(and heroine) and the popular standards for bestowing honor on an individual—in other words, to encourage students to look beyond the commercial and sometimes superficial heroes created and promoted by the media. By encouraging students to look for 'everyday heroes' in their schools, neighborhoods, or local communities, students will begin to critically assess for themselves (with less influence from commercial media) who

is, indeed, praiseworthy (perhaps including themselves or family members).” With the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum emphasis on Character Education, studies of personal heroes will engage students to think about a number of the 27 character traits emphasized in these standards (for example, courage, loyalty, tolerance, patriotism, compassion, generosity, kindness, cheerfulness, courtesy, cooperation, honesty, fairness, sportsmanship, patience, diligence, perseverance, self control, virtue, respect for the environment, respect for the Creator).

What defines a folk hero, held in collective memory, as opposed to a family hero or media celebrity? A folk hero is bigger than life, holds uncommon powers, and is the subject of various stories. A family hero may be known only to a family, but the admirable qualities of this person inspired the family. Can a media star be heroic? This lesson explores these questions. Think about literary, local, and family heroes important to you (see Unit V of Louisiana Voices, from which this paragraph is drawn, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>).

In her book, *Student Worlds, Student Words* (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990), Elizabeth Radin Simons lists some common characteristics of folk heroes:

- Person whose life reflects the values of the folk group that tells the stories
- Someone whose life generates folklore, usually through anecdotes, songs, or narratives about his or her life
- Originating not with the media, but with folk groups.
- Person who is bigger than life and holds uncommon powers

The stories about folk heroes change with the telling, as is the case with all folklore. Typically there are more regional and local folk heroes than national ones. However, national figures who have also been folk heroes include Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King. Since September 11, the nation has a new group of folk heroes, ordinary people who have been transformed into folk heroes and heroines in our collective consciousness and are the subject of stories and memorials.

The media creates celebrities; but everyday people create and perpetuate stories about folk heroes. Elvis is one example of a national celebrity who is also a folk hero (for examples, stories that Elvis is still alive). There are also examples of folk heroes who have originated in certain ethnic groups, such as the African American steel-driving man, John Henry and Gregorio Cortez, a Mexican American, both of whom have been the subject of ballads and legends.

In her work with high school students in California, Simons observed the power of personal heroes in students' lives. “With the students, a new group of heroes emerges; they come from family and friends. Curiously, these folk heroes and the stories told about them usually represent the values that many educators feel are missing from the school curriculum and, in fact, from the nation's ethos. Immigrant students, for examples, write of their admiration for the courage and industry of their parents. Native-born Americans write of relatives as mentors. Although heroes change, the primary reasons for studying them do not. For a young person, a hero can be both model and mentor” (Simons 140).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Start a class discussion about the qualities of heroes and heroines. Are heroes always in the right or always good? Are they famous because of the media (celebrity) or because everyday people tell stories about them? Can family members be heroes? As a pre-writing activity, the teacher will have students complete the worksheet [Folk and Family Heroes](#).

Activity 2:

Students will participate in a class discussion of heroic traits and compare and contrast answers to the qualities listed by the class in the trait poems (see previous lesson: [Their Places Lesson #1](#) Character Traits).

Activity 3:

Students will brainstorm a list of local people who could be described as heroes. From this list, students will select one person as a basis for a paper on local heroes. This person could be the person who is chosen for the trait poem in the previous lesson.

Activity 4:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process to compose an essay describing his or her local hero. (See [Personal Hero Power Point Presentation worksheet](#)).

Activity 5:

Each student will share his or her essay with the class or with a small group of two to four students.

Activity 6:

The student will enter the essay into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

[Folk and Family Heroes worksheet](#) (see below)

[Personal Hero Model](#) (PowerPoint) (see below)

[Worksheet]

Folk and Family Heroes

Name _____

Date _____

Task: Think about heroes you know. They could be folk heroes who are known to many, local heroes who are known in a community, or family heroes who are known only in your family. Show what you think about heroes by marking the responses and completing the statements. You may add your own words to the list in Step 1 that you would use to describe your heroes.

1. What words best describe a hero?

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| _____ famous | _____ kind | _____ brave |
| _____ talented | _____ unselfish | _____ always good |
| _____ strong | _____ wealthy | _____ loved |
| _____ college-educated | _____ always serious | _____ generous |
| _____ funny | _____ careful | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

2. What do you think causes people to become heroes?

- _____ They are just born that way.
- _____ They think they are better than most people.
- _____ Other people feel that they have done outstanding things.
- _____ They have made lots of money.
- _____ They help and teach others.
- _____ Other people admire their qualities and want to be like them.

3. How would you recognize a hero?

- _____ From the way he or she talks
- _____ From the way he or she brags
- _____ From the way other people act around him or her

_____ From pictures on television or in the newspapers

_____ From the stories people tell about him or her

4. Name some heroes you know

Family Heroes

Folk Heroes

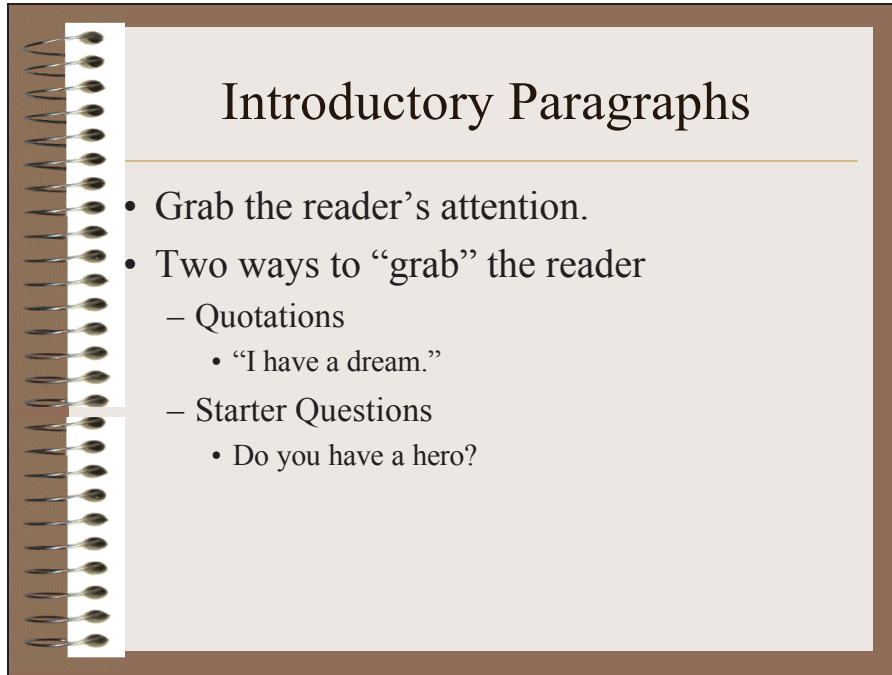
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. List the qualities that define a hero. Keep adding to the list throughout the lesson.

(Adapted with permission from Unit V, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>

[Worksheet]

Power Point Slide Presentation “My Personal Hero”



Introductory Paragraphs

- Grab the reader’s attention.
- Two ways to “grab” the reader
 - Quotations
 - “I have a dream.”
 - Starter Questions
 - Do you have a hero?

A Bad Introductory Paragraph

- This is an essay about my hero. His name is Henry Conger. He was my grandfather. He is very funny. He loved me a lot.

A Good Introductory Paragraph

- “You all love on another.” That was my grandfather’s motto in life. My granddaddy, Henry Conger, was the perfect example of love. He was always hugging and laughing; he made everyone feel joy. For these reasons and many more, my granddaddy is my hero.

Body Paragraphs

- Give detail or action to your essay.

“My Hero” Body Paragraphs

- The first paragraph
 - Gives general information about your hero.
 - Example:
 - Henry Conger was my great grandfather; he was born in 1910 and passed away in 1998. He married Myrtle Hesters in 1932 and preached for sixty-six years. He was a short man, but he had a huge heart full of love.

“My Hero” Body Paragraphs

- The second paragraph
 - Gives the special qualities of your hero.
 - Example:
 - My granddaddy was a happy man. It was rare to see him without a smile. He was always willing to spend time talking and joking with his family members. Most importantly, he was willing to show love to his family through laughter, hugs, and prayer.

“My Hero” Body Paragraphs

- The third paragraph
 - Gives the special memories of your hero.
 - Example:
 - When my granddaddy died, I thought I would be empty without his presence, but then I realized he left me with wonderful memories. I will always remember how he would sneak his scraggly cat into the house when grandmother wasn't looking. I will never forget his big, booming voice singing his favorite hymn or telling me “to come on in and grab a chair.” Most of all, I will always remember how much he loved me.

Closing Paragraphs

- Basically retell the introductory paragraph
- Example –
 - My granddaddy was a wonderful person. He was loving, caring, and kind. From my granddaddy, I learned the important lessons in life. Although he is gone, he will always be my hero.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

My Personal Hero Essay Assessment Rubric

_____ Involvement in pre-writing exercises and activities including Personal Hero Worksheet	(5 points)
_____ Development of Rough Draft	(10 points)
_____ Completion of self-editing activities	(5 points)
_____ Completion of peer-editing activities	(5 points)
_____ Completion of all five paragraphs in final draft	(10 points – 2 points per paragraph)
_____ Completion of First Paragraph as an introduction paragraph	(3 points)
_____ Completion of Second Paragraph as a biographical paragraph	(3 points)
_____ Completion of Third Paragraph as a remembrance paragraph	(3 points)
_____ Completion of Fourth Paragraph as a heroic trait paragraph	(3 points)
_____ Completion of Fifth Paragraph as a conclusion paragraph	(3 points)
_____ Completion of final draft in pen and in cursive handwriting	(5 points)
_____ Inclusion of Final Draft and illustration in folklore journal	(5 points)
_____ Total Score out of a possible 60 points	

RESOURCES

Reissman, Rose, *Everyday Heroes* is a teacher resource focused around the concepts of heroism and the Identification of extraordinary heroes within our communities. Available from the CARTS Culture Catalog at <http://www.carts.org> or 1-800-333-5982

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit 5, Lesson 3 deals with Folk and Family Heroes and Heroines and includes material on which this lesson is based (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>) There are a number of extension ideas and technology links.

Simons, Elizabeth Radin, *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990), the high school folklore and writing curriculum, includes Chapter 8, "Even Heroes Have Heroes," Mexican-American Students Study Their Folk Heroes, and Chapter 9, "Aren't We a Little Old for This?" Suburban Students Design a Unit on Folk Heroes.

For a lesson planning article from Education World titled "Heroes On-line: Looking to the Web for Those We Can Look Up To, see http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson157.shtml

Davis, Amy and Jill Rossiter, comp. *What's Your Name? Rhymes & Rhythms from Pennsylvania's Neighborhoods*, (Institute for Cultural Partnerships), includes the following unit suitable for middle and high school: Everyday Heroes, What do graffiti, monuments, eulogies, and praise songs have in common? Available from Institute for Cultural Partnerships, 3211 North Front Street, Suite 104, Harrisburg, PA 17110, 717-238-1770, <http://www.culturalpartnerships.org>

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: The length of this activity may need to be modified for students in the lower grades. Teachers may want to start with a list of heroes, and then complete the worksheet. For cross cultural comparison, the Teaching Tolerance website of the Southern Poverty Law Center has the on-line lesson "Eat, My Fine Coat" about Nasreddin Hoca, a Turkish folk hero, recommended for ages 5-8. (<http://www.tolerance.org/storybooks/eat/index.html>). An additional resource is *John Henry* by Julius Lester (Puffin, 1999) (grades 1-4).

Middle School Level: The length of this activity may need to be modified for students in the lower middle grades. Teachers may want to start with a list of heroes and then complete the worksheet.

High School Level: This lesson needs no modification.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #3: My Greatest Treasure

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible.

Time required: approximately 120 minutes but it may be expanded as suggested below.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to compose a description of a treasured possession.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subjectverb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 13: Expands listening vocabulary.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 17: Determines the denotative and connotative meanings of words in oral context.

Standard 18: Records, summarizes, organizes, interprets, compares, and contrasts information presented orally.

Standard 20: Analyzes literal, inferential, and critical questions.

Standard 21: Discusses various literary forms (short stories, novels, epics, folk tales, poems, dramas, essays, and myths).

Standard 23: Uses literary elements and techniques such as plot, setting, theme, character, characterization, conflict, figurative language, and point of view to analyze literature.

Standard 25: Experiences traditional and contemporary literature through a variety of media.

Standard 27: Explains how cultures and values are represented in literature.

Standard 29: Responds creatively to literature (e.g., drama, art, multi-media projects, and essays).

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include unifying ideas and supporting details (may include topic sentence and clincher sentence).

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, narration, description, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Students' treasured objects often reflect something about the region they are from or something about themselves and their families. Some objects may in fact be items of traditional material culture, but more often the folklife is found in the context of the object:

its meaning, the memories it evokes, the stories about it, the traditional events or occasions associated with it. If you have a multicultural classroom, objects such as these may provide a window to cultural similarities and differences among students and within the community. The treasured object approach also offers extension opportunities to look at the treasured objects of others in the community. Consider repeating this lesson using “their treasures.” [Resources](#) and [Notes to Teachers](#) below may be helpful. (Note: the above section adapted with permission from Unit III, Louisiana Voices, An Educator’s Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>)

The reading used in this lesson, which includes as the title character an aging blues singer, also could be a springboard to study of the traditional form of the blues. The classic 12-bar blues form of AAB, usually with the first two lines repeated, is an accessible poetry form for the classroom. In addition to being one of the South’s richest forms of oral poetry, the psychological, social, economic, and historic context of the blues connects with studies of segregation, Jim Crow Laws, sharecropping, and the Depression. Since blues often express feelings, students might write a blues about Lemon Brown’s experience, and then move on to a larger study of the blues in context. See [Resources](#) below.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

With an audio tape, the students will listen to the short story “The Treasure of Lemon Brown,” (adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course*, Holt Rinehart Winston, 1997), or another appropriate selection, and will focus on the importance of possessions and the role that possessions play in connecting people.

Activity 2:

Students answer basic reading comprehension and literary questions about the selection. The following are sample questions for “The Treasure of Lemon Brown”:

- Why is Greg angry with his father? (His father will not give him permission to play basketball.)
- Why does Greg go into the abandoned tenement building ? (He is trying to escape the rain.)
- Who does Greg meet in the abandoned building? (Lemon Brown)
- What was Lemon Brown’s career? (He was a blues singer and played the harmonica.)
- What do the robbers want to take from Lemon Brown? (They want Lemon Brown’s treasure; they believe the treasure is money.)
- What is the treasure of Lemon Brown? (The items that his son took to war; newspaper clippings about Lemon Brown’s career and an old harmonica.)

Activity 3:

As a pre-writing activity, students will brainstorm a list of their treasured objects. The only requirement for the object is that it holds special meaning by connecting the student with another person or persons. Introduce the idea of *context*, or the overall setting, history, and situation in which a cultural expression is based. Students should be encouraged to explore the context of the object and write about associated stories, memories, and events. The [What’s the Context worksheet](#) below will assist students in looking at their object in more depth.

Activity 3:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process in order to compose a description of his or her greatest treasure. The extent to which students address the various topics on the worksheet will determine the length of the writing assigned. Don't forget peer editing.

Activity 4:

Each student will share his or her description with the class or in a small group of two to four students.

Activity 5:

The student will enter the description into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

[What's the Context](#) (see below)

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 2)

[worksheet]
What's the Context?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write the name of your treasure _____

Research it carefully for its hidden meanings as well as its obvious story. Interview persons who may be able to tell you more about the object. Write the Context Clues in the appropriate boxes.

It Belonged To...

Use

Materials

History

It Was Made By...

Value

Description

Where it is usually kept

Can you tell whether it was made in Georgia? What clues did you find?

What I like about it

Is there a story or memory about it that makes it a “treasure”?

(Adapted with permission from Unit III, Louisiana Voices, An Educator’s Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts), <http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of

life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a

variety of purposes.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

“My Greatest Treasure” Description Rubric

_____ Involvement in reading and pre-writing exercises	(10 points)
_____ Development of rough draft	(5 points)
_____ Completion of self-editing activities	(10 points)
_____ Completion of description in final draft	(10 points – 5 points per paragraph)
_____ Oral sharing of description with class or with small group	(10 points)
_____ Inclusion of final draft and illustration in folklore journal	(5 points)
_____ Total Score out of a possible 50 points	

RESOURCES

Myers, Walter Dean, “The Treasure of Lemon Brown,” adapted from *Elements of Literature 2nd Course* (Holt Rinehart Winston, 1997).

Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, Unit III, Lesson 3 deals Family Treasures (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>). There are a number of extension ideas and technology links.

Past *CARTS Newsletters* (Cultural Arts Resources for Teachers and Students) are on line. In *Writing Across the Curriculum*, see “Folk Culture Inspires Writing Across the Curriculum” by Sue Eleuterio and “Stepping In and Stepping Out” by Bonnie Sunstein;

both offer excellent writing activities based on describing and interpreting objects (<http://www.carts.org>). Click on the Resources link or call 800-333-5982.

Condon, Kathleen, *CARTS Teacher's Guide: Keepsakes and Memories*, is designed to go with the following books for elementary grades dealing with treasured objects: *This is the Bird*, *The Keeping Quilt*, *Aunt Flossie's Hats*, *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*, *The Hundred Penny Box*, *Quilt of Dreams*, and *The Patchwork Quilt*. All books and the *Teacher's Guide* available from <http://www.carts.org> (see CARTS Culture Catalog) or call 800-333-5982.

The Florida Music Train "Nuestro Dia Ya Viene Llegando (Our Day is Coming)" Cuban salsa lesson, is based on a song about Cuban migration to Miami and includes a writing activity by Laurie Sommers which addresses personal treasures, culture, and identity. In the song, the writer brings a suitcase of memories to the U.S. from his native land. Students are asked to write about what items they would bring in their own suitcase of memories if they were never to see their homeland again. This writing activity would be especially useful for discussions of migration and immigration. This lesson is part of a larger instructional unit designed for middle school social studies and language arts classrooms, based on Florida traditional music, which includes a poster, CD, and extensive unit materials. To order contact the Florida Heritage Education Program, The Old Capitol, Room B-11, Tallahassee, FL 32301 (\$50 payable to the Friends of Historic Properties and Museums) or contact 850-487-1902.

Blues Extensions Resources

Blind Willie McTell was a well-recorded early Georgia bluesman. Search the Internet for the latest website addresses and recordings. For example, the following site has lyric's to several of McTell's blues: <http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/Delta/2541/blmctell.htm>. A recording of McTell's "Statesboro Blues" as well as other blues and Georgia folk music is available on the cassette, *Georgia Folk*, distributed by the Georgia Council for the Arts Folklife Program, 260 14th Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30318-5793 (404-685-2786).

Bruce Bastin's *Red River Blues*, *The Blues Tradition in the Southeast* (University of Illinois Press, 1995) is a teacher's resource about regional blues traditions.

Dargan, Amanda and Steve Zeitlin, "The Blues," a classroom connection from the Poetry in Education issue, *CARTS Newsletter* (Cultural Arts Resources for Teachers and Students). This includes a brief overview of the blues and samples of AAB blues lyrics. Go to Resources (<http://www.carts.org>).

