

**ARTS, MUSIC,  
LITERATURE**

# **N** TIME AND PLACE: INFLUENCES ON MISSISSIPPI WRITERS

## **Time and Place: Influences on Mississippi Writers**

**Cathy B. Miles  
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### COMPETENCIES:

#### State Competencies: Mississippi Studies

- Competency 3: Describe the relationship of people, place, and environment through time.
- Competency 4: Demonstrate the ability to use social studies tools.
- Competency 6: Examine the cultural impact of Mississippi artists and writers.

#### National Geography Standards

- Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representation, tools, and technology to acquire process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions.

#### National History Standards

- Era 8: A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement
- Era 9: The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

## National Social Studies Standards

- Standard 1: Culture: social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- Standard 4: Individual Development and Identity: social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.

**PREVIEW:** The student will develop a literary map according to birthplace of authors, a timeline of authors born during given timeframes, the main writing topics of these authors, and the main events occurring during these timeframes. Students will also read excerpts of work by authors such as William Faulkner, Richard Wright, Eudora Welty, Elizabeth Spencer, and Willie Morris and discuss their writings.

**OBJECTIVES:** As a result of this lesson the students will:

1. Create a literary map of Mississippi authors.
2. Draw a timeline of authors, topics the authors wrote about, and the main events that occurred according to specific timeframes given.
3. Read literary excerpts of authors and compare and contrast how economics, past and present events, location, culture, history, politics, experiences, and personality influence a writer's work and perception of self and society.

**CONTENT:** Mississippi has produced many famous writers such as William Faulkner, Richard Wright, Eudora Welty, Tennessee Williams, William A. Percy, Walker Percy, Margaret Walker, Shelby Foote, Willie Morris, Elizabeth Spencer, and many others. Many factors can influence an author's writings. Maybe it is his/her birth place and the influence the environment and culture of a place has played upon that person, or maybe it is the national or world events of the time that might influence a writer. But typically a writer writes about what he/she knows best and writes about things that he/she observes at a particular place at a particular time in history. Thus place (setting) and time, as well as the characters, events, etc., are important ingredients in one's writings.

Mississippi is an interesting state with a varied natural and cultural environment. It is the varied and colorful character of Mississippi that has inspired and influenced many writers and the topics of their writings—be it the Civil War, civil rights, the great flood of 1927, the great migration of African Americans or southern culture in general. Thus the general purpose of this lesson is to acquaint students with various Mississippi writers and what they wrote about. This can be accomplished by completing the “student activities”

associated with this lesson.

**SUGGESTED TIME:** This lesson will take approximately two 45 minute class periods or one hour and one-half hour block.

**MATERIALS/RESOURCES:**

1. Student Handout – List of Authors (Na)
2. Student Activity sheets (Fig. N1, Nb)
3. Student Handout (Nc)
4. Student Activity sheet (Nd)
5. Mississippi Studies text
6. Various volumes of Mississippi Writers: Reflections, and Mississippi Writers: an Anthology, edited by Dorothy Abbott and published by the University Press of Mississippi. (These are optional resources – not needed to complete this lesson).
7. Web site: [www.olemiss.edu/depts/english/ms-writers/](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/english/ms-writers/) . This web site provides a comprehensive guide to Mississippi writers. (Access to the site is not necessary to complete this lesson).
8. Map of “Modern Mississippi Writers” published by University Press of Mississippi. (Cost: approximately \$10) (This is an optional resource not needed to complete this lesson).

**SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE LESSON:**

Quote: “Most people believe they see the world as it is. However, we really see the world as we are.” Anonymous

**OPENING THE LESSON:**

1. Have student complete this phrase silently: “I am walking down a street when a dog approaches me. My reaction is going to be \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.”
2. Answers will vary (scared, to run, to pet the dog, to scream, etc.).

3. What determines the differences in reaction? (Write these on the board.) They should include past experience, attitude, personality, environment. Discuss these.
4. Does this actually determine if the dog is actually going to bite us? “no”
5. Define perception (an awareness of elements of environment through physical sensation interpreted in light of experience). Relate this to the quote.