Library of Congress American Memory website includes audio, text, and performer biographies for a huge variety of traditional genres. There are a number of resources on the blues, including the historic recordings, "Now What A Time: Blues, Gospel, and the Fort Valley (Georgia) Music Festival, 1938-43. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ftvhtml/ftvhome.html>. For a social studies connection to the boll weevil and blues, see the nice recording of "Boll Weevil Blues" complete with lyrics.

The Florida Music Train "Rolling and Tumbling" Blues lesson, includes extensive blues context, performer biography, a sound recording and blues writing activity by Laurie Sommers. This is part of a larger instructional unit designed for middle school social studies and language arts classrooms, based on Florida traditional music. To order contact the Florida Heritage Education Program, The Old Capitol, Room B-11, Tallahassee, FL 32301. To order contact the Florida Heritage Education Program, The Old Capitol, Room B-11, Tallahassee, FL 32301, or contact 850-487-1902.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified for students in the lower grades. For suggestions, see the CARTS Teaching Guide: Keepsakes and Memories listed under **Resources** above. Younger students may be able to illustrate their greatest treasure instead of writing a description. The Library of Congress American Memory site Learning Page includes “Introducing the Artifact Road Show,” which uses personal primary source documents and artifacts that reflect something important in your own life, readings from grade level anthologies by Hartcourt Brace, and the American Memory collection, (Grades 4-6). See <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/99/road/teacher.html>.

Middle School Level: The length of this activity and the reading selections may need to be modified for students in the lower middle grades. Students may also want to bring in the object to share with and show to the class. The Library of Congress American Memory site Learning Page lesson plans includes “Introducing the Artifact Road Show,” which uses personal primary source documents and artifacts that reflect something important in your own life, readings from grade level anthologies by Hartcourt Brace, and the American Memory collection, (Grades 4-6). See <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/99/road/teacher.html>.

High School Level: The reading selections may need to be modified for high school students. Students may also want to bring in the object to share with and show to the class.

Our Places Unit: This Is Us



Many local restaurants serve dishes such as macaroni and cheese, turnip greens, butter beans, fresh sliced tomatoes, fried okra, and corn bread for a noon buffet. For many families in South Georgia, these dishes are favorite family meal items. Photo by Laurie Sommers, 2001.

Our Places Unit

Lesson #1: My Favorite Family Meal

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts with Social Studies extensions possible.

Time required: approximately 45 minutes but it may be expanded.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the concept of foodways and practice descriptive writing about a favorite food.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subjectverb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 15: Listens and responds to various forms of literature such as prose, poetry, and drama.

Standard 16: Demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and Compositions

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is the first in the series of three for a unit on foodways, focusing on family meals and culminating in a class cookbook. The term **foodways** describes not only the recipe and the food item but also the whole process of preparing and serving food, and stories and beliefs about food. This unit allows all students to bring their experience to the classroom, without the teacher having to be an expert on a particular ethnic group. In focusing on “family meal,” be sensitive to the actual home and family situations of students in your class.

Folklorist Elizabeth Adler wrote the following overview of foodways for *A Teacher’s Guide to the Kentucky Folklife Festival* that has been adapted in a few places to relate more specifically to Georgia:

http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm

Foodways is the term for the ideas and customs about food that people acquire without formal written training or practice. How did you first learn to cook? From your parent, grandparent, or friend? That is the traditional, or folk, way, and the way

most of us begin cooking. In fact, before World War II, most recipes, called receipts, were not written down. There were, instead, in the heads of the cooks. When a recipe was recorded, it was often preserved simply as a list of ingredients.

Foodways are not only what we eat, but how, when, and where we eat. What are a meal's raw ingredients, and how are they prepared, preserved, and served? What are the social and psychological functions of food, and their ramifications for other aspects of our traditional culture, including our attitudes, taboos, and religion? Why do we think of fried chicken and Sunday dinner, turkey and Thanksgiving, cake and birthdays?

What inspires foodways study? Any situation where food is involved, including your own family's daily meals and holiday foods; dinner on the grounds and social events with friends and acquaintances; and community events which share your group's foodways traditions with others at bake sales, fairs, political rallies, community festivals, and other public gatherings.

Georgia's own particular foodways stem from groups contributing and adapting their own dietary traditions to the state's resources and to each other. English cakes, puddings, pies, preserves, country ham and fried oysters; native American's knowledge of wild game, wood fire cooking such as barbeque, and domesticated squash and corn; African traditions of deep frying food and foods such as okra and black-eyed peas. These are among the frontier colonial heritage that we think of today as Georgia's traditional foodways. Over time, many other groups have added their foodways traditions to the state's mix, including recent immigrants whose stores, restaurants, and ethnic markets are increasingly visible. Mexicans, for example, have their own style of barbeque called *barbacoa*, frequently cooked in a backyard pit.

Maintaining foodways, one of the most important outward signs of a group's cohesiveness, poses special problems for non-native Georgians. Modifying recipes to locally available ingredients, adapting cooking methods to a different lifestyle, and locating or importing crucial ingredients are all issues faced daily by cooks preparing traditional food not indigenous to Georgia. Many families shop in larger cities such as Atlanta, raise their own vegetables in gardens, or have friends or relatives send supplies from their homeland.

Holidays are important markers defining foodways traditions. Holidays and celebrations are a time when we gather together as families and communities, socially reinforcing our shared cultural heritage (Adler 2000, 33-34).

Foodways can be the basis for a number of classroom projects across the curriculum involving writing, research, and fieldwork. How do foods contribute to a sense of place, of region within the state, of region within the nation? How is food used within the context of a community festival which serves as an identity symbol for a local community, as is the case with many South Georgia communities (National Mayhaw Festival in Colquitt, National Peanut Festival in Sylvester, Swine Time in Climax, Blueberry Festival in Alma, to name a few)? What traditional foodways are found in literature? What story does the local produce stand tell about agriculture in the state? What are the origins of foods found on students' dining room tables and in the school cafeteria?

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Prepare students for the unit by introducing the term **foodways** as described above. Have students close their eyes and think about smells and tastes of foods we often associate with Georgia: chicken salad finger sandwiches, cheese straws, and tea cakes at an elegant lunch; a fish fry at a political rally; field peas simmering on the stovetop; green boiled peanuts at a roadside stand; pound cake and sweet potato pie at a dinner on the grounds; grits, country ham and homemade biscuits for breakfast (insert your own examples). These are only a few of the possibilities. Other foods may be more local still, such as mayhaw jelly, swamp gravy, and gallberry honey in South Georgia. Insert your own examples. What is a specialty at the local fair or locally owned restaurant, for example?

Activity 2:

Have students play the [Foodways Bingo Game](#) (worksheet attached). Blank Bingo worksheets for creating your own categories are found in Unit 1 of Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide (<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>). Play by asking students individually or in groups for examples to fill in each blank. Put their initials in the box. Vary the game by finding someone who has consumed the food or inviting school staff to join in. (Some of the best traditional cooks may work in the school lunchroom! The first to fill a card wins. Make a class master list of examples.

Activity 3:

The teacher will have students close their eyes and take an imaginary trip to their kitchen or a family member's kitchen. Students will visualize their favorite meal or food being prepared. They will recall the sights, sounds, smell, and feeling of their favorite meal or food. On the back of the **Sensory Card worksheet** (see below) they will jot down why this is their favorite meal or food and any story or event associated with the food (for more information on the five senses, go to www.sedl.org/scimath/pasopartners/senses/lesson1.html).

Activity 3:

After the teacher shares a personal example, the students will use descriptive words to fill out a sensory card for their favorite meal or food (see [Sensory Card worksheet](#)).

Activity 3:

After completing the card, students will voluntarily share their sensory cards with the class.

Activity 4:

Students will display the cards around the classroom and later, students will enter the description into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

[Sensory Card](#) (see below)
[Foodways Bingo](#) (see below)


[worksheet]

Sensory Card

Sight	Sound
<u>Favorite Food or Meal</u>	
Smell	Texture (Feeling)

Name: _____ Date: _____

FOODWAYS BINGO WORKSHEET

Roadside stands	Fish and wild game	Holiday foods	Family favorites	Georgia or local specialty
				

((Adapted with permission from Unit I, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts) <http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

My Favorite Meal Sensory Card Assessment Rubric

_____ Involvement in pre-writing exercises
(2 points)

_____ Completion of corners of the Sensory Card
(8 points – 2 points per corner)

_____ Use of at least 10 descriptive words (adjectives, adverbs, etc.)
(10 points – 1 point per word)

_____ Display of description with class
(3 points)

_____ Inclusion of final draft in folklore journal
(2 points)

_____ **Total Score out of a possible 25 points**

RESOURCES

My Five Senses lesson from the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, especially designed for elementary students but adaptable for middle grades.
<http://www.sedl.org/scimath/pasopartners/senses/lesson1.html>.

Winston, Linda. *Keepsakes, Using Family Stories in Elementary Classrooms* (Heinemann, 1997), includes a chapter on “Home Cooking” with classroom ideas.

Adler, Elizabeth Mosby. “Kentucky Foodways: Traditional and Modern,” in *A Teacher’s Guide to the Kentucky Folk Festival*, Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Arts Council, 2000, pp. 33-34, contains useful activities and overviews many of which are applicable outside of Kentucky, downloadable in PDF format. The Background section above is drawn heavily from this source.

http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm

Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, Unit VII, Lessons 3 and 4 deal with foodways (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>) There are a number of extension ideas and technology links.

Foodways, a 4-H FOLKPATTERNS Project includes a packet of useful activities for upper elementary and up with a background guidebook for the leader. The popular FOLKPATTERNS series has been widely used by educators. To order contact Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service, East Lansing, MI, 48824.

<http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>

Brown, Fred and Sherri M. L. Smith. *The Best of Georgia Farms Cookbook and Tour Book* (Georgia Department of Agriculture, 1998) is a great teacher’s resource for Georgia foods, recipes, anecdotes, history and folklore, and places to visit.

The Food Timeline, a wonderful on-line resource for extensions dealing with the origins of food, eating habits, and even historic recipes from different cultures and time periods.

<http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>

Socolov, Raymond. *Why We Eat What We Eat* (Summit Books, 1991) is a useful teacher’s resource for background on the cultural history of common foods, especially as they reflect the encounter between the Old and new worlds. Good for global education social studies extensions linking the local to world cultures.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Students in the lower grades may illustrate their favorite meal or food and write a caption, or they may simply do an illustration instead of using words.

Middle School Level: Students may also illustrate their favorite meal or food with a drawing, or photograph. For a fieldwork activity describing and documenting a family meal in more depth, see Louisiana Voices, Unit VII, Lesson 4 (<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>).

High School Level: For a fieldwork activity describing and documenting a family meal in more depth, see Louisiana Voices, Unit VII, Lesson 4 (<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>).

Our Places Unit

Lesson #2: Recipe Interviews

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: approximately 90 minutes but it may be expanded.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to learn and practice interview techniques, and to interview a family member about a favorite meal or food.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 18: Records, summarizes, organizes, interprets, compares, and contrasts information presented orally.

Standard 48: Uses interviewing to gather information.

Standard 58: Adjusts manner and style of speaking to suit audience and situation.

Standard 63: Uses standards of American English in appropriate settings.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 53: Takes notes and develops outlines

Standard 55: Distinguishes between primary and secondary sources and determines respective uses.

Standard 59: Formulates questions related to topic.

Standard 65: Identifies areas for further study.

Standard 66: Shows respect towards others.

Standard 72: Places related events in chronological order.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is the second in the series of three for a unit on foodways, focusing on family meals and culminating in a class cookbook. The term **foodways** describes not only the recipe and the food item but also the whole process of preparing and serving food, and stories and beliefs about food. For more in-depth information on foodways, see the previous lesson.

This unit involves a community or family interview. Use the sample [Letter for Caregivers](#) (back of Chapter 5) to send home with students in order to ensure the success of this unit.

The focus of this lesson and the interview should not be the recipe as an end in itself but foodways: students interview questionnaires should elicit stories about the whole process of preparing and serving food, the occasion for eating the food, stories and beliefs about food, stories about learning how to make the food, etc. The final cookbook entry should include a story or some additional information related to the recipe.

To study community and family foodways, students need more information than their memories provide. Folklorists gather much of their information through interviewing. Students can be taught to interview also. Teachers will need to decide if this lesson is to use recording equipment and/or cameras or if simple notetaking will suffice. Chapter 5 of Folkwriting details how to set up a class interview project.

One of the keys to a successful interview (and to students getting good information for writing activities) is to practice and model skills in forming and asking appropriate questions. Here is a brief overview, as suggested by Elizabeth Radin Simons in her book *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Boynton/Cook Heinemann 1990):

1. Students should discuss what type of information they want to gather and dictate sample questions to the teacher or to a student recorder. Each student should contribute a question or two.
2. The class should decide which of these questions to include in the final questionnaire. Lead the students to realize which questions will produce the kinds of answers they are seeking; questions that can be answered “yes” or “no” should be avoided.
3. Lead the students to include name of interviewer and interviewee, date and place of the interview, topic, and a leading question that begins the interview.
4. After the questionnaire has been completed, pairs of students should practice interviewing each other.
5. Ask two student volunteers to interview each other in front of the class, with everyone watching and taking notes, or, as suggested in this unit, do a practice interview in class with a guest speaker from the community, with staff members in the school, or with fellow students. After the practice interview, the questions and interviewing technique should be discussed and adjusted.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students will be introduced to the concept of interviewing in order to create a cookbook with a recipe, information about the cook, and the context of the recipe (perhaps a story about the setting in which the food is usually prepared or served, or about learning how to prepare the food). The interviews will be with a family member or acquaintance about a favorite meal or food. To further focus this activity, assign a favorite *holiday* meal or food. The key to successful collection projects is to focus the topic.

The *Discovering Our Delta* video is a highly recommended resource for introducing middle school students to interviewing projects since it shows this age group doing community interviews in the Mississippi Delta (see [Resources](#) below). The on-line Student Guide is an excellent resource for having students think about and work with the interview process. Role-playing with the model interview script included in Chapter 5 may be useful to get students thinking about ethics and politeness when interviewing ([How Not to Conduct an Interview model script](#)) (see back of Chapter 5).

Be sure to send home an explanatory **Letter to Caregivers** explaining the project before the interview process begins.

Activity 2:

Students will discuss the different types of interview questions (how, when, where, why, who). [The Reluctant Guest](#), another model script from Chapter 5, can serve as an introduction to the interview questionnaire and asking open-ended and follow up questions. In small groups, students critique and re-write *The Reluctant Guest* with more appropriate questions.

Have students draft questions to use in a practice interview about a favorite recipe or meal. Students draft sample questions using the [That's A Good Question](#) worksheet found at the end of Chapter 5.

Activity 3:

Follow the procedure outlined in Background above for teaching the practice interview. Students might practice in pairs interviewing each other about the favorite foods described in Lesson 1. Or invite a guest (perhaps someone from the school cafeteria or another member of the school staff) and do a practice interview in front of the whole class, using questions generated in the **That's A Good Question** activity and any additional questions that may come up in the context of the practice interview.

In doing their own interviews, students will need to fill out the [Interview Report Form](#) and [Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5). The teacher may wish to fill out these forms with the guest in order to review this procedure. (Note: if recording equipment is to be used, students should practice using it).

Activity 4:

In small groups or as a class, students critique the questions from the practice interview. Using the [Recipe Questionnaire worksheet](#) below as a starting point, students develop a revised interview questionnaire for use in their own foodways interview,

Activity 5:

Use the [Interview Checklist](#) (back of Chapter 5), to review the steps students will be required to use in doing their interview (tape recording, notetaking, etc.). Modify the checklist to suit your assignment. The checklist also includes good tips for the interview process. Students will be given a time limit to complete the interview form, consent form, and obtain the answers to the **Recipe Questionnaire worksheet**.

Activity 6:

Students will enter the **Recipe Questionnaire worksheet** into a folklore journal.

WORKSHEETS

[Recipe Questionnaire Worksheet](#) (see below)

[The Reluctant Guest](#) and [How Not to Do an Interview](#) model scripts (see back of Chapter 5)

[That's a Good Question](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Interview Report Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Interview Checklist](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Worksheet]

“Recipe Questionnaire”

Student Name _____ Date of Interview _____

Interviewee's Name _____

1. **What** is the name of the food that is being prepared?
2. **Who** developed the recipe for this food?
3. **How** did you learn to cook this food?
4. **When** is this food usually cooked?
5. **Why** is this food important in the family?
- 6.
- 7.

Recipe – On the back, write the complete recipe including ingredients, preparation, and cooking times.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

(Note: several rubrics are offered, depending on the scope of the assignment)

Recipe Interview Rubric

____ Completion of the That's a Good Question worksheet
(5 Points)

____ Creation of at least two original questions for the Recipe Interview Worksheet
(10 Points)

____ Completion of the Consent Form for Interview
(10 Points)

____ Completion of the Recipe Questionnaire Worksheet through an interview and placement into the folklore journal
(25 Points)

____ **Total Score out of a possible 50 points plus 5 points of extra credit**

Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

Fieldwork Rubric

Performance Element	Accomplished ____ Points	Developing ____ Points	Beginning ____ Points	Total Points
Preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly identifies what to collect and/or study. • Chooses appropriate method of documentation and prepares needed materials and tools. • Completes items in Interview Checklist that are relevant to preparation stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies some irrelevant points to study or items to collect. • Method of documentation is not most appropriate; prepares some materials and tools. • Omits some relevant items in Interview Checklist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrectly identifies what to collect and/or study. • Chooses inappropriate method of documentation, fails to prepare materials and tools. • Omits most relevant items in Interview Checklist. 	
Practicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiently practices using the equipment that will be used. • Practices interviewing informants. • Plans and practices videotaping; checks for background interference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices using the equipment a little, mastery not attained. • Practices interviewing informants a little. • Practices videotaping insufficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to practice using the equipment. • Fails to practice interviewing informants. • Fails to practice videotaping. 	
Conducting Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects appropriate notebooks, forms, surveys and/or checklists. • Ask meaningful questions, records accurately. • Takes high-quality photographs, labeled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects most fieldwork tools. • Asks mostly meaningful questions, recording mostly accurate. • Takes some high-quality photographs, labeled adequately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects inappropriate or inadequate fieldwork tools. • Asks poor questions, takes inadequate Notes. • Takes insufficient photographs, labels them 	

	<p>properly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape records at appropriate volume, with no interfering noises. • Completes Tape Log 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape recordings lacking in quality, some noise. • Tape log incomplete. 	<p>inadequately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape recordings of poor quality. • Tape log incomplete. 	
Processing Fieldwork Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archives recorded materials where they will be protected. • Labels materials carefully, files consent forms with materials. • Transcribes tapes accurately; proofs and edits transcriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archives most recorded materials where they will be protected. • Labels some materials inaccurately, files most consent forms • Transcribes some tapes inaccurately, proofs and edits most transcriptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archives few recorded materials where they will be protected. • Labels most materials inaccurately, files few consent forms • Transcribes most tapes inaccurately, proofs and edits few transcriptions. 	
Presenting Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows instructions for presenting findings. • Conveys a message through creative presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat follows instructions for presenting findings. • Conveys a message through mundane presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to follow instructions for presenting findings. • Fails to convey a message through creative presentation. 	

Audience Feedback

The Audience evaluates the student's fieldwork according to how carefully and accurately the student can prepare carefully, practice needed skills, conduct fieldwork, process and archive materials properly, and present the findings.

Audience Comments

(Adapted with permission from Louisiana Voice's Educator's Guide, Unit II, <http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

RESOURCES

Chapter 5 of this workbook outlines fieldwork and interview procedure. See also Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research (video can be ordered, teacher and student guides are on line at this site): the community research methods demonstrated here are powerful tools for teaching and learning of language arts, social studies, music, art, mathematics, science, and home economics. The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students, including a foodways interview project (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000) The video must be ordered, but Student and Teacher's Guides are on-line:

<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore*, (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990).

Winston, Linda. *Keepsakes, Using Family Stories in Elementary Classrooms*, (Heinemann, 1997) includes a chapter on "Home Cooking" with classroom ideas.

Adler, Elizabeth Mosby. "Kentucky Foodways: Traditional and Modern," in *A Teacher's Guide to the Kentucky Folk Festival*, Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Arts Council, 2000, pp. 33-34, contains useful activities and overviews many of which are applicable outside of Kentucky, downloadable in PDF format: The Background section above is drawn heavily from this source.

http://history.ky.gov/Programs/Folklife/Folklife_Teacher_Guide.htm

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit VII, Lessons 3 and 4 deal with foodways. There are a number of extension ideas and technology links. <http://www.louisianavoices.org>

Foodways, a 4-H FOLKPATTERNS Project includes a packet of useful activities for upper elementary and up with a background guidebook for the leader. The popular FOLKPATTERNS series has been widely used by educators. To order contact Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service, East Lansing, MI, 48824.

<http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>

Brown, Fred and Sherri M. L. Smith. *The Best of Georgia Farms Cookbook and Tour Book* (Georgia Department of Agriculture, 1998) a great teacher's resource for Georgia foods, recipes, anecdotes, history and folklore, and places to visit.

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<http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>

Socolov, Raymond. *Why We Eat What We Eat* (Summit Books, 1991) a useful teacher's resource for background on the cultural history of common foods, especially as they reflect the encounter between the Old and New Worlds. Good for global education social studies extensions linking the local to world cultures.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of the interview may need to be modified according to the students' capabilities. The county fair may be a good source for foodways leads and local recipes. Chapters 6 and 7 have lessons incorporating interviewing with elementary students. See also Linda Winston's *Keepsakes* (**Resources** above) for ideas on adapting a food activity to the elementary classroom. The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (now off-line) offers useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos, cooking implements, or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewees be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: Encourage students to use "probes" or follow-up questions during the practice interview. The county fair may be a good source for foodways leads and local recipes.

High School Level: The length of the interview may need to be modified according to the students' capabilities. High School students should be able to do more extensive interviews or a fieldwork project documenting a family meal or a community foodways tradition. The county fair may be a good source for foodways leads and local recipes.

Our Places Unit

Lesson #3: Classroom Cookbook

Grade Level: 8th but is appropriate for all middle school grades.

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts and Social Studies

Time required: approximately 180 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to create a page for a classroom cookbook that includes a five to ten lines interview summary, recipe, and illustration or photograph.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 10: Applies standards of American English in:

- subject-verb agreement
- cases of personal pronouns
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- principal parts of verbs
- comparisons of adjectives and adverbs.

Standard 11: Applies standard rules of capitalization and punctuation.

Standard 12: Spells frequently used words correctly and applies common spelling rules.

Standard 14: Follows oral directions and asks questions for clarification.

Standard 18: Records, summarizes, organizes, interprets, compares, and contrasts information presented orally.

Standard 64: Uses a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing (can involve peer editing), proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 65: Writes paragraphs that include unifying ideas and supporting details (may include topic sentence and clincher sentence).

Standard 66: Uses transitions within and between paragraphs.

Standard 67: Produces paragraphs and compositions for a variety of purposes (exposition, narration, description, and persuasion).

Standard 68: Expands writing vocabulary.

Standard 69: Writes with organization, style, and sense of audience.

Standard 70: Produces various types of writing (personal, academic, business, and vocational).

Standard 71: Uses descriptive words and phrases.

Standard 73: Applies grammatical and mechanical conventions to writing.

Standard 74: Correctly spells frequently used words and commonly confused words (e.g., accept, except) in paragraphs and compositions.

Standard 75: Uses available electronic techniques in writing.

Standard 76: Writes legibly.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 8th Grade Social Studies Standards

Standard 53: Takes notes and develops outlines

Standard 55: Distinguishes between primary and secondary sources and determines respective uses.

Standard 59: Formulates questions related to topic.

Standard 66: Shows respect towards others.

Standard 72: Places related events in chronological order.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is the third in the series of three for a unit on foodways, focusing on family meals and culminating in a class cookbook. The term **foodways** describes not only the recipe and the food item but also the whole process of preparing and serving food, and

stories and beliefs about food. For more in-depth information on foodways, see the previous lessons ([Our Places Lesson #1](#) in this chapter).

If the class tape records interviews, teachers may require that students transcribe a relevant description or story from their interview to accompany the recipe in the cookbook. As discussed in Chapter 5 of this workbook, transcribing involves a number of spelling, grammar, and information processing skills. Chapter 5 includes a [Transcribing a Tape](#) worksheet and a sample [Tape Log](#) that can be used as part of this activity.

As a social studies extension, students may do research on the origin of the ingredients, their relationships to agriculture and the market economy, the different cultures which introduced the food to the United States, etc. For other extension ideas and alternative projects besides a classroom cookbook, see the suggested projects list in Chapter 5 of *Folkwriting and Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit VII* (<http://www.louisianavoices.org/>).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

After the teacher shares a personal example, each student will use the writing process and the [Recipe Questionnaire Worksheet](#) (previous lesson) to compose a summary of the information gathered during the interview. The length of the summary is up to the teacher's discretion but will depend on the cookbook format to be used. Be sure to include the recipe and some foodways context in the summary assignment (a related story, event, interesting anecdote, details on the process of making the recipe, where it comes from, etc.). Peer editing is a useful tool for editing rough drafts (see [Peer Editing Checklist](#) back of Chapter 2).

Activity 2:

After the teacher shows the page layout of the cookbook, students will use the computer lab to type a page for the class cookbook which includes the recipe, interview summary, and an illustration or photograph. For a good clip art site for food, see Resources below. The editing/proofreading stage of the writing process is especially crucial here. See [Editor's Checklist](#) worksheet from the back of Chapter 2.

Activity 3:

The cookbook will be published by an outside publisher or in desktop publishing format students will enter their individual pages in their folklore journal. (For information on publishing, go to <http://www.morriscookbooks.com>).

WORKSHEETS

[Recipe Questionnaire Worksheet](#) (see previous lesson)

[Transcribing A Tape](#) (optional, see end of Chapter 5)

[Tape Log](#) (optional, see end of Chapter 5)

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) (see end of Chapter 2)

[Editor's Checklist](#) (see end of Chapter 2)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Cookbook Page Assessment

_____	Development of Rough Draft of summary	(5 Points)
_____	Completion of self-editing activities	(5 Points)
_____	Completion of peer-editing activities	(5 Points)
_____	Completion of 5-10 line summary paragraph in final draft	(10 Points)
_____	Completion of summary final draft on computer	(5 Points)
_____	Completion of recipe final draft on computer	(5 Points)
_____	Inclusion of Illustration or photograph on page layout	(5 Points)
_____	Completion of correct page layout on computer	(5 Points)
_____	Inclusion of Final Draft and illustration in folklore journal	(5 Points)
_____	Total Score out of a possible 50 Points	

RESOURCES

Chapter 5 of this workbook outlines fieldwork and interview procedure. See also Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research (video can be ordered, teacher and student guides are on line at this site). The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students, including a foodways interview project (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000) The video must be ordered, but Student and Teacher's Guides are on-line: <http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore*, (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990).

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applicable outside of Kentucky, downloadable in PDF format. The Background section above is drawn heavily from this source.

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<http://museum.msu.edu/s-program/folkpatterns/index.html>

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The Food Timeline, a wonderful on-line resource for extensions dealing with the origins of food, eating habits, and even historic recipes from different cultures and time periods.

<http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>

Socolov, Raymond. *Why We Eat What We Eat* (Summit Books, 1991) a useful teacher's resource for background on the cultural history of common foods, especially as they reflect the encounter between the Old and New Worlds. Good for global education social studies extensions linking the local to world cultures.

For cookbook publishing layouts, see <http://www.morriscookbooks.com>

Food and Cooking Clip Art,

<http://www.southernfood.about.com/library/clipart/blclip3.htm?once=true&>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Students may write a shorter interview summary that would not need to be typed. Instead of the **That's A Good Question worksheet**, use **FOLKPATTERNS Short Interview cards**, found at the back of Chapter 5. During interview practice, a class guest may prepare a special recipe in front of the class. Invite the interviewees to share examples of their favorite recipes with the class as a culminating activity. *Keepsakes, Using Family Stories in Elementary Classrooms*, by Linda Winston (Heinemann, 1997) includes a chapter on "Home Cooking" with classroom ideas. For a math project, students may work with weights and measures in the recipe.

Middle School Level: Students may write a shorter or longer interview summary. During interview practice, a class guest may prepare a special recipe in front of the class. Consider entering the cookbook or individual pages as part of a display at the county fair. Invite the interviewees to share examples of their favorite recipes with the class as a culminating activity.

High School Level: Students may write a longer interview summary. If interviews are tape recorded, have them transcribe a good story or anecdote from their interviews for use in the cookbook. High school students may also do a photo documentary of a recipe being made, or an entire food event.

CHAPTER TEN

Scrapbooking My World

Adam Hathaway

Cook High School



Students' scrapbooks were published at the 2001 Exchange Club Fair. The High School exhibit placed second at the fair. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

The units in this chapter were designed for a ninth grade class on a block system and may need to be adapted if not on block scheduling. The lessons are to be used in conjunction with the *Odyssey* but may be used with a story or a novel. No matter what literary selection is used in conjunction with these units, the teacher should remember to provide the students with an environment that is conducive to writing and to give writing prompts that are meaningful to them.

In this chapter students address the shaping power of place on literary characters, in their own lives, in the life of a mentor (who is interviewed by the student), and in the community. The lessons designed around scrapbook units always stimulate much enthusiasm. Adam Hathaway sees the scrapbook medium as simply a vehicle that gets the students writing about what they know whether it is places, people, or events. When students write about the things they know, they are tapping into a knowledge base that already exists as well as connecting with the writing topic in a very personal way. Their work seems important. The activities in this unit can be based completely on scrapbooks or in combination with other means of marking places that matter.

My Places Unit: My Scrapbook



The environment has a profound effect on culture, economy, and traditions. For generations of South Georgians, the native wiregrass and longleaf pine ecosystem has been a shaping force. Photo by Diane Kirkland, Georgia Dept. of Industry, Trade, & Tourism, 2000.

My Places Unit

Lesson #1: Creation of Character

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to help students better understand character development based on the environment of the individual.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 35: Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 38: Learns about the development of the English language, including the influence of other languages, ancient and modern.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson involves classroom discussion about the *Odyssey*, or some other literary work in which the main character is shaped by his/her environment. In order to engage students in a stimulating discussion, the teacher should establish a risk-free environment where even shy or timid students will not be threatened. Although all students will not speak up during the discussion, all students should be mentally engaged in the discussion. Many teachers make the mistake of being the “sage on the stage” in the classroom, not allowing time or opportunities for the students to speak up and express their ideas. It is important for the teacher to give appropriate prompts and questions to guide the students’ thinking process. Some will eagerly speak up; others will remain quiet but will be mentally assimilating and evaluating the information. The teacher should lead the students in the thinking process so that they come up with their own thoughts and ideas. By not telling the students what to think but guiding them as they are processing, assimilating, and evaluating their thoughts,

the teacher is indeed a teacher and not a “brainwasher.” A novice teacher may need to learn to be comfortable with “dead time” when no one is speaking. The silence allows the students to stretch and to make mental connections. Although the veteran teacher is usually able to “read” students’ facial expressions and body language to gauge the pace and direction for the discussion, the less experienced teacher will be more comfortable leading the discussion by preparing a discussion guide with prompts or questions to help direct the flow of the discussion. It is important to guide the students as they reach their own conclusions during a class discussion. The teacher is teaching them how to think—not what to think.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students will engage in a discussion, facilitated by the teacher, about how the main character in the literary work was created by his or her environment. Odysseus or any character may be used. Start the discussion with a prompt such as, “Is a person changed by his or her surroundings or are the surroundings changed by the person?” Lead the discussion into the idea that a person’s environment greatly affects his or her personality, values, and beliefs, therefore shaping the person. Start by asking if the students would still have the same religious beliefs if they had not been raised in their specific environment. This is a powerful example of how a person’s environment affects him or her, and it ties in well with the mythology theme.

Activity 2:

Split the class into groups and create a list of places that Odysseus went and how each place affected Odysseus’s character. Group size will vary depending on class.

Activity 3:

In a large group, share what each small group discovered about the creation of Odysseus. The teacher or a class scribe should take notes on the chalkboard or an overhead transparency so all learning styles or modes will be accommodated. The teacher might require each student to make a chart or take notes during this large group sharing time.

WORKSHEETS

None.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no

Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

RESOURCES

Homer. *The Odyssey*. <http://www.on-line-literature.com/homer/odyssey/>

Bodkin, Odds, *The Odyssey: An Epic Telling* (Rivertree Productions, Inc. 1995), a sound recording that allows students to hear this oral epic as performed oral poetry, suitable for grades 3-12. Available from the CARTS Culture Catalog, 1-800-333-5982 or <http://www.carts.org>.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: This discussion activity can be done on a simpler level for younger students, focusing on why the characters in the story act the way they do.

Middle School Level: This discussion can be done with very few modifications.

High School Level: The teacher should ensure that the group discussion is led in the direction of people being changed by their environment. Students will seize the opportunity to talk about anything and everything if the teacher does not guide the discussion with prompts, questions, or responses, which keep the discussion, focused on people being changed by their environment.



Adam Hathaway begins the class discussion by reviewing the character Odysseus and the significance of his environment in *The Odyssey*, in order to set up prompts and questions to guide the students' thinking and discussion. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

My Places Unit

Lesson #2: Introduction of Scrapbook

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Social Studies

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the idea that they are shaped by places in their environment and also to introduce scrapbooks as a way to document those places.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 35: Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 38: Learns about the development of the English language, including the influence of other languages, ancient and modern.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Social Studies Standards Core Skills

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

The success of Lesson #1 and this lesson lies in the teacher's ability to establish a risk-free environment where even shy or timid students will not be threatened. Although all students will not be willing to speak up during the discussion, all students should be mentally engaged in the discussion.

Photos and illustrations are important parts of a scrapbook assignment. Students can simply bring in photos or, if cameras are available, teachers can assign a photography component.

Cameras for the Classroom

Teachers find that the new disposable 35-mm cameras work better than other inexpensive cameras and create better prints. So far, disposable slide film cameras are not marketed. Buy the highest ASA possible (400 ASA is ideal) and urge students to make sure they have as much light as possible before shooting and to avoid backlighting (shooting a subject in front of a window, for example). Build film processing into your budget and photography practice into your schedule. If you choose to emphasize the study of photography, find some single-lens reflex (SLR) 35-mm cameras that require adjustments and focusing. Try the school media center, local newspaper, high school art department, and parents. Folklorists often take both color and black and white photographs as well as color slides. The photos work well in publications, and slides are more affordable to process than prints and can be used easily in presentations. With computer scanners and color photocopiers becoming more affordable, you will be able to make excellent use of color photos. Digital cameras require a computer and are good ways to study technology and develop computer-based products.

Identify Your Photos

Whatever the camera, be sure to label prints, slides, and digital diskettes with pertinent information: date, time, place, photographer, subject (see the end of Chapter 5 for a sample [Photo Log](#)). Label each slide or print to identify the corresponding photo log sheet. Write lightly in pencil on the back of prints or write on a label, then stick the label on the back of the photo.

Photography Tips

- Try to center the subject in the camera viewfinder.
- Experiment with different distances from the subject: how does this affect your picture?
- Use different camera angles to make the picture interesting: eye level, above, and below.
- Be aware of light and shadow: don't take a picture with someone right in front of a window.
- Tell a story of your place with the camera: take close-up detail shots, action shots

[Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts):

<http://www.louisianavoices.org>]

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

This lesson should be taught the day following the class discussion concerning a character being shaped by his or her environment. During this activity, the teacher should lead the class in another short discussion about how students are shaped by their environment (for example, what place of worship they attend, what their parent do for a living, what activities they pursue, siblings, etc.)

Activity 2:

The teacher should provide a model of places that have helped to shape him or her (church, football field, home, grandma's home). The [Spirit of Place worksheet](#) (see below) can be used as a tool for thinking about place and the traditions and memories that make places significant (Note the worksheet is also a guide for writing a longer narrative on place). The students will then create an individual list of places in their community that have helped to shape them. Each student will share at least one place from his or her list with the class.

Activity 3:

The class will be given handouts explaining the [“Expectations for Scrapbooks”](#) and how they will be created. The teacher will discuss each element of the scrapbook with the students and the students will then be given a copy of the rubric. (A model for the rubric [“Grading My Scrapbook”](#) is provided, but can be easily adapted to whatever you think will work for your class.)

Activity 4:

Each student will be required to bring in at least two pictures of places for tomorrow’s class. These pictures do not necessarily have to be taken overnight; they can be pictures that have been previously taken. If students will be taking photos as part of the assignment, see Background above and go over the photo tips.

WORKSHEETS

[Handout with Expectations for Scrapbooks](#)

[Handout for Grading “My Scrapbook”](#)

[Spirit of Place Worksheet](#)



The Cook High School exhibit at the Cook County Exchange Club Fair won second place. The photos in this display are places of importance to the students. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Spirit of Place Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Working individually or in groups, discuss questions in each section and make notes of answers and ideas that come to you. The worksheet can be used to brainstorm places of personal significance in new ways, or to explore places of significance to others. Choose any number of sections to investigate. From your findings, write about the spirit of your place.

Notice how your community celebrates secular and sacred time.

Where do people hold festivals, celebrations, parties, and other gatherings?

Where do people go on "pilgrimage" (cruising the strip, along traditional parade routes)?

Where are the objects that mark time and space (holiday decorations, public art, lawn sculptures, signs, graffiti)?

Where do people go to play?

Where do people go to worship?

Find out what lives in the spaces in between.

What is in the alleys, the abandoned lots, the grown over fields?

Where can you go to see wildlife or green growing things or water?

Where can you go to get away from cars?

Where do teenagers go to get away from adults?

Find out where the spirits live.

Who lived here before you did? And before them? Where did important events happen?

Where have scandals and tragedies occurred?

Where are the haunted places in the community?

What happens in your community between midnight and 6 a.m.?

Where are the memorials, the cemeteries, the old home places or abandoned buildings?

Determine how well-rounded the soul of the place is

What places are named by the young people?

Where can you go to talk to someone who is not a family member or next-door neighbor?

In what place are your stories made?

What makes your place different or special?

(Adapted from "Finding the Soul of the City," by Elizabeth VanderSchaaf, *Utne Reader*, September/October 1994, reprinted with permission. In *Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions*, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): see Unit IV, Lesson, 3, Sense of Place <http://www.louisianavoices.org>]

[Handout]

Grading My Scrapbook

For an **A scrapbook** you must have:

- 10 pictures
- 10 summaries of pictures
- A creative binding
- Creative cover page
- Must be neatly done (no wrinkled up pictures)

For a **B scrapbook** you must have:

- 8 - 9 pictures
- 8 - 9 summaries
- Creative binding
- Cover page
- Neatly done

For a **C scrapbook** you must have:

- 5 - 7 pictures
- 5 - 7 summaries
- Bound
- Cover page
- Neatly done

For a **failing grade**:

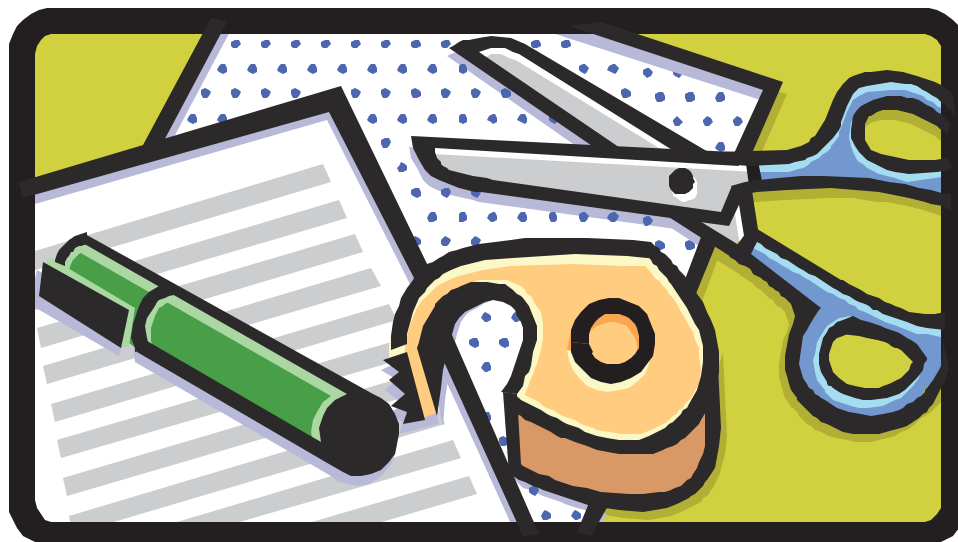
- Have less than 5 pages in a ratty, messy scrapbook



[Handout]

Expectations for Scrapbooks

1. Each scrapbook will include pictures of places from the community that have a special meaning for you. The pictures can be pictures that you already have or can be pictures that you go out and take. These are not to be pictures of people, but people can be in the picture. For example, if you take a picture of a picnic area that your family uses all the time, it's okay to have the family in the picture.
2. The scrapbook will also include a summary of why each place is important to you. The short summary will be about the place in the picture NOT the people. It just needs to be a short explanation of what about the place makes it significant in your development. The summary can be typed or handwritten and placed directly under the picture on a piece of construction paper. Each page will be bound together in a creative manner.



PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Expectations for Scrapbooks
Grading “My Scrapbook”

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

RESOURCES

Homer. *The Odyssey*. <http://www.on-line-literature.com/homer/odyssey/>

Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, Unit IV, Lesson 3, Sense of Place, is an on-line curriculum with lessons and technology links, include a version of the Spirit of Place (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

For a good website on photo tips, see Kodak <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/nav/takingPics.shtml>
Click on “Guide to Better Pictures”

Indivisible, the Duke Center for Documentary Studies community documentation Website, has an Educator’s Guide link which includes some useful activities for working with photographs and taking documentary photos. <http://www.indivisible.org/resources.htm>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The teacher should send a note home explaining the activity and requesting pictures be given to the student for this activity. Engaging the parents or the caregiver in the lesson is key to the success of getting the pictures from home to the classroom. Younger students can also take new photos as part of this assignment (See Chapter 7, [Their Places Lesson #2](#), for example).

Middle School Level: The teacher should send a note home explaining the activity and requesting pictures be given to the student for this activity. Even for this level, students may need parental or caretaker involvement for success of the activity. Middle school students can also take new photos as part of this assignment (See Chapter 7, [Their Places Lesson #2](#), for example).

High School Level: The students can have more than one picture for each place.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 3: Summary Writing

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to begin working on the creation of a scrapbook.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 31: Develops an understanding of the effect of history on British literature (e.g., literary movements and periods).

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 35: Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 38: Learns about the development of the English language, including the influence of other languages, ancient and modern.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Each student will take one of the pictures brought in and brainstorm ideas about why that place is important to her or him. The brainstorming activity should involve completing a Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How chart or web.

Activity 2:

Students will be grouped in pairs to share their pictures and explain some of the reasons these places are important to them. Each pair will be encouraged to ask questions of one another about the pictures. These questions should be centered on the 5 W's and H chart or web. This time spent talking about the places will help the students develop a sense of importance about the place by explaining the impact of that place on their lives.

Activity 3:

Each student will then go back to his or her original list and modify it to include the new reasons that may have been discovered through the discussion.

Activity 4:

Each student will create a short summary (paragraph form, at least four sentences) about one of the pictures, describing its importance.

Activity 5:

The students will be placed back into pairs in order to revise and edit their summaries. Revising and editing checklists should be used to facilitate these stages of the writing process.

Activity 6:

Depending on the amount of class time available, the students will work on additional pictures and summaries following the previous five activity steps.

WORKSHEETS

[Editor's Checklist](#) available in the back of Chapter 2

[Peer Editing Checklist](#) available in the back of Chapter 2

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

RESOURCES

Essay of Place by Michael Umphrey from the Montana Heritage program is an excellent model for a 7-step essay, using the writing process and different approaches to place. The website includes examples of student writing: <http://www.edheritage.org>

Exploring Your Community poster text, available from the American Folklife Center and the Rural Schools and Community Trust, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/> (ideas for teachers on place-based projects for the classroom).

The CARTS (Cultural Arts Resources for Teachers) Newsletter is on-line: see Writing About Place for useful activities: <http://www.carts.org> (go to the Resources link).

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons>, the National Geographic website has age specific lesson plans geared to national geography standards which links place description to social studies themes about the characteristics of place.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: It might be helpful to list “question words” (who, what, when, why, where, how) on the board so students won’t forget what kinds of questions to ask.

Middle School Level: It might be helpful to list “question words” (who, what, when, why, where, how) on the board so students won’t forget what kinds of questions to ask.

High School Level: The teacher should expect students to ask “How long does it have to be?” The length of class time spent on these activities will can vary according to the students and you. Teachers will probably need to **remind** the students to bring in their pictures for the next day’s class.



Adam Hathaway shows his class models of scrapbooks from his previous classes. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 4: Scrapbook Workshop

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to assemble a scrapbook.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Once the students have completed several summaries, they should be encouraged to repeat the steps as many times as they wish when assembling the pages of the scrapbooks. The teacher may need to spend a few minutes answering questions once the assembly process begins.

Activity 2:

The class will continue working on their picture summaries and responding to other students' summaries as long as time allows. Special attention will be placed on the editing and revising stages of the writing, allowing the students to work together and with the teacher.

The classroom environment is somewhat unstructured with each student working on his or her

scrapbook. Although many students will have worked on their books at home, the classroom environment promotes sharing and competition. This setting truly establishes a “community of learners” without the teacher having to dictate the roles or duties of the learners. Students “naturally” show and tell as they work.

Activity 3:

To complete the assembly, the students will paste their pictures and summaries onto construction paper. Once all pictures and summaries have been gathered and prepared on the construction paper, the students will bind and decorate their scrapbooks. Class time should be allowed but addition time after school hours should be encouraged.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

[Expectations for Scrapbooks](#) (see My Places lesson #1 in this chapter)

[Grading “My Scrapbook”](#) (see My Places lesson #1 in this chapter)

RESOURCES

None.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Art supplies such as construction paper, glue, and glitter, are a necessity.

Middle School Level: Art supplies such as construction paper, glue, and glitter, are a necessity.

High School Level: This hands-on classroom activity may be a bit juvenile, but the students enjoy having the opportunity to be creative with their hands as well as their minds. Many students find this lesson to be such a delightful experience, they begin to like English class. The amount and types of materials you bring are up to you and your students, and, of course, your budget! This could also be done as a web scrapbook if appropriate scanners and technology are readily available.

My Places Unit

Lesson # 5: Sharing Scrapbooks

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to present a scrapbook to an audience.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Each student will be required to present two pages from his or her scrapbook by reading the paragraphs and showing the pictures. They will also answer appropriate questions asked by the class.

Activity 2;

The students will submit scrapbooks to be graded using the "Grading My Scrapbook" rubric.

WORKSHEETS

None.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

[Expectations for Scrapbooks](#) (see Our Places Lesson #1 of this chapter)
[Grading “My Scrapbook”](#) (See Our Places Lesson #1 of this chapter)

RESOURCES

None.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary School Level: Students may want to share more of their scrapbooks.

Middle School Level: Same as above.

High School Level: The time for this lesson will vary accordingly.



Parents and friends look closer at students' scrapbooks on display at the "Celebrating Cook County" presentation. Photo by Diane Howard, 2002.

Their Places Unit: Their Scrapbooks



The football stadium of the Cook High School Hornets is an important place for many members of the community and the site for many stories and customs. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Their Places Unit

Lesson # 1: Introduction to Their Scrapbook

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Social Studies

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce interviewing techniques and the purpose of the interviewing assignment.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 35: Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit revolves around information gathered by students in a community interview. Students should identify someone in the community (relative, neighbor, teacher, etc.) who has been a mentor or influential person the student's life. The interview will focus on the shaping role of place for the mentor. What are his or her significant places? Although there may be places of special significance that are not in the local community, students should be encouraged to focus the interview on special places in the local area in preparation for the Our Places unit.

This unit can be taught as a repetition of the My Places scrapbook unit, with the same "[Expectations for Scrapbook](#)" and "[Grading My Scrapbook](#)" handouts as in the previous unit. If repeating the idea from the previous unit, consider finding a venue to present the students' Their Places scrapbooks to the persons interviewed and to the community, perhaps at a county fair or other community event. As an alternative, students can be directed to take a somewhat different approach to the writing and gathering of materials. The unit described below uses a verbal collage approach as a prewriting and drafting activity in preparation for writing a narrative of "Places That Matter" in the local community.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Inform the class that they will be identifying and writing about the significant places for an important person in their lives. This person must be from the local community and available to interview. At the

end of the Our Places unit, they will write a narrative of places that matter in the community, drawing from their personal scrapbook and their interview.

Activity 2:

Students will be introduced to the concept of interviewing in order to gather stories about places of importance to the person they will interview. Be sure to send home an explanatory letter to caregivers explaining the project before the interview process begins (see [Sample Letter to Caregivers](#), back of Chapter 5).

Activity 3:

Model an interview for the class. One highly recommended resource is the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage video *Discovering Our Delta*, which shows seventh through ninth graders doing interview projects (see [Resources](#) below for ordering information. The on-line Student Guide is an excellent resource for having students think about and work with the interview process. <http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>). Each student will write three questions that were asked in the video. If this particular video is unavailable, the teacher may use another video of an interview, or skip to the modeling and practice activities listed in [Their Places Lesson #2](#) of this chapter.

Activity 4:

The class will discuss the techniques seen in the video and some of the questions that were asked. Focus will be put on interviewing place, pace, and attitude. Role-playing with the model interview script included at the back of Chapter 5 may be useful to get students thinking about ethics and politeness when interviewing ([How Not to Conduct an Interview](#) model script from the back of Chapter 5).

WORKSHEETS

[How Not to Conduct an Interview](#) model script (see back of Chapter 5)
[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Standard 1:** READ and understand a variety of materials.
- Standard 3:** LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 5:** Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 7:** GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

RESOURCES

Chapter 5 of this workbook outlines fieldwork and interview procedure. See also *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research. The community research methods demonstrated here are powerful tools for teaching and learning of language arts, social studies, music, art, mathematics, science, and home economics. The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000). The video must be ordered, but Student and Teacher's Guides are on-line:

<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Any video that contains an interview can be used. Students should come up with questions that might be asked before viewing the video. Review question words.

Middle School Level: Any video that contains an interview can be used.

High School Level: More advanced research and interviews should be expected in upper grades.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #2: Introduction to Interviewing

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Social Studies

Time required: approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to practice interviewing techniques.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 4: Uses research process: selecting topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, organizing, summarizing, and presenting.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Core Social Studies Standards

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 7: Compares, analyzes and evaluates artifacts in relation to subject content

Standard 12: Takes notes and develops outlines

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is the second in the background preparation for a student interview. It involves an interview about significant places with someone who is important to the student (family member, mentor, role model). To study the stories and other traditions associated with their subject, students need more information than their memories and experience provide. Folklorists gather much of their information through interviewing. Students can be taught to interview also. Chapter 5 of this workbook provides more detail on how to set up a class interview project. Teachers will need to decide if this lesson is to use recording equipment and/or cameras or if simple notetaking will suffice. If possible, have students record the interview so they can *transcribe* important stories or comments about place. Transcription will allow the students to work with the content of an interview, using valuable information processing and language processing skills. It is one thing to conduct an interview: it is another to use the writing, spelling, and grammar skills to write down an oral conversation or narrative and to select appropriate passages for the assignment. The *Odyssey*, of course, is also someone's written version of an oral narrative (for more on transcription, see Background for Teachers in [Their Places Lesson #3](#) which follows).

This lesson focuses on the interview process. One of the keys to a successful interview (and to students getting good information for writing activities) is to practice and model skills in forming and asking appropriate questions. After the practice interview, the questions and interviewing technique should be discussed and adjusted. The activities below suggest some procedures to follow and techniques to try.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

The class will have a brief discussion on the previous day's work to remind them of the concepts covered. The teacher will keep a jot list on the board of terms and ideas.

Activity 2:

With the entire class, discuss the different types of interview questions (how, when, where, why, who). [The Reluctant Guest](#), another model script from the back of Chapter 5, can serve as an introduction to the interview questionnaire and asking open-ended and follow-up questions. In small groups students critique and re-write **The Reluctant Guest** with more appropriate questions, or write their own interview script geared toward their particular topic. Have students draft questions to use in practice interviews. Students may wish to draft sample questions using the [That's A Good Question](#) worksheet found at the end of Chapter 5.

Activity 2:

The teacher will choose a student to interview in front of the class as a model. The class will come up with interviewing questions for the teacher to use. Each of these questions will be geared toward getting the interviewee to talk about his/her favorite places in the community and why they are his/her favorite place (the stories and memories associated with the place). Finally, the interview questions should elicit any ideas about how the interviewee has been shaped by places in his or her life. The teacher will use these questions to conduct a model interview. The teacher will record the interview on cassette or video and will discuss the details of the interview.

Activity 3:

In doing their own interviews, students will need to fill out the [Interview Report Form](#) and [Consent Form](#). The teacher should discuss and model the Interview Report Form and Consent Form during the model interview (see sample forms at the end of Chapter 5).

Activity 4:

The students, in pairs, will create a questionnaire to be used in the interview. They will use these questions to do practice interviews with their partner. The students will be reminded to keep a jot list of the places named and the reasons why they are important.

Activity 5:

Each student selects a significant person in their life to interview about their interviewee's significant places (family member or someone in the community). Use the [Fieldwork Checklist](#) below to review the steps students will be required to use in doing their interview (tape recording, notetaking, etc.). Modify the checklist to suit your assignment. The checklist also includes good tips for the interview process. Students will be given a time limit (one week) to complete the interview process. If possible, encourage the student to visit an important place or two with their interviewee, or to view pictures of the significant places if the interviewee has a photo album. Set a deadline for completion of the interview. Before students actually do the interview, introduce [Their Places Lesson #3](#).

WORKSHEETS

[Fieldwork Checklist](#) (see below)

[The Reluctant Guest](#) and [How Not to Do an Interview](#) model scripts (see back of Chapter 5)

[That's a Good Question](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Interview Report Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

[Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

Fieldwork Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

Task: You are a reporter who must interview a person who knows about a place or an event in your community. You will be assessed on your ability to complete the steps of the interview process listed below.

Directions: Make an X to show that a task was accomplished. First, use this checklist to assess your own performance. Then have a peer assess your performance. Last, your teacher will assess your performance.

Quality Features	Self	Peer	Teacher
Identify someone to interview.	_____	_____	_____
Collect all necessary equipment (notepad, pencil, camera, tape recorder, film, tapes, batteries, etc.)	_____	_____	_____
If working in teams, choose roles such as recorder, photographer, interviewer, etc.	_____	_____	_____
Create a project timetable.	_____	_____	_____
Prepare and use consent forms.	_____	_____	_____
Listen carefully to interviewees.	_____	_____	_____
Take notes, make sketches, formulate and ask questions.	_____	_____	_____
Record information on appropriate forms or worksheets.	_____	_____	_____

[Adapted with permission from Unit IX, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts).
<http://www.louisianavoices.org> Rubric created with "The Rubricator" software package by Strategic Learning Technologies, used with permission, <<http://www.rubrics.com>> 888/881-7979.]

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

See **Fieldwork Checklist** above for assessment tool

Alternate Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

RESOURCES

Chapter 5 of this workbook outlines fieldwork and interview procedure. See also *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research, the community research methods demonstrated here are powerful tools for teaching and learning of language arts, social studies, music, art, mathematics, science, and home economics. The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students, including a foodways interview project (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000) The video must be ordered, but Student and Teacher's Guides are on-line:

<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

Umphrey, Michael, *The Essay of Place* (1996) a seven-step on-line guide for teachers and students to writing about place with examples of student writing; includes a section on folklore and interviewing (<http://www.edheritage.org>)

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of the interview may need to be modified according to the students' capabilities. Spend time developing question skills, practice, and have students write the answers to particular questions only. Chapters 6 and 7 have lessons incorporating interviewing with elementary students. The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (no longer on-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: Encourage students to use "probes" or follow-up questions during the practice interview. The teacher may need to provide some sample questions as a model.

High School Level: Upper grade students should be able to do more extensive interviews. Inexperienced interviewers sometimes end up with very short interview tapes; the key is finding a subject who is a talker, and in effectively using probes and follow-up questions to pull out details and the stories.

Their Places Unit

Lesson # 3: A Verbal Collage

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English, Social Studies, and Character Education

Time required: approximately 180 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to prepare for and process the completed interview.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 4: Uses research process: selecting topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, organizing, summarizing, and presenting.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards: Anthropology

Standard 12: Assesses the contributions of oral history and other primary sources in ethnological investigations.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Core Social Studies Standards

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources.

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 7: Compares, analyzes and evaluates artifacts in relation to subject content.

Standard 12: Takes notes and develops outlines.

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Before students go into the field for their interview, they need to be aware of the next step. The interview and the interview experience itself will need to be written down in some way. Students could listen to their field tapes, create a subject index, and choose a portion to transcribe. A subject index can be as simple as a list of words listed in order that will help cue a listener; however, a full transcription of selected descriptions and stories in the words of the narrator will make for much richer writing and a better learning experience for students. It is best to transcribe as soon after fieldwork as possible, since the interviewer will remember the conversation more clearly. Students may want to type the transcriptions using computer and word processing software. This would make the editing process much simpler as they play and replay the recordings. Be realistic about how much students can actually transcribe. A mere five minutes of conversation may take up pages when transcribed. For this project, students might transcribe only sections about the most important place for the person they interview (assuming the interview deals with more than one place). Or perhaps they might select the place which elicits the most vivid or interesting stories. See [Transcribing a Tape](#) (back of Chapter 5).

So why transcribe at all? It is a good way to teach listening, proofing, editing and keyboarding skills. Students can see themes that emerge, analyze the text more carefully, and study the difference between oral and literary narratives. Results can be preserved in a local archive or in students' portfolios; used as scripts for radio programs or readers' theater, for example; given to interviewees as gifts; or added to exhibits. A transcription can also indicate where follow-up fieldwork is needed, either to clarify a point or deepen the project. When students return to interviewees with their transcriptions, they can verify the interview and strengthen their relationships with interviewees.

[Adapted with permission from Unit II, Louisiana Voices, An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org>]

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

If recording devices are used (and they are strongly recommended), introduce the concept of transcription. Students will be asked to process the interview in two ways: 1) by the **Verbal Collage Journal worksheet questions 1-3**, and 2) by listening to their interview tape, summarizing the contents on a **Tape Log** (see sample form at the back of Chapter 5), and transcribing particularly important passages using the **Verbal Collage Journal worksheet questions 4-6**. Be clear what level of detail is required for each step. Not all students may be able to do their interview on the same day. As soon as possible after the interview, or as a homework assignment, students should write down notes in about their interview. Hand out the [Verbal Collage Journal worksheet](#) (see below) as an interview processing and prewriting assignment, in preparation for writing a narrative of community places that matter in the Our Places Unit. Ideally, questions 1-3 should be answered as soon as possible after the interview, either as a homework assignment or during the next class period following the interview. Questions 4-6 can be completed in class following the interview or after transcription is completed.

Activity 2:

Students will conduct their interview.

Activity 3:

In class or as a homework assignment, students will transcribe their interview tape, fill out a [Tape Log](#) with a summary of tape contents, and complete the **Verbal Collage Journal worksheet**. Be

sure to specify how much of the tape should be transcribed. The **Verbal Collage Journal worksheet** will give students an idea of expectations.



Adam Hathaway reviews instructions for an assignment. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

Activity 3:

As described in the Our Places Unit, students may assemble scrapbooks for their interviewee. As an alternative format, have students excerpt key words, phrases, and quotes from their **Verbal Collage Journal worksheet** and create a verbal collage with interesting typefaces, colors, borders, and placement. Photos may or may not be required here; since interviewing requires a great deal of active listening, it may be best not to require students to include photos for this assignment. Also, interviewees may be reluctant to loan photographs to students.

During the class period, students will work on their transcriptions and verbal collage worksheets, as well as assemble the scrapbooks or verbal collages. The classroom environment is somewhat unstructured with each student working on his or her scrapbook or collage. Although many students will have worked on their projects at home, the classroom environment promotes sharing and competition. This setting truly establishes a “community of learners” without the teacher having to dictate the roles or duties of the learners. Students “naturally” show and tell as they work.

WORKSHEETS

[Tape Log](#) (please see end of Chapter 5)

[Transcribing a Tape](#) (please see end of Chapter 5)

[Verbal Collage Journal Worksheet](#) (see below)

Verbal Collage Journal Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Person Interviewed _____

Pull out important details, impressions, and information from your interview into an interview journal. These details will be used later in writing a narrative of Places That Matter in your community. Questions 1, 2, and 3 should be answered as soon as possible after your interview so you don't forget important details. You will need to use additional sheets of paper.

1. Why I picked this person/their relationship to me

2. The place where the interview took place: sensory details, important objects

3. Jot list of places described in the interview/my reaction to these places

4. A transcription of comments from the interview that gives vivid details and descriptions of what the place looks like (sensory details).

5. A transcription of parts of your interview discussing an important place and why the place is important (event, people, traditions, memories). These are your stories of places that matter.

6. A quote from the interview about the most important place or places in the life of the person you interviewed. How has this place shaped his or her life?

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Standard 2:** LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.
- Standard 3:** LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 4:** Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 6:** SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.
- Standard 7:** GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

See [Our Places unit](#) of this chapter for scrapbook assessment tools, if similar scrapbooks are used in this unit.

Rural School and Community Trust and What Kids Can Do, *Tell Us How It Was, Stories of Rural Elders Preserved by Rural Youth* (Rural School and Community Trust, 2002), a terrific teacher resource for using oral history interviews in the classroom, with transcripts of student interviews from around the country, student writing, rubrics, how-to guides. Available from the Rural Trust, attn. Publications Manager, 1825 K Street, NW, Suite 703, Washington DC, 20006. 202-955-7177, <http://www.ruraledu.org>

For a sample transcription, see Unit II of Louisiana Voices (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>), [Transcribing a Tape](#) at the back of Chapter 5, or Discovering Our Delta Student Guide (<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>).

The Journal for Multimedia History, Vol. 3, 2000 includes useful examples in the article "Miner's Work, Miner's Photographer: The Life and Work of George Harvan," a number of recorded interviews are both transcribed and available in audio form. This is a great way for students to listen to a conducted interview and to track the differences between spoken and transcribed words. <http://www.albany.edu/jmmh/>

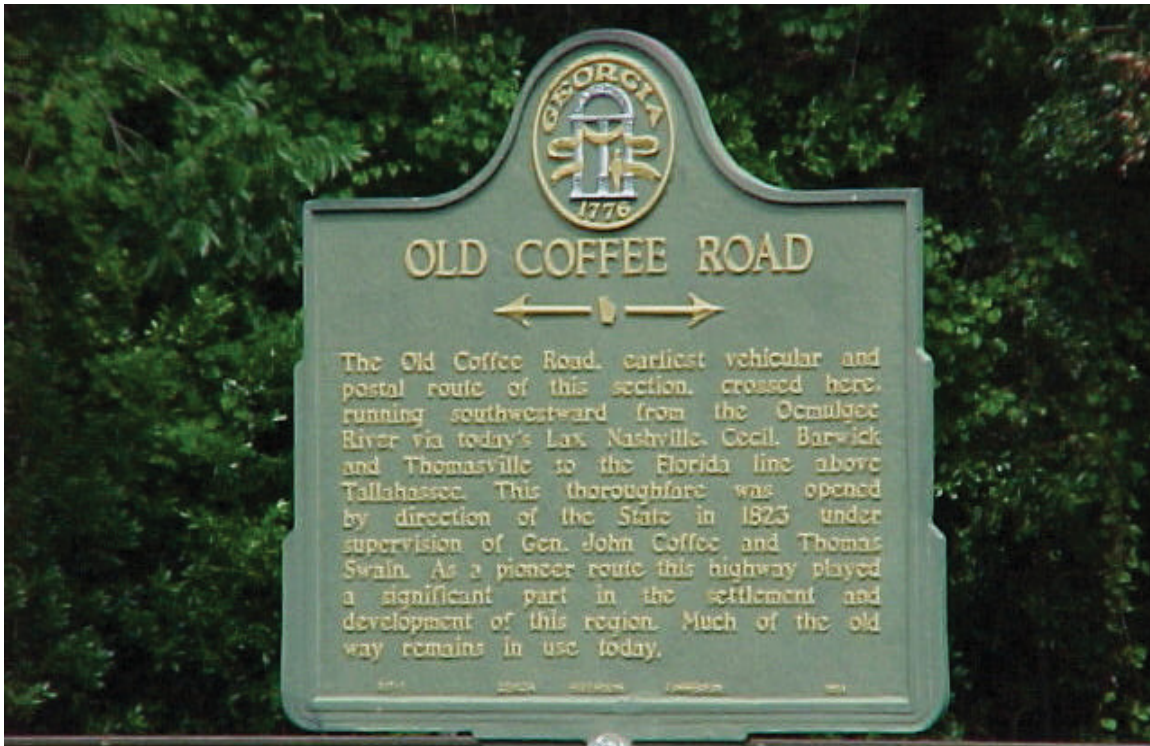
NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: Elementary students will skip the transcriptions and perhaps focus on a simple verbal collage for their interview, or do another scrapbook, as in *Our Places*. Teacher needs to provide materials and provide much hands-on assistance. Having an aide and/or several parents or grandparents in the classroom will be good. Don't forget thank you letters to the person interviewed!

Middle School Level: Although most students are independent workers by this level, some will want and need assistance. Allowing students to move about freely in the classroom will promote cooperative learning. The teacher must be alert for any uncooperative situations that may develop. Don't forget thank you letters to the person interviewed!

High School Level: Don't forget thank you letters to the person interviewed!

Our Places Unit: Places that Matter



Historical marker in Cook County located on highway US 41 marks an officially designated “place that matters.” What are the places that matter to your students and those they interview? Photo by Diane Howard, 2002.

Our Places Lesson # 1: A Narrative of Places that Matter

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: The time for this lesson is approximately 180 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to use the writing process in creating a narrative of a place that matters in the community.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 4: Uses research process: selecting topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, organizing, summarizing, and presenting.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit combines information gathered by students in the previous units to create a narrative of a place that matters to them in the community. In order for this lesson to be meaningful to the

students, the teacher should allow the students to select their own places (and people and events) to write about. This lesson is not about what the teacher considers an important place in the community but about teaching the student how to write a descriptive, chronologically effective narrative, rich in dialogue that develops the character in the narrative.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students will use scrapbook pre-writing materials from the [Our Places unit](#), and the [Verbal Collage Journal worksheet](#) from Their Places to compose a narrative of a place that matters in the community. To begin this activity, students should select one of the places familiar to them and associated with the person interviewed. This place may not be a well-known or famous spot.

Activity 2:

Students should complete a web map with details and description about this place, including information related to the five senses.

Activity 3:

Students should remember a time or event when the person interviewed was at this place and freewrite about the time and place, giving as many details as they can remember.

Activity 4:

With the web maps and freewritings completed, the students should write first drafts about the event and include the person and some dialogue. The transcriptions from the previous lesson could assist in developing dialogue.

Activity 5:

Once the first drafts have been typed, the students should begin the revision stage of the writing process, using the [Revision--Shape](#) worksheet provided below.

Activity 6:

The following class period the students should engage in a peer editing lesson, using the [Peer Editing worksheet](#) provided below.

Activity 7:

When the final version is ready to be published, the students will submit their narratives and the photos.

WORKSHEETS

[Revision—Shape](#) (see below)

[Peer Editing for High School](#) (see below)

Revision--Shape

[worksheet]

Directions:

Follow these four items to revise your first draft by writing on the printed copy of the draft. Make the changes that improve the structure and the details of the narrative. Label the marked copy of this draft "Revision—Shape."

Make changes on the electronic version and save the file. Print a copy and bring to the next class.

1. Look at each body paragraph for

- Topic sentence--underline once
- Examples--put brackets around
- Details--brackets around
- Concrete, specific nouns--circle
- Action verbs--underline twice

2. Look at essay for realistic touches

- Dialogue
- Sounds
- Smells
- Colors
- Specific objects such as items of clothing, vehicles, animals

3. Look at essay for setting

- Description of a place is incorporated in the piece
- The person moves throughout and interacts with the setting allowing the reader to see what's happening.

4. Look at essay for completeness

- Person sounds like a real person and says what a real person would say. Be certain to include some lines of dialogue so the reader can "hear" the person speak.
- Person acts like a real person and does things a real person would do.
- The reader can see the person in the mind's eye having read your essay.
- The reader "knows" the person and would recognize the person if he/she walked into the room.

[worksheet]

Peer Editing for High School

Directions:

1. Swap final drafts with a classmate.
2. Read your classmate's paper very carefully, and pencil in any corrections you think appropriate. You should look for all errors in mechanics or typing (capitalization, underlining, and abbreviations).
3. Check for spelling.
4. Check punctuation: commas, semicolons, colons, end marks, and quotations marks.
5. Check sentence structure: no fragments, run-ons, or comma splices.
6. Check for subject-verb agreement.
7. Check for pronoun reference.
8. Sign your name at the top of the first page as "EDITOR" of this draft.
9. When you have finished reading and marking your classmate's piece, select three corrections you have made and write a rule for each on the back of the last page of the piece. Do not use your grammar handbook for writing these rules. Use your own words.
10. Return your classmate's draft and answer any questions he/she has about your editing.

If you decide not to follow the corrections made by the student-editor for any one of the three changes (with the rules written at the bottom), write a rule for not making the change under the three rules the student/editor wrote.

Remember: You are responsible for the piece you submit. You do not have to follow the student-editor's advice.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Teacher may develop a rubric based on the Revision--Shape worksheet.

RESOURCES

Umphey, Michael, *The Essay of Place* (1996), website of the Montana Heritage Project has useful ideas for educators, sample projects, and the model Writing the Essay of Place.

<http://www.edheritage.org>

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary Level: students at this level may substitute some of the other place-based writing in the workbook. See Chapters 6 and 7.

Middle School Level: The stories may be several paragraphs based on the level of the class.

High School Level: If students need more information, they may need to go back to their interviewee and ask more questions.

Our Places Unit

Lesson # 2: Cultural Markers of Places that Matter

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English, Social Studies, and Character Education

Time required: The time for this lesson is approximately 180 minutes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to create texts for cultural markers of places that matter in the community.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 32: Reads, discusses, and analyzes English literature representing various periods.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 35: Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Standard 36: Presents arguments in orderly and convincing ways.

Standard 38: Learns about the development of the English language, including the influence of other languages, ancient and modern.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards: Anthropology

Standard 12: Assesses the contributions of oral history and other primary sources in ethnological investigations.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 7: Compares, analyzes and evaluates artifacts in relation to subject content.

Standard 12: Takes notes and develops outlines.

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 31: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Character Education Skills

A number of the 27 character traits may be addressed in this lesson.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit can be taught in a similar vein to the My Places scrapbook unit, with students selecting one page from each of the scrapbooks previously compiled for a master class scrapbook of Places that Matter (Our Places). Use or adapt “[Expectations for Scrapbook](#)” and “[Grading My Scrapbook](#)” handouts from the My Places unit of this chapter, with longer stories of place replacing the summaries. Ask each student to design a creative cover for “Our Scrapbook.” Consider finding a venue to present the students’ Our Places scrapbooks to the community, perhaps at a county fair or other community event.

An alternative approach is to write creative texts for “cultural markers” of places that matter to the community. The lesson below outlines activities for this approach. The idea for “places that matter” comes from Place Matters, a joint project of City Lore (New York City) and the Municipal Art Society of New York. Place Matters was launched in 1998 to foster the conservation of New York City’s historically and culturally significant places. Every community has places that hold memories and anchor traditions that both shape personal experience and that help tell the history of the community as a whole. The following excerpt from the Place Matters website Mission page sets the stage for this unit:

“Place matters because it is the physical dimension of our lives, and home for our traditions and memories. All of us have become attached to buildings and locales that create beauty, mark events of historical and cultural significance, and serve as a locus for community gatherings and neighborhood identity....Place matters because all of our lives are enhanced by living in a community where the natural and built environment articulates rich layers of history, memory, and story. Place Matters identifies places that evoke these associations to understand why these places are meaningful.” (From Mission link, <http://www.placematters.net>)

Use these questions to guide your students to think about the community.

- Every community has places of special value to its history or traditions. What is your community’s most special place? Don’t forget to describe its location.
- What makes this place important? What historical event, people, traditions, or memories?
- When you visit this place, what physical features help you or your community to remember its history or preserve its traditions?
- Do you know of any threats to, or plans for, this place—such as real estate development plans, government agency plans, and community revitalization plans? What would be lost if this place were destroyed or changed?

(adapted from Census of Places that Matter, <http://www.placematters.net>)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Use the questions from Background above and information gathered in previous units to compile a master list of places that matter *to the community*. What are “our places”? What is a broader vision than “my places”? New ideas may come up as students discuss the questions.

Activity 2:

Research and discuss existing examples of cultural markers in the community. For example, the Community Profiles website listed under [Resources](#) below includes a “points of interest” section for each county in the state. Georgia’s official historic markers program is also on-line. Students may research other local markers in the community. Are these the “definitive” places that matter to the community? By whose definition? Again, consider the questions in the Background above. Guide the students to think more broadly about community rather than personal places. The Place Matters approach views folklife as central to significant places in the community: certain places matter because of the traditions, people, places, and events associated with them, not because they feature elegant architecture or are associated with a famous person.

Activity 3:

Students use the writing process to create a text for a community marker of a place that matters. What would they pick? The four questions used in the Background above can be used as guides. Make sure students describe the reason they chose this particular place: an association with a tradition, an event, a person, a memory, etc. Use peer editing to improve rough drafts for a final version of the marker. Students may design some creative way to present their marker.

Activity 4:

Publish the markers on a website, or in an exhibit (perhaps with photos of the place). Local historic preservationists or the chamber of commerce may wish to include the student work on an official website. Consider working with local officials to create actual markers for the community. Is there a threatened place in the area? Get involved with your students!

WORKSHEETS

[Spirit of Place worksheet](#) (Our Places Lesson #1) may be useful for student brainstorming
[Peer Editing for High School](#) (see this unit)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT

Note: for scrapbook rubrics, see Our Places Unit of this chapter

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing: (4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Place Matters, a website that encourages the cultural conservation of places that matter in the community. Links to projects, a sample census form of places that matter, ideas for marking places that matter to students and the community. <http://www.placematters.net>

Georgia Historical Society has links to Georgia's official historical marker program so you can see the kinds of markers that already exist in your community; <http://www.georgiahistory.com/Markers.htm>. For older students, there is a marker prospectus and marker guidelines, also links to all known historical markers in the state of Georgia.

Exploring Your Community poster text, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/poster/> (ideas for teachers on community-based projects for the classroom from the American Folklife Center and the Rural Schools and Community Trust)

Project History, Teaching with Georgia's Historic Places, A Guide for K-12 Teachers (Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation and Georgia State University, 1995), a guide to help teachers make better use of local historic and cultural resources, with emphasis on historic preservation. Contact 404-656-2840.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs County Snapshots, general overviews of the key features of each Georgia County, <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/snapshots>. These list points of interest in each community, but are these all the places that matter?

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, with links the Main Street Program and the Trust's Heritage Education Program, <http://www.georgiatruster.org/about.html>

NOTES TO TEACHER

Elementary and Middle School Levels: a similar activity is suggested in Chapter 7. Elementary students may repeat the scrapbook idea for Our Places, creating a composite class scrapbook.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Plays about Place

Jeremy Williams

Cook High School



A family cemetery is one of the many places about which students chose to write in this drama class. Photo by Diane Howard, 2001.

The following three units are designed for beginning drama classes but can be implemented in English sections or advanced drama with slight modifications. The purposes of this chapter are to cover a wide variety of necessary theatre skills using one central idea and to connect students with the places and traditional events that are familiar to them. Students write well when they write about what they know, and that is the basis of Folkwriting.

This chapter begins with reading a play in which place or event is a central metaphor and culminates in the writing and performance of the students' original plays. Students explore playwriting through the writing process. They will do pre-writing activities such as reading other works, researching, and brainstorming, and will work together to write, revise, and edit original plays based on places and traditions in their hometown. The publishing phase of the process will come as a performance of these works. The students will work together to produce the shows, thereby learning about play production and technical theatre.

My Places Unit: Play Reading and Monologue



A local event such as Valdosta's celebration of the Feast Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe (the patron saint of Mexico) combines traditions of ritual, music, procession, food, and dance, providing a rich subject for student writing. Photo by Laurie Sommers, 1997.

My Places Unit Lesson #1: The Plays

Grade Level: 9—12

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Drama

Time required: The time required for these lessons is five to eight 90-minute classes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce the idea of writing about place, and of making an important location or event the central metaphor of a work for theatre.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 16: Recognizes speaker's purpose and identifies verbal and nonverbal components of communication (body language, facial expression, gestures).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit uses a sense of place or a traditional event as the central metaphor in a work of student writing and produced theatre (suggested plays listed under [Resources](#) below). Some communities already have plays written about some local event or individual which could be an interesting resource for students. Often the central event is historic: check with the local historical society, museum, or chamber of commerce to see if such a play exists in your community. One particularly noteworthy play based on local traditions and oral histories is Swamp Gravy, the state folk play of Georgia held in Cotton Hall—a refurbished cotton warehouse in Colquitt, Georgia. For this unit, a field trip to Swamp Gravy (with performances in the spring and fall of each year) would be a good field trip. Topics change: recent productions have focused on river and fishing traditions, the town square, and gospel music (<http://www.swampgravy.com>).

As preparation for this unit, students will need to be introduced to folklife concepts so they can better identify traditional stories and events in the community as a basis for their own play writing. Like

other aspects of community life, folklife shapes and is shaped by the place (environment or context) in which it occurs. Chapter 4 provides an overview of folklife with activities and worksheets. [What is Folklife](#) in the Appendix categorizes types or genres of folklife with characteristic examples from South Georgia (Things People Do (Customs); Things People Sing, Say, or Write; Things People Make; Things People Believe). Students need to be guided to think with a cultural perspective about their community. Folklife, geography, ecology, history, economics, literature, and verbal arts are all entwined in defining what makes a place special. "Sense of place" may be examined through various lenses, or cultural perspectives. The list of cultural perspectives below (adapted from *Louisiana Voice's Educator's Guide*, Unit IV) is tailored to this unit: Short definitions of many of these terms are found in the [Glossary](#) listed in the Appendix.

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 place 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 effect 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? Send your students on an audio expedition, with tape recorders or paper and pencil, collecting and/or describing different sounds of the community.)

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 these used within events or how do they contribute to a distinctive sense of place? How are they 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, pageants, parades, or processions? 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 Activities (What events always occur at particular seasons of the year? Where do these activities occur? See the [Seasonal Round activity](#) at the back of Chapter 4 for more on this topic.)

Oral narrative genres (Are there jokes, stories, tall tales, legends, riddles, proverbs, folktales, 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? See the [All About Me](#) activity at the back of Chapter 4 to get students thinking about the different groups they and others in the community belong to, such as groups based on religion, age, occupation, ethnicity, etc.)

Occupations and occupational folklife (work-related skills: the knowledge, customs, traditions, stories, jokes, music, and lore of different jobs or occupations. Note: Chapter 6, Unit 2, Lesson 2 deals with this topic in more detail)

Settlement history and patterns (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?)

Note: If your featured play is Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, one option is to use this work to encourage students to research the history of their own town with the goal of writing an original play about local history and residents. Students will become more familiar with Wilder’s play as they study it in order to emulate the playwright’s style and follow a similar development pattern. They will gain a sense of ownership over the material by producing their own play based on their local community, and will gain new insights into that community through research. This historical approach complements the place and event-oriented approach in this unit, perhaps leading to two drama units. Chapter 7 of *Folkwriting* includes a number of useful resources and approaches for studying the local community which could easily be adapted to *Our Town*. The *Our Town* unit is an excellent format for cross-disciplinary collaboration with Social Studies. A brief outline of procedures for an “Our” *Our Town* unit is included under [Notes to Teachers](#) below.

[Adapted with permission from Unit IV, *Louisiana Voices, An Educator’s Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions*, by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens, (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts): <http://www.louisianavoices.org>]

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students will read a work of theatre with the knowledge that they will be asked to write an original play. The plays should contain subject matter relevant to place or traditional event. (See [Resources](#) below for some suggested plays). Review (or introduce) the elements of drama (character, theme, conflict, setting, as well as style and staging). Students will divide into groups and read a play aloud to one another, noticing elements of the play that they may or may not want to include in their own piece. Each group should have a different play, and (ideally) each person in the group should have a character, though each group should not consist of more than six students.

Activity 2:

The class groups will engage in discussion about the play and will complete the [“Play Assessment Questionnaire”](#) (see below). In order to complete the assessment, students will need to understand what the questionnaire means by “customs and traditions.” See Chapter 4 for discussion of folklife and choose activities that seem appropriate to the particular play(s) under discussion. One possibility is to play the [Folklife Bingo Game](#) to help students identify examples of folklife in their

own life and in the community (see worksheet at back of Chapter 4). For blank bingo worksheets check Unit 1 at <http://www.louisianavoices.org/> . If the central focus of the play under study is events, consider using the **Seasonal Round** activity, found at the back of Chapter 4, which helps students identify traditional events throughout the calendar year. Note: teachers may wish to add relevant portions of the Cultural Perspectives list from Background above to the **Play Assessment Questionnaire**.

Activity 3:

Each group will choose a short (3 – 5 minute) scene to present before the class. The scene should reflect the mood of the piece and include as many characters as possible.

WORKSHEETS

Play Assessment Questionnaire (see below)

Folklife Bingo and other activities introducing folklife (see Chapter 4)

Seasonal Round (see Chapter 4)

All About Me (see Chapter 4)

[Worksheet]

Play Assessment Questionnaire

1. Whose story is this? Why do you think so?
2. What is the central theme or underlying message of the play?
3. What is the place or event that is central to the plot of this play?
4. What do the characters say about the central place or event? Why is that place or event important to their lives? Is it a positive place or a negative one? Some of each? Why?
5. What other places or local events are mentioned in the play? Why do you think they are mentioned? What significance, if any, do they have for the plot and/or characters?
6. List any other traditions or customs you noticed in the play. Why are these listed? What do they tell you about the setting?

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

RESOURCES

Sample texts of plays with local customs, places, or events as central plot devices include:

Laddy Sartin's *Catfish Moon* (the pier),

Brad Bailey's *The Real Queen of Hearts Ain't Even Pretty* (Queen of Hearts pageant),

Robert Harling's *Steel Magnolias* (beauty shop, Christmas festival),

William Inge's *Picnic* (the picnic),

Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (the church, the cemetery) (see **Notes to Teachers** below)

Louisiana Educator's Guide, Unit IV, deals with a sense of place and includes the cultural perspectives list included in Background above (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Dramatist's Play Service and Samuel French Inc. are two sources for reviewing and obtaining plays of all kinds (<http://www.dramatists.com>, <http://www.samuel french.com>).

Swamp Gravy, the official folk play of Georgia, is performed twice a year at historic Cotton Hall in Colquitt. The play is based on oral histories of local people, places, and events. The Swamp Gravy Institute teaches community building through using local culture. For schedules and information see <http://www.swampgravy.com>.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Elementary classes can substitute a video for play reading. The entire class would need to view the same film. For other drama ideas for K-6 see *Improvisation with Favorite Tales: Integrating Drama into the Reading/Writing Classroom* by Ruth Beall Heinig and *Drama of Color: Improvisation with Multiethnic Folklore* by Johnny Saldana. Both books are available at CARTS Culture Catalog, 1-800-333-5982 or <http://www.carts.org>

Middle School Level: Middle school students would need shorter plays with simpler themes. For a lesson introducing students to customary folklore in their community as a basis for monologue and play writing, see [Chapter 7, My Places Lesson #2](#). Although geared for upper elementary, this lesson includes ideas for adapting to middle grades and useful background information for teachers.

High School Level: The play assessment questionnaire can be answered by the whole group or, if it is deemed beneficial, each member can answer the questions individually. For a lesson introducing students to customary folklore in their community as a basis for monologue and play writing, see Chapter 7, My Places Lesson #2. Although geared for upper elementary, this lesson includes ideas for adapting to upper grades and useful background information for teachers.

Suggested Procedure / Activities for a unit on “Our” *Our Town*:

1. Students will read and discuss in class Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, keeping in mind their upcoming project so that they can notice elements of the play that they may or may not want to include in their own piece. The class should discuss character, theme, setting, and other elements of the play as well as style and staging. This portion of the unit should take one to two weeks.
2. Students begin working on the research portion of the project, which can involve print and electronic resources as well as oral interviews. Michael Umphrey's Essay of Place model (<http://www.edheritage.org>) provides a good model and oral history links here. A number of Resources are also listed in Chapter 7, which focuses on the local community. Divide the class into three groups: one group will research people, one buildings, and one events. The time needed here will depend on the depth of research required. The interview procedures described in [Their Places Lesson #2](#) of this chapter can be used to do community oral history interviews on pertinent topics. Each group should prepare a presentation of their findings in order to bring the other groups up to speed with their research.
3. Students will share findings from their research with the class during one class period. Students will then decide which pieces of information they would like to include in their play. Students should choose titles and themes for the three acts just as Wilder does for his play and decide whether to keep such conventions as the stage manager and the absence of properties.
4. Once decisions are made, break the students into the three groups again, assigning members from each of the research groups into each of the new writing groups. Assign one act of the play to each group and have them write the dialogue and stage directions for that act, basing their sections loosely on Wilder's acts, respectively. This portion should take one to two weeks, depending on the class.
5. When the play is complete, assign roles to the students and have them read their own work, revising and editing if necessary. Once the product is satisfactory, plan a staging or staged reading of the show, depending on time and the desire/ability of the class. Invite other classes to see the piece. If there are more characters than students, double cast the roles; if there are more students than characters, assign jobs such as costuming, stage management, etc. to students who do not wish to be on stage.

My Places Unit Lesson #2: My Place

Grade Level: 9—12

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Drama

Time required: The time required for these lessons is one to two 90-minute classes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for the student to connect with a particular local place or event that means something to him or her in preparation for monologue and play writing.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 1: READ and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 39: Understands that English usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Standard 42: Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources.

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 12: Makes notes and develops outlines

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

In the introduction to his *Essay of Place* instructional unit for the Montana Heritage Project (<http://www.edheritage.org>), Michael Umphrey writes that some “places are part of the landscapes in our minds. When we are homesick, we remember them. Sometimes we feel an urge to go to them. When we think of important events, times full of life, we see in our minds the places where they occurred: which are inseparable from what happened. Other places are storied with events of national significance, so the entire country remembers important events by remembering the place where they occurred. Gettysburg, Wounded Knee. Pearl Harbor. Thousands of people visit such places so that they can forge a personal connection with events that matter. At such places, monuments and signs and plaques usually re-tell the story. And yet other places have more personal meaning. The place where a brother died, or the place where a friend shared a secret, or the place where you thought through a hard problem and decided to change your life. In these places, no memorials make the story public, but the story is real and important, nonetheless” (Umphrey 1996).

What local places or events are significant to your students? What do they know and care about? Why? What is the story here? Depending on the play the students are reading, the rest of the unit should focus on either place or event (whichever is most germane to the literature under study).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Note: this activity is written with a focus on place, but as discussed above, the focus could also be an event. As a pre-writing activity, students will make a “Sensory Place Card.” They begin by thinking of a place that is special or important to them. For the purpose of this exercise, each student should think of a local place that he or she feels is significant to his or her life or where something of particular interest to the student happens (a local business, a fish camp, the family home place, a local BBQ stand, the fairgrounds, a football field or basketball court, a city park, a secluded area near a pond, etc.). Students should write the name of that place in the center of an index card. In one corner, they would write a smell he or she associates with that place; in another, a taste, and still another, a sound; and in the last, a sight.

Activity 2:

Using the writing process, students should write an “I Am From” poem using the places they wrote on their cards. Using the folklife introduction from Lesson 1, each poem should include reference to some aspect of local tradition: a food, belief, craft, custom, narrative, music, dance, belief, occupational folklife, etc. For a preparatory listening activity, play selections of I Am From poems from Rural Voices Radio CDs (see [Resources](#) below). Use peer editing to share and revise student writing.

Activity 3:

Students draft a story associated with the place. It can be something that happened to them personally, or it can be a story they have heard about the place from someone else.

WORKSHEETS

None.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 2: LISTEN, READ, and respond critically and creatively to literature as a reflection of life experience.

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Local Learning: Poetry and Sense of Place shares ideas for writing individual and group poetry about places using I Am From Poems. See the CARTS website: (http://www.carts.org/staff_poem.html)

Michael Umphrey's *Essay of Place* (1996) instructional unit for the Montana Heritage Project includes a seven-step process for writing about place (<http://www.edheritage.org>) and would be an excellent model for preparing to write a play about place as well.

Rural Voices Radio Volumes I and II include readings of I Am From poems by students from National Writing Project Rural Sites around the country; for complimentary CD set contact the National Writing Project by email at nwp@writingproject.org or National Writing Project, University of California, 2105 Bancroft 1042, Berkeley, CA 94720-1042, 510-642-4545, <http://www.writingproject.org>

The website link to Resources---Rural Voices Radio includes several examples of student writing.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Young children can substitute a drawing of the place or brainstorm as a class to come up with smells, tastes, etc. Use this exercise when teaching the senses. Chapter 6 My Places includes an “I Am From” poem activity for second grade.

Middle School Level: This exercise should work without modifications. (See High School notes below). Chapters 7 and 9 include special “favorite place” lessons for suitable for middle grades as well. Chapter 7 is devoted to the study of neighborhood and the local community culture.

High School Level: It is important to have the students share their cards, poems, and stories with the class. These activities are a prelude to monologue writing, so sharing helps to loosen up the students, and often sparks ideas for expansion.

My Places Unit

Lesson #3: My Monologue (Writing)

Grade Level: 9—12

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson #3 is one to two 90-minute classes.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to put their ideas into a presentable form by writing original monologues from their own points of view.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 15: Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 19: Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, and applications) writing.

Standard 20: Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 33: Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences of a given period or culture.

Standard 34: Conceives and develops ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group, chooses and organizes related ideas, presents them clearly, and evaluates similar presentations by others.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

Standard 41: Participates in a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, with an emphasis on publishing.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources.

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 12: Makes notes and develops outlines

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Students should be familiar with monologues before this unit is implemented. If they haven't been introduced to them yet, take one to three 90-minute sessions to introduce the monologue and its purpose and role in a work of theatre.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

According to Richard Toscan in his on-line Playwriting Seminar, a monologue is a mini-play, a minimum of 10 lines, which tells a story of an event that happened or an emotional development

(see [Resources](#) below). Students will write a 60- to 90-second monologue using their cards, poems, and stories. (One page of manuscript usually takes a little over a minute to perform on stage.)

Activity 2:

Students will form peer groups of three or four to listen to, evaluate, and edit one another's work.

Activity 3:

Students will work on their own and in peer groups to produce their final drafts.

WORKSHEETS

[Peer Editor's Checklist](#) (located in Chapter 2)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Discussion

Willingly participates in discussion	yes	no
Listens attentively	yes	no
Responds appropriately to questions	yes	no
Identifies story elements (setting, character, plot)	yes	no

Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail

- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Sensory cards, stories, poem from previous lesson

Toscan, Richard, The Playwriting Seminars, an on-line playwriting workshop, includes a section on monologue (<http://www.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting/monologue.html>).

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Students could prepare and tell their story to the class.

Middle School Level: The length of the pieces could be shortened, and the subject matter could be restricted to the stories.

My Places Unit

Lesson #4: My Monologue (Presentation)

Grade Level: 9—12

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson 4 is five to eight 20 – 30, plus one 45 – 60-minute session for presentation.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for the student to present their original monologues.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum 9th Grade Language Arts Standards

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 40: Shows mastery of grammatical systems and patterns of usage.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

During each short session, students will work on their pieces in two to three-person peer groups. They will work on memorization, blocking, and inflection, using the others in their groups as sounding boards, or “director substitutes.”

Activity 2:

Students will present their pieces before the class for teacher evaluation.

Activity 3:

As an alternative form of presentation more in the form of reader’s theatre, publish and perform the monologues in the format of Rural Voices Radio (see [Resources](#) below), with appropriate natural sound (this refers to the background sounds which characterize a place) and music. Enlist the help of a local radio station or community cable network for assistance in sound recording. Students may wish to return to their place with a tape recorder to create a soundscape or sound collage of their place, or to collect other suitable sounds in the community. Favorite music recordings or recordings by local musicians also may be used.

WORKSHEETS

None

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Monologue Evaluation Rubric

Student: _____

Name of Piece/Playwright: _____

Requirement

Comments

<p>Time (20 pts)</p>	<p><i>Less than 30 seconds: 0 pts</i> <i>30-45 seconds: 5pts</i> <i>45-60 seconds: 10 pts</i> <i>60-90 seconds: 20 pts</i> <i>Over 90 seconds: 15 pts</i></p>
<p>Memorization (20 pts)</p> <p>Are you struggling for lines? Can we tell you are?</p>	
<p>Movement (20 pts)</p> <p>Are you moving? Are movement choices appropriate?</p>	
<p>Projection (20 pts)</p> <p>Can we hear you? How well?</p>	
<p>Interpretation (20 pts)</p> <p>gestures & facial exp. Appropriate to character?</p>	

RESOURCES

Rural Voices Radio Volumes I and II include readings of I Am From poems by students from National Writing Project Rural Sites around the country; for complimentary CD set contact the National Writing Project by email at nwp@writingproject.org or National Writing Project, University of California, 2105 Bancroft 1042, Berkeley, CA 94720-1042, 510-642-4545, <http://www.writingproject.org> The website link to Resources--Rural Voices Radio includes several examples of student writing.

Richman, Joe. *Teen Reporter Handbook: How To Make Your Own Radio Diary* (Radio Diaries Inc., 2000), from the producers of NPR's Teenage Diary Series, provides tips on interviewing and sound recording, with a CD of examples (<http://www.radiodiaries.org>). For information contact Radio Diaries, 169 Ave. A, Suite 13, New York, NY 10009.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary and Middle School Levels: Younger students may simply read their monologues.

High School Level: Have a copy of the monologue handy to check memorization.

Their Places Unit: Original Play Writing



A community festival often revolves around some aspect of local culture or economy, as in the Timberland Jubilee in Homerville, Georgia, here celebrating old-time hand skills in timber harvest. Photo by Billy Rowe, 2000.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #1: Observing Places and Events

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: The time required for Lesson #1 is two to three 90-minute sessions, and, one overnight homework assignment.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for student teams to gather information about a local place or event through observation and field notes. This activity is a prelude to a community interview about the place. They will then use this information in writing a play about "Place" and how places affect our lives

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 21: Creates hypotheses and predicts outcomes.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 25: Composes and revises on a computer.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards: Anthropology

Standard 3: Identifies the scientific method used by anthropologists in an Anthropological Investigations

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 7: Compares, analyzes and evaluates artifacts in relation to subject content.

Standard 12: Takes notes and develops outlines.

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit uses **fieldwork**, or going into a community and using observation and interviews to obtain first-hand information, as part of the background preparation for playwriting. Fieldworkers use tape recorders, cameras, notetaking, and sketches. The term **documentation** refers to the collection and presentation of the research results through writing, tapes, and photographs. Fieldwork methods engage students in valuable skill-building pedagogy that fits any curriculum and fills many requirements, including observing, questioning, listening, information processing; problem solving, communicating, reporting, recording, creating, assessing, revising, editing. By observing and

documenting cultural expressions, students can step outside their own worldviews to study how other people conduct their lives. All successful fieldwork projects include preparation and background research. In this lesson, students will use their own powers of observation to gather more information about the place or event they will use as the setting for their play. (Again, if the work of literature discussed in Unit 1 focused on place, students should pick a place. If the focus was an event, students should pick an event). Since the play will be written by a group, the observation and information gathering should be planned and implemented as a team. This activity will serve as a springboard for the interviewing activity which follows, helping students to become more familiar with their chosen place and to begin to generate questions about the place.

Since students will decide on a place or event as group, the chosen subject may not be equally familiar to each member. This is a strength, because each brings a different perspective. Some are outsiders; some are insiders in terms of knowledge and familiarity. The methods of the fields of folklore and anthropology focus on point of view, or insider and outsider perspective. (These are useful ideas for thinking about voice in a work of fiction as well.) The best field study is usually the result of a team effort that includes insiders and outsiders (sometimes called emic and etic perspectives in folklore methodology). Encourage your students to recognize the significance of perspective. In their book *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research 2nd edition*, Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater and Bonnie Stone Sunstein include excellent ideas and activities for interpreting and writing about culture. In Chapter 2 they discuss “positioning:” in which students are asked to uncover their assumptions, preconceptions, personal experiences, and feelings that influence their perspective. These are important insights for students to understand and will aid in the development of character and voice when students begin to write the plays (Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein 5; see [Resources](#) below).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students should get back into their play-reading groups (see [My Places Lesson #1](#) of this chapter). Each group should start the activity by deciding on a local place or event to use as a setting for their play. (Note: if using an event, students ideally should pick an event that they can observe, but if this is not possible, the team should visit the place where the event takes place.)

Activity 2:

After selecting a subject, student teams should brainstorm about their “position” or perspective as described in Background above. Have them answer the following questions individually and then discuss them as a team:

- What are your reasons for choosing this place?
- What do you already “know” or think you know about the site?
(preconceptions/assumptions)
- What feelings does the mention of or memory of the place bring to mind?
- How might all these things affect how you “see” or perceive the place?

Activity 3:

As a team pre-writing activity, students visit the place as a fieldwork assignment to provide additional rich material for playwriting. Students will take detailed field notes in the form of a journal about their place, as if describing it for a person who has never been there, or as if the student is experiencing the place for the first time. Consider the following ideas: different team members may be assigned different activities, but everyone should do “observing” and “questioning” as a preparation for the interview:

- Listening (a sound scavenger hunt with notebooks or tape recorders. How do sounds change through the day and night?)
- Mapping (buildings, objects, boundaries, activities)

- Observing (write down everything you see happening: who or what comes here, when, and why?)
- Looking for the details (sensory elements, design elements, building materials, ornaments and decoration, plant and animal life, language, dialect, physical characteristics and dress of people; clues to the history of the place)
- Questioning (What more would you like to know about the place? Who could you ask? How could you find out?)

Students also may select from the **Cultural Perspectives** in this chapter, Our Places, Lesson #2: select those features which seem most applicable to their place for further description and observation.

Activity 4:

As a social studies extension, students could research their place or event in standard print or electronic sources before doing their interview about the place or event. Is there a website? Are there newspaper articles or other information in the local library or the school media center? Are there photos of the event or what the place used to look like? Historic maps or other resources?

Activity 5:

Students pool information in class and begin to brainstorm and categorize ideas and information for their play: characters, setting, subject, voice, etc. Students should also come up with a people who they could interview about their place or event. Older people who have some perspective over time are good choices. Students should also consider family members and school personnel as appropriate.

WORKSHEETS

None

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The teacher should develop an appropriate rubric to assess the performance emphasized in this lesson.

RESOURCES

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*, 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002, a teacher resource in the form of a college text for writing ethnography with many good ideas encapsulated in "Boxes" with classroom tested writing and in interpretation activities dealing with culture. See also the project website (<http://www.fieldworking.com/>).

Williams, Leah, Searching for the Magic Bus: Football Saturdays with Iowa Hawkeye Fans, is an on-line fieldwork project from the FieldWorking website. There are sample field notes included. Other projects are added all the time. Check for those useful to and appropriate to your students. (<http://www.fieldworking.com/historical/index.html>)

Special Focus: Place-Based Education, CARTS Newsletter, Spring 2002, Volume 6, lots of ideas from educators around the country. (past CARTS newsletters are available under Resources at <http://www.carts.org>)

The Perception of Place and other useful place-based activities and teacher tested lessons are found in the National Geographic Xpeditions website (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/>)

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Students could take a field trip to an interesting place or event in the community as the basis for an age appropriate writing or speaking assignment. See Chapter 6 for a unit on a local seasonal event (cane syrup making).

Middle School Level: Students use the observing/questioning journal activity at a selected place or event.

High School Level: The National Geographic Xpeditions lesson "Perception of Place" focuses on the theme of differing perceptions of place and asks students to develop skits about an outing to the place (or event) and each character portrays a person who has a different perception and feeling about the place. The skits should explain the differences in perception and the reasons for the differences.



Hunting season, including quail hunts via mule-drawn hunt wagons such as this one at Thomas County's Myrtlewood Plantation, are rich subjects for student writing. Photo by Diane Kirkland, Georgia Department of Industry, Trade, & Tourism, 2000.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #2: Community Interview

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English

Time required: The time required for Lesson #2 is at least two to three 90-minute sessions, and at least one overnight homework assignment.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to gather information about a local place (or event) by interviewing an appropriate member of the community and use this information in writing a play about "Place" and how places affect our lives. The interview is designed to capture the essence of the place and the stories and traditions associated with it: interviewees will not necessarily be written into the final plays. If using actual people in the form of a docudrama or oral history, be absolutely sure to have signed consent forms and approval of the final work before publishing or performance.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Standard 7: GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 2: Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

Standard 3: Takes notes on the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions and reports accurately what others have said.

Standard 8: Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

Standard 9: Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 21: Creates hypotheses and predicts outcomes.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 25: Composes and revises on a computer.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Studies Standards: Anthropology

Standard 12: Assesses the contributions of oral history and other primary sources in ethnological investigations.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 3: Analyzes interpretations of same event from different sources

Standard 4: Acquires and processes information by using thought processes (recall, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Standard 6: Distinguishes between objective and subjective source material.

Standard 7: Compares, analyzes and evaluates artifacts in relation to subject content

Standard 12: Takes notes and develops outlines

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task

Standard 31: Relates the past to the present in the study of change and continuity in human affairs

Standard 35: Describes and analyzes the cultural and physical characteristics of place

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This lesson is the second in the background preparation for play writing. It involves a community interview with someone who can give some additional perspectives on the place or event under study. Use the sample [Letter for Caregivers](#) (back of Chapter 5) to send home with students in order to ensure the success of this unit.

To study the stories and other traditions associated with their subject, students need more information than their memories or experience provide. Interviews can provide the following types of information as raw material for a play (or other types of fiction):

- additional stories or details for dramatic development
- additional information and points of view for character development
- continuity and change in an event or place if interviewing an older person
- information about artifacts associated with the place or event which can be later developed as a prop for the play

Folklorists gather much of their information through interviewing. Students can be taught to interview also. Teachers will need to decide if this lesson is to use recording equipment and/or cameras or if simple notetaking will suffice. Chapter 5 of this workbook provides more detail on how to set up a class interview project.

One of the keys to a successful interview (and to students getting good information for writing activities) is to practice and model skills in forming and asking appropriate questions. Here is a brief overview, as suggested by Elizabeth Radin Simons in her book *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Boynnton/Cook Heinemann, 1990):

1. Students should discuss what type of information they want to gather and dictate sample questions to the teacher or to a student recorder. Each student should contribute a question or two.
2. The class should decide which of these questions to include in the final questionnaire. Lead the students to realize which questions will produce the kinds of answers they are seeking; questions that can be answered “yes” or “no” should be avoided.
3. Lead the students to include name of interviewer and interviewee, date and place of the interview, topic, and a leading question that begins the interview.
4. After the questionnaire has been completed, pairs of students should practice interviewing each other.
5. Ask two student volunteers to interview each other in front of the class, with everyone watching and taking notes, or, as suggested in this unit, do a practice interview in class with a guest speaker from the community, with staff members in the school, or with fellow students.. After the practice interview, the questions and interviewing technique should be discussed and adjusted.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students will be introduced to the concept of interviewing in order to gather stories about the place or event under study.

The *Discovering Our Delta* video is a highly recommended resource for introducing students to interviewing projects since it shows 7th through 9th graders doing community interviews in the Mississippi Delta (see [Resources](#) below). The on-line Student Guide is an excellent resource for having students think about and work with the interview process

(<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>). Role-playing with the model interview script included at the back of Chapter 5 may be useful to get students thinking about ethics and politeness when interviewing ([How Not to Conduct an Interview model script](#)).

Be sure to send home an explanatory [Letter to Caregivers](#) explaining the project before the interview process begins.

Activity 2:

With the entire class, discuss the different types of interview questions (how, when, where, why, who). Guide students to think about the play they read (what questions would they ask of characters in the play) and the questions they developed during their field observation in the previous lesson.

[The Reluctant Guest](#), another model script from the back of Chapter 5, can serve as an introduction to the interview questionnaire and asking open-ended and follow up questions. In their teams, students critique and re-write **The Reluctant Guest** with more appropriate questions, or write their own interview script geared toward their particular topic. Have students draft questions to use in practice interviews. Students may wish to draft sample questions using the [That's A Good Question](#) worksheet found at the end of Chapter 5.

Activity 3:

Follow the procedure outlined above in Background for teaching the practice interview. Students might practice in pairs by interviewing each other. Or invite a guest (perhaps someone from the school cafeteria or another member of the school staff) and do a practice interview in front of the whole class. In doing their own interviews, students will need to fill out the [Interview Report Form](#) and [Consent Form](#). The teacher may wish to fill out the **Interview Report Form** and discuss the **Consent Form** with the guest in order to review this procedure. (Note: if recording equipment is to be used, students should practice using it).

Activity 4:

In small groups or as a class, students critique the questions from the practice interview.

Activity 5:

Each student selects at least one appropriate person to interview who can provide more information on the place or event under study. Additional interviews are encouraged, but not required. Use the [Fieldwork Checklist](#) from Chapter 10 to review the steps students will be required to use in doing their interview (tape recording, notetaking, etc.). Modify the checklist to suit your assignment. The checklist also includes good tips for the interview process. Students will be given a time limit to complete the interview process.

Activity 6:

For interviews done with notetaking only, students write a two-page summary of the session, emphasizing stories and other relevant portions of interview to keep as a reference for playwriting. If interviews were recorded students listen to and log their interview using the [Tape Log](#) form from the back of Chapter 5. Students summarize and/or transcribe relevant parts of the interview (important stories, descriptions, and details) for use in play writing. See [Transcribing a Tape](#) (back of Chapter 5).

Activity 7:

Students write thank you notes to the person interviewed.

WORKSHEETS

[Fieldwork Checklist](#) (see Chapter 10)

[The Reluctant Guest](#) and [How Not to Do an Interview](#) model scripts (see back of Chapter 5)

[That's a Good Question](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

- [Consent Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)
- [Interview Report Form](#) (see back of Chapter 5)
- [Sample Letter to Caregivers](#) (see back of Chapter 5)
- [Tape Log](#) (see back of Chapter 5)
- [Transcribing a Tape](#) (see back of Chapter 5)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Standard 3:** LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 4:** Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 5:** Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.
- Standard 6:** SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.
- Standard 7:** GATHER AND USE INFORMATION from a variety of sources (including media and technology) to communicate discoveries in ways that suit the purpose and audience.

RUBRIC FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Alternate Rubric for Interviewing or Questioning

4 = Excellent

- Questions are relevant
- Asks mostly open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when required to write questions)
- Willingly participates in practicing interviewing and questioning skills

3 = Good

- Questions are relevant
- Asks some open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation (when writing)
- Somewhat willing to practice interviewing or questioning skills

2 = Fair

- Most questions are relevant
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Uses correct ending punctuation most of the time
- Reluctant to practice interviewing or questioning skills

1 = Poor

- Asks many irrelevant questions
- Asks few open-ended questions
- Inconsistent ending punctuation (when writing)
- Does not practice interviewing or questioning skills

(See **Fieldwork Checklist** above for assessment tool)

RESOURCES

Chapter 5 of this workbook outlines fieldwork and interview procedure. See also *Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide*, Unit II, Fieldwork (<http://www.louisianavoices.org>)

Discovering Our Delta, A Learning Guide for Community Research (video can be ordered, teacher and student guides are on line at this site): the community research methods demonstrated here are powerful tools for teaching and learning of language arts, social studies, music, art, mathematics, science, and home economics. The video looks at traditions of the Mississippi Delta through the eyes of five middle school students, including a foodways interview project (produced by Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2000) The video must be ordered, but Student and Teacher's Guides are on-line:

<http://www.folklife.si.edu/MississippiDelta/discoveringourdelt.htm>

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990).

Umphrey, Michael , *The Essay of Place*, a seven-step on-line guide for teachers and students to writing about place with examples of student writing; includes a section on folklore and interviewing (<http://www.edheritage.org>).

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The length of the interview may need to be modified according to the students' capabilities. Spend time developing question skills, practice, and have students write the answers to particular questions only. Chapters 6 and 7 have lessons incorporating interviewing with elementary students. The NEH website <http://www.myhistory.org> (no longer on-line) offers the following useful tips on interviewing with kids: 1) help kids develop questions that link them with the people they are interviewing, such as: What is your earliest memory of _____? What was _____ like when you were my age? 2) For in class interviews, have the interviewees bring or show photos or other objects appropriate to the lesson material that might interest children; 3) be aware of issues facing adopted children and children who do not come from two-parent homes; 4) help young interviewers be sensitive to powerful issues that can come up in an interview.

Middle School Level: Middle school students will need to write shorter summaries. Encourage students to use "probes" or follow-up questions during the practice interview. The teacher may need to provide some sample questions as a model.

High School Level: Upper grade students should be able to do more extensive interviews.

Their Places Unit

Lesson #3: Writing an Original Play

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson #3 is five to eight 60 - 90-minute sessions.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to use the writing process to create a 15 – 20 minute play based around a locally significant place or event.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 13: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources (e.g., films, recordings, theater, computer databases) as parts of the study of literature.

Standard 18: Participates in the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 25: Composes and revises on a computer.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This unit assumes that students will already have studied the elements of drama within the language arts curriculum. When it comes to play writing, however, students may need some guidance. The following tips may prove helpful, in addition to your textbook.

- The play is a story, with all the same elements as fiction: (characters, setting, conflict, complications, climax, resolution)
- Your event or place provides the setting.
- You've gathered stories: draw on your notes, summaries, and interview excerpts. You need character, plot, and theme, in other words, emotion, action, and meaning. Think about the various points of view you have discovered in your fieldwork. What matters here? What needs to be told? Whose point of view?
- Conflict fuels the play (what can you draw on from your interviews and your own experience?).
- Show, don't tell (the story must be told by stage action and dialogue).
- Keep it a team effort: don't let any one person dominate your group.

- The important ingredient: feeling!

(Background material adapted from Robert Anderson, "Drama: An Introduction," in *Elements of Literature First Course* (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1997: 270-71 and Richard Toscan, The Playwriting Seminars, <http://www.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting>)

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students should get back into their play-reading groups (see My Places of this Chapter). Each group should start the activity by writing a list of similarities and differences between the major place or event in the play they read, and the major place or event in the play they intend to write.

Activity 2:

Students should then brainstorm for artifacts. Each newly written student play must have an artifact from "now" and an artifact from "then" included in either the dialogue or the stage directions. Student interviews or field notes may provide ideas for relevant artifacts. (Students should plan to bring in or make a replica of their artifact for the Our Places unit).

Activity 3:

Student groups begin to write. The plays must read 15-20 minutes each (this translates to roughly a 15-20 page script) and contain as many characters as there are members in the group. The plays must center on a particular local place, custom, or event. Give clear directions to your students about whether or not all characters MUST BE FICTIONAL. If you choose to use real people in the play, be absolutely sure that all students have [Consent Forms](#) (see Chapter 5) from their interviewees. Allow interviewees to review the final work before any public presentation or publication.

Students may need review on the elements of drama, or some suggestions on how to structure their plays and organize their group work. Review the importance of the background preparation: ideas for characters and point of view, setting, a story for development, practice with character's personality and manner of speaking (the monologue).

Activity 4:

Peer editing: each group hands their play off to another, who will edit and suggest additions or cuts.

Activity 5:

Rewriting: groups will make corrections, cuts, or clarifications in their texts. The final drafts should be typewritten and photocopied for each member of the group.

WORKSHEETS

[Peer Editor's Checklist](#) (located in Chapter 10)

[Consent Form](#) (located in Chapter 5)

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 4: Communicate effectively through WRITING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: SPEAK and WRITE using standard grammatical structures, spelling, and other conventions of English.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Rubric for Writing (4= Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 =Poor)

4 = Excellent

- Topic well developed- clear beginning, middle, end
- Engages the reader
- Uses varied language and sentence patterns
- Reader rarely notices errors in conventions (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)

3 = Good

- Topic clear and somewhat developed- beginning and/or ending maybe clumsy
- Engages reader
- Some variety of sentences
- Few errors in conventions

2 = Fair

- Topic clear but development is incomplete
- Limited awareness of reader or writing task
- Simple word choice and sentence patterns
- Errors in convention interfere with communication

1 = Poor

- Little or no topic development, organization, or detail
- Little awareness of reader or writing task
- Uses incomplete sentences
- Errors in conventions prevent the reader from understanding the writer's message

RESOURCES

Plays read by the students (see My Places Lesson #1 of Chapter 11).

Poems, stories and monologues written by the students (see My Places of Chapter 11)

Interview summaries, transcripts, and field journals (see Lesson #1 and #2 of this unit).

Class textbooks on the elements of drama.

Anderson, Robert. "Drama: An Introduction," in *Elements of Literature First Course* (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1997), pp. T270-271.

Toscan, Richard, *The Playwriting Seminars*, an on-line playwriting workshop, includes an on-line guide to the playwriting process. (<http://www.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting>)

Umphrey, Michael, *The Essay of Place* (<http://www.edheritage.org>).

NOTES FOR TEACHER

Elementary Level: Elementary teachers may decide to skip this step. Options include focus on writing a monologue or acting out the story of the place or the event.

Middle School Level: Middle school teachers may want to reduce the time limit on the plays and/or make the number of characters more flexible.

High School Level: Be sure to mingle and offer input for all groups. Try to encourage students to keep in mind that the project should be a group exercise. Try to keep them from letting one student control or monopolize the group discussion.

Our Places Unit: Play Presentation



Parents, school administrators, and fellow classmates watch students present their monologues at the “Celebrating Cook County” event.. Photo by Diane Howard, 2002.

Our Places Unit Lesson #1: Rehearsal

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson 1 is ten to fifteen 30 - 60-minute sessions, plus home memorization work.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to work as actors in producing their original play.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Lessons one and two work best when run simultaneously, with students rotating the use of the stage and the tools or sewing equipment.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students should work in groups to create a rehearsal schedule for their play (see [Rehearsal Schedule](#) worksheet below).

Activity 2:

Students will work both in class and outside of class to block their play and memorize their lines and blocking.

WORKSHEET

[Rehearsal Schedule](#) worksheet (see below)

Rehearsal Schedule

First read-through:

Blocking dates:

Line run dates:

Off book:

Run-through:

First dress:

Final dress:

Performance:

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Each day the student will be given credit if he or she stays on task and works with the group.

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Elementary teachers may want to skip this step or have each student learn a short speech to present individually.

Middle School and High School Levels: The teacher must be very firm in keeping all groups on task. Students are notorious for thinking that have their lines memorized when, in fact, they have barely a clue.

Our Places Unit Lesson #2: Production

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson 2 is ten to fifteen 30 - 60-minute sessions, plus home memorization work.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to work as technicians in producing their original play.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Lessons #1 and #2 work best when run simultaneously, with students rotating the use of the stage and the tools or sewing equipment.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students should work in groups to create a production schedule for their play (see [Production Schedule](#) worksheet below).

Activity 2:

Students will work both in class and outside of class to design and produce or collect costumes, set pieces, and properties for their original play.

WORKSHEET

[Production Schedule](#) worksheet (see below)

Production Schedule

Costume designs due:

Scene designs due:

Properties list due:

Work days: (What? For how long?)

All costume pieces here/made by:

All set pieces here/ built by:

All properties here by:

First dress:

Final dress:

Performance:

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed on their timely completion of the production schedule above.

RESOURCES

Abel, Lisa, ed. And R. Pettengill. *Theatre: Art in Action*, (NTC/Contemporary Publish Company, 1999), a reference work on technical theatre for design and construction ideas.

For links to ideas on costuming, set design, etc. from around the country, see <http://www.siu.edu/COSTUMES/>

For a website on all aspects of costuming see <http://www.costumes.org>

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: Elementary teachers will want to use cloth, paper, and cardboard for the construction materials. Don't be afraid to ask for a quality product.

Middle School Level: The materials will have to be adjusted for this level. Encourage students to try to make the product worthwhile.

High School Level: Remember to maintain close supervision over saws, sewing machines, etc. Make sure the students design first, then start to build or gather. Have them turn in their sketches and get them back from you, approved, before they even touch a needle or a hammer.

Our Places Unit Lesson 3: Performance

Grade Level: 9th but may be used with any high school level English class

Curriculum Areas or Disciplines: Language Arts or English and Drama

Time required: The time required for Lesson 3 is one to two 90-minute sessions.

Purpose of Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is for students to perform their original play before an audience of teachers and peers.

Content Standards:

Cook County Language Arts Standards

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum High School Language Arts Core Skills:

Standard 10: Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

Standard 17: Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

Standard 23: Speaks so others can hear and understand.

Standard 24: Works as a team member to solve problems.

Standard 25: Composes and revises on a computer.

Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Social Study Skills

Standard 21: Works within a group, following set rules of procedure, to complete an assigned task

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Students perform (publishing in the writing process) their play.

Activity 2:

Students discuss and assess one another's work using the Short Play Evaluation rubric (see below).

WORKSHEET

None

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard 3: LISTEN and respond appropriately for a variety of purposes.

Standard 5: Communicate effectively through SPEAKING to a variety of audiences and for a variety of purposes.

RUBRICS FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

See below.

Short Play Evaluation Rubric

Student: _____

Name of Piece/Playwright: _____

Requirement

Comments

<p>Time (10 pts)</p>	<p><i>Less than 10 minutes: 0 pts</i> <i>10-15 minutes: 10 pts</i> <i>Over 15 minutes: 5 pts</i></p>
<p>Projection (10 pts.)</p> <p>Can we hear everyone? How well?</p>	
<p>Blocking (20 pts)</p> <p>Are movement choices appropriate? Are relationships Communicated?</p>	
<p>Memorization (20 pts)</p> <p>Are actors struggling for lines? Can we tell they are?</p>	
<p>Interpretation (20 pts)</p> <p>Are choices appropriate to character? <i>Are choices well executed?</i></p>	
<p>Technical (20 pts)</p> <p>Are technical Elements well-done and Appropriate?</p>	

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Elementary Level: The performances will consist of demonstrations of the their monologues.

Middle School and High School Levels: It is a good idea to bring other classes in to watch the students work and also encourage discussion after the performances. This may mean that more days will need to be added to the performance schedule. Note: a stopwatch will be useful to accurately assess length of play.

APPENDIX

CHAPTER REFERENCES: PRINTED AND ON-LINE

Chapter One

Printed References

None

On-line References

National Writing Project. <http://writingproject.org>

South Georgia Folklife Project. <http://www.valdosta.edu/music/SGFP>

South Georgia Writing Project. <http://www.valdosta.edu/sgwp>

Chapter Two

Printed References

Elbow, Peter. *Embracing Contraries: Explorations in Learning and Teaching*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986.

---. *Writing with Power*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981.

---. *Writing without Teachers*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973.

Flower, Linda S. *The Construction of Negotiated Meaning: A Social Cognitive Theory of Writing*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994.

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Lamott, Anne. *Bird By Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor Books, 1994.

Murray, Donald M. "Write before Writing." *CCC*, 29 (December 1978), 375-82.

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Zinsser, William K. *On Writing Well*, 4th ed. New York: Harper Collins, 1990.

On-line References

ABC's of the Writing Process. <http://www.angelfire.com/wi/writingprocess>

Louisiana INTECH, a project of the Louisiana Department of Education, based on the Georgia Framework for Integrating Technology in the Student-Centered Classroom.
<http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/> .

Chapter Three

Printed References

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore*. Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990.

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*, 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002.

On-line References

P-16 Initiative website. <http://www.usg.edu/p16/>

Chapter Four

Printed References

Kozma, LuAnne Gaykowski. *FOLKPATTERNS Leader's Guide, A Cultural Heritage Project*. Michigan State University Museum and Cooperative Extension, 1991.

Simons, Elizabeth Radin. *Student Worlds, Student Words, Teaching Writing Through Folklore*. Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1990.

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GLOSSARY OF FOLKLIFE TERMS*

(*adapted with permission from Louisiana Voices, An Educators Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>)

Acculturation--Modification of groups' and individuals' culture, behavior, beliefs, and values by borrowing from or adapting to other cultures.

Aesthetics--The sense of what people consider beautiful or culturally appropriate, varying from folk group to folk group and individual to individual.

Ballad--A traditional song that tells a story, like a musical historical legend.

Context--The overall setting, history, and situation that a cultural expression is based in.

Corrido--A Mexican ballad tradition that tells the story of current or past events or heroic figures, like musical historical legends,

Cultural Processes--Culture and knowledge passed on through folk, popular, or elite cultural modes.

Culture--The customs, values, worldview, attitudes, expressive behaviors, organizations of a folk group, their way of life, which is learned through observation and imitation, not inherited genetically.

Custom--A common practice of a folk group.

Cyberlore--Folklore transmitted by and created on the Internet.

Documentation--The collection and presentation of the research results in writing, tapes, photography, etc.

Elite Culture--The culture and knowledge handed on, learned, and taught officially through formal institutions such as schools, colleges, museums, conservatories, or governments, as opposed to folk or popular culture. See Cultural Processes.

Emerging Tradition--New tradition arising within a region or folk group.

Ethnography--Writings about a culture based on extensive fieldwork research.

Fieldwork--Methods and ways folklorists and other social scientists use to identify and record traditional culture through directly observing tradition bearers and cultural processes.

Folk Arts--Sometimes used like "folklore" or "folklife" to mean the traditional ways of doing things that are passed on informally in groups or to mean the objects and materials made by hand as well as the process of making the objects. A third meaning is informal artwork that makes its way into museums or galleries.

Folk Artist or Tradition Bearer--Individual who practices folk cultural expressions passed on within a folk group. For a longer definition, go to Who Is A Folk Artist?

Folk or Traditional Culture--Culture and knowledge passed on by word of mouth, imitation, and observation. Also known as traditional culture and used as another term for folklife. See Cultural Processes.

Folk Group--A group of people who share some identity and cultural expressions.

Folk or Traditional Music--Music that folk groups create and pass on (see Revivalists).

Folklife--Used like the word folklore, folklife refers to the traditions and the ways traditions are passed down informally among small groups of people.

Folklore--Traditions, which are not necessarily old, that are passed on over time and through space by word of mouth, observation, and imitation. Folklore is usually anonymous, has motifs or patterns that stay the same, yet also varies as it is passed on.

Folklorist--Scholar of folklore who conducts fieldwork and studies the culture of folk groups.

Folktale--A traditional tale.

Foodways--Obtaining, preparing, serving food and stories and beliefs about food.

Genre--Categories or types of traditions, such as ballads or tall tales.

Historical Legend--A story told as truth about local, regional, or other historical events.

Informant--A term that folklorists use to describe the person they are interviewing. The term interviewee is also common.

Joke--Humorous oral narrative that can be very short or very long.

Legend--A story set in the past and told as truth although the teller and audience may or may not believe a given legend.

Material Culture--A broad genre of folklore including a vast array of traditional artifacts or objects from fence types to quilts, instruments to foodways.

Motif--An element that stays the same within a tradition.

Myth--Sacred stories that often explain the origins and worldview of a culture.

Narrative--Story.

Occupational Folklife--Work-related skills; the knowledge, customs, traditions, oral narrative, music, and lore of occupational folk groups.

Oral History--Collecting interviews of ordinary people to get their stories about their participation in events, which fills gaps in written records and tells of those who are often absent from official histories.

Oral Narrative--Includes many types of spoken folk genres, from jokes to legends.

Personal Experience Narrative--An autobiographical account of memorable events that sometimes reflects the worldview of a community or folk group.

Popular Culture--Culture and knowledge passed on through mass media.

Proverb--A brief traditional oral expression that generally remains in fixed form ("A rolling stone gathers no moss," "Don't cry over spilt milk.") and is used by the teller to name a situation, teach a lesson or illustrate a point..

Revivalists--Musicians, storytellers, and other artists who perform the folk music, tales, crafts, and folk arts of other people and times, often learned from books, recordings, or workshops. Some revivalists also perform genres from their own traditions.

Tall Tale--A fictional story, presented as a true account and usually told in the first person, that begins by describing a common situation, but gradually adds more and more unusual features until it pushes up to and beyond the limits of belief.

Toast--An African American memorized oral narrative tradition often expressing protest and historic events and that rhymes and is open to improvisation, a special use of a common term usually meaning to drink in tribute.

Tradition--A cultural expression that a folk group continues to pass on or practice. Traditions may be old or newly emerging.

Trickster Tale--A tale in which the main character, such as Brer Rabbit, constantly tries to outsmart or outwit other characters.

Urban Legend--Stories told as truth of the modern world and often passed on through media such as newspapers and the Internet.

Variant--A variation within a tradition, a different version.

Worldview--Abstract cultural aspects that give value, meaning, and order to the experiences of a folk group, often embodied in folklife.

WHAT IS FOLKLIFE? EXAMPLES FROM SOUTH GEORGIA

(*adapted with permission from Louisiana Voices, An Educators Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions by Paddy Bowman, Sylvia Bienvenu, and Maida Owens (with funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, <http://www.louisianavoices.org/>. The organization of Things People Do, Say, etc. taken from Jackie Thursby's What is Folklore Handout based on William A. Wilson's approach, from the 2001 National Council of Teachers of English conference, Baltimore, MD)

Because folklore is so pervasive, folklorists have divided folk traditions into a number of categories or genres. The names for the genres may not be the same as those used in your community. The following genre list is intended to jog your memory and help you think of individuals in your community that have these skills or knowledge. This list is not exhaustive. You will likely think of more topics that you would like to document and share.

THINGS PEOPLE DO (CUSTOMS)

Religious Rituals: processions, Blessing of the Fleet, traditional wedding marches and customs, (pinning money on the bride and groom), naming ceremonies, chanted sermons, river and lake baptisms, wakes, funerals, religious pageants, Watch Night.

Traditional Occasions: Dinner on the grounds, fish fries, cane grindings, dove shoots, turkey shoots, fish fries, graveyard cleanings, religious events, funerals and wakes, memorial days, family and community reunions, barbecues, church anniversaries and homecomings, Homecoming parades, holiday celebrations such as Easter egg hunts, Christmas parades, Chinese New Year's Dragon Dance, rites of passage such as quinceañeras, sweet sixteen parties, bar mitzvahs, graduation.

Games: variations of hopscotch, handclapping songs, marbles, string games, competitions (hog catching, preach-off).

Dance and Movement: two steps, waltzes, breakdowns, square dance and calling, Gullah-Geechee ring shout, polkas, line dances.

Agricultural Customs: planting, cultivation, and harvesting lore and practices; farmstead and plantation layout, tobacco auctions.

Other Work-Related Skills: railroading, logging and sawmills, truckers, piloting (boats and crop dusters), ranching, rodeos, shrimpers, hunting/fishing guides, bee keeping .

THINGS PEOPLE SAY, SING, OR WRITE

MUSIC

Old Time Country (hillbilly): includes breakdowns, waltzes, ballads; instruments: fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bass, banjo, spoons; electrical instruments may be added or substituted.

Bluegrass: (developed by Bill Monroe and Flatt and Scruggs) same acoustic instruments as country music above; features close vocal harmony.

Blues: may be country blues or rhythm and blues; instruments include guitar, piano, harmonica, fiddle, bass, horns.

Gospel: church and family groups, individuals; a cappella or instruments such as organ, piano, percussion, guitar.

Rockabilly combines hillbilly, rock, and rhythm and blues; instruments include acoustic or electric guitars, piano, bass, drums, vocals.

Work calls: railroad work, street vendors, turpentine tally chants, cow calling

Sacred harp: singing style transmitted orally but based out of one of several printed shape note books.

Lined hymns: a song leader or deacon chants or “lines” the first line or stanza of a hymn and then the congregation sings the line together; also called “lining out.

Yodeling (hollering, cow calling): a distinctive alteration of head or chest tones used to signal across distances, call livestock, or just done for the sheer joy of it.

Corridos: Spanish language story songs or ballads.

Conjunto: Texas-Mexican music/dance form featuring button accordion or keyboard, electric bass, drum set, and rhythm guitar.

ORAL TRADITIONS

Legends: stories about local people or folk heroes, place names, or local strange phenomena, urban legends such as "The Hook."

Personal Experience Narratives: memorates, anecdotes, family history, narratives from occupations such as logging, railroading, turpentine, farming, river work, etc.

Ghost Stories: (also called scary or haunt stories).

Tall Tales: improbable or exaggerated stories; may include hunting and fishing stories.

Rhymes: Counting rhymes, jump rope rhymes.

Jokes and Riddles

Proverbs or "old sayings."

Sermons: includes those preached by ministers who have learned their art through observation and participation in traditional ceremonies.

Oral History: descriptions of traditional life, historical events and people, etc.

School Cheers

WRITING

Folk Poetry: autograph book verse, tongue twisters.

Computer folklore

Xerography (repeatedly photocopied sheets such as “Department of Redundancy Department”)

THINGS PEOPLE MAKE

Musical Instruments: fiddle, fiddlesticks, banjo, mandolin, accordion, guitar, Native American rattles and drum.

Farm Crafts: blacksmithing, wheelwright, whipmaking, cornshuck weaving, basketry, (split oak, sedge grass, pine needle, river cane, palmetto), shingle (shake) riving, making horsehair ropes, saddle and harness making, well digging, barrel making (cooper), gourd dippers and birdhouses, handle making, other traditional handmade implements, branding livestock.

Hunting, Fishing, and River Crafts: making knives, blowguns, wooden slat traps, bird traps, crab traps and nets, shrimp nets, fish nets, fish hooks, net needles, boatbuilding (dugout, bateau, flat boat, John boat, rowing skiff), quail hunting wagons, hide tanning, gunmaking, shrimping, fishing, frog gigs, netting suckers, duck blinds, worm grunting, handfishing (for catfish), paddle making, hunting horns, duck and bird calls, quail hunt wagons, alligator trapping, decoy carving, making hunting horns, rope knots and items, other traditional handmade paraphernalia.

Domestic Crafts: cornshuck mops, gallberry brooms and palmetto brooms, carved bowls, quilts, crochet, tatting, embroidery, rag rugs, soap making, rocking chairs, straight back chairs, chair bottoms (hide, split oak, cornshuck), cypress furniture, cowhorn spoons, turtleshell dippers, gourd dippers, gourd birdhouses.

Decorative Crafts: weaving, tatting, embroidery, baby bonnets from wedding handkerchiefs, model boats, Native American beading, Easter eggs, woodcarving and whittling, walking sticks/canes, boxes, chains, gunstocks, etc.

Traditional Toys: flying jenny, whirligig, tops, boats, whistles, flutes, doll furniture, dolls (cornshuck, rag, Spanish moss), puzzles and teasers, slingshots, paper airplanes and cootie catchers.

Ritual Crafts: Benevolent Societies ribbon baskets and sashes, home altars for the Virgin of Guadalupe or other patron saints, nacimientos (Mexican nativity scenes), breads for religious services, ketubah (Jewish marriage contracts), lining caskets.

Folk Architecture: Plantation and small farm buildings, country stores, churches, houses (most common regional house types are dog trot, shotgun, double pen, I-house).

Landscape Decoration & Use: Fencing, bottle trees, yards and gardens (decorative and agricultural), graveyard decor (traditional tombstones and grave decoration).

Other Work-related Crafts: Carpentry, sign painting.

Foodways (Traditional techniques, recipes, and aesthetics of and beliefs about food harvesting, preparation and preservation) Favorite regional foods such as cornbread, peas, swamp gravy, country ham, tea cakes, Brunswick stew, barbecue, fried foods, wild game (including wild game dinners). Drying and canning of fruits and vegetables: relishes, jams, jellies (such as mayhaw and scuppernong), preserves. Syrup-making. Butchering: hog, beef, game butchering, meat preparation, sausage making, smoking, homemade wine.

THINGS PEOPLE BELIEVE

Superstitions and Omens: weather, luck, illness, death, love, marriage, supernatural, etc.

Folk Medicine: Curing, curandero/a, root doctor, herbal knowledge, midwifery, etc.