#### DEVELOPING THE LESSON:

1. Hand out the “List of Authors” (Na), which lists the author, birth place, date of birth, and writing topic. Have a transparency of this table, display it, and discuss the information on it with your students.
2. Hand out map of Mississippi (Fig. N1) and have students place the names of the authors on the map with an arrow pointing to the city where the author was born. (See Appendix Fig. N1 for answer key to Fig. N1). Have transparency of answer key map (N1), display it, and discuss with students the birth places of some of the writers.
3. Hand out “Literary Timeline Worksheet” (Nb). Note the major events are listed across the top of the timeline. Have students fill in the bottom of the timeline by listing the author and date they were born in parenthesis according to the time period they were born in. Then have the students list the general topics these writers wrote about. Much of the information for this timetable can be obtained from “List of Authors” sheet (Na). Additional information can be obtained from textbooks and websites. Hand out Student Activity (Nd), and have students complete Part 1 of Student Activity (Nd). Discuss the information put on the timetable with students. (The “answer key” to “Timeline” (Nb) is in the Appendix). (Make a transparency of answer key to Student Activity (Nb) and use it to assist in class discussion).
4. Hand out “Student Handout” (Nc) of excerpts from selected Mississippi Writers. Have students read excerpts and complete Part 2 of Student Activity (Nd). Most of the questions in Part 2 of Student Activity (Nd) can be answered via discussion in class.

CLOSING THE LESSON: Review concepts of “past” and “present” in literature, and show how past events may influence the present or are reflected in the present. Review the concept of “sense of place” and how the author(s) views and writes about place.

EVALUATING THE LESSON:

1. Evaluate completion of Student Activities.
2. Evaluation of class discussion.
3. Prepare questions for test on this unit. Question suggestions include: what influences a writer's topics and perceptions, and discuss concepts of literature (i.e., past vs present).

## Na

## List of Authors

<u>Author</u>	<u>Birth Place</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Writing Topic</u>
<i>Ida B. Wells</i>	<i>Holly Springs</i>	<i>1862-1931</i>	<i>Civil Rights</i>
<i>Stark Young</i>	<i>Como</i>	<i>1881-1963</i>	<i>Civil War</i>
<i>William Percy</i>	<i>Greenville</i>	<i>1885-1942</i>	<i>Delta, culture, WWI, KKK, Great Flood</i>
<i>William Attaway</i>	<i>Greenville</i>	<i>1911-</i>	<i>Lit., art, music by blacks, Great Migration</i>
<i>Walker Percy</i>	<i>Greenville</i>	<i>1916-</i>	<i>Philosophy, Catholicism, Southern experience</i>
<i>Shelby Foote</i>	<i>Greenville</i>	<i>1916-</i>	<i>Civil War</i>
<i>William Faulkner</i>	<i>Oxford</i>	<i>1897-1962</i>	<i>Decaying South</i>
<i>Larry Brown</i>	<i>Oxford</i>	<i>1951-</i>	<i>Autobiographical, blue collars, Vietnam War</i>
<i>Tennessee Williams</i>	<i>Columbus</i>	<i>1911-1983</i>	<i>Human Predicament</i>
<i>Richard Wright</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>1908-1960</i>	<i>Social Protest</i>
<i>Eudora Welty</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>1909-</i>	<i>Autobiographical</i>
<i>Margaret Walker</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>1915-</i>	<i>History, Black culture</i>
<i>Mildred Taylor</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>1943-</i>	<i>Children's books on Black culture</i>
<i>Richard Ford</i>	<i>Jackson</i>	<i>1944-</i>	<i>Fiction, some set in MS</i>
<i>Ellen Douglas</i>	<i>Natchez</i>	<i>1921-</i>	<i>Novels rooted in MS</i>
<i>Elizabeth Spencer</i>	<i>Carrollton</i>	<i>1921-</i>	<i>Fiction</i>
<i>Lerone Bennett, Jr.</i>	<i>Clarksdale</i>	<i>1928-</i>	<i>Fiction</i>
<i>Al Young</i>	<i>Ocean Springs</i>	<i>1930-</i>	<i>Language and art</i>
<i>Willie Morris</i>	<i>Yazoo City</i>	<i>1934-1999</i>	<i>Autobiographical, social change, people, places</i>
<i>Ellen Gilchrist</i>	<i>Vicksburg</i>	<i>1935-</i>	<i>Fiction, girls in society</i>
<i>Sterling Plumpp</i>	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>1940-</i>	<i>Absurd, disoriented, violent, meaningless world</i>
<i>Barry Hannah</i>	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>1942-</i>	<i>Experimental, mocking, dreamlike, politics</i>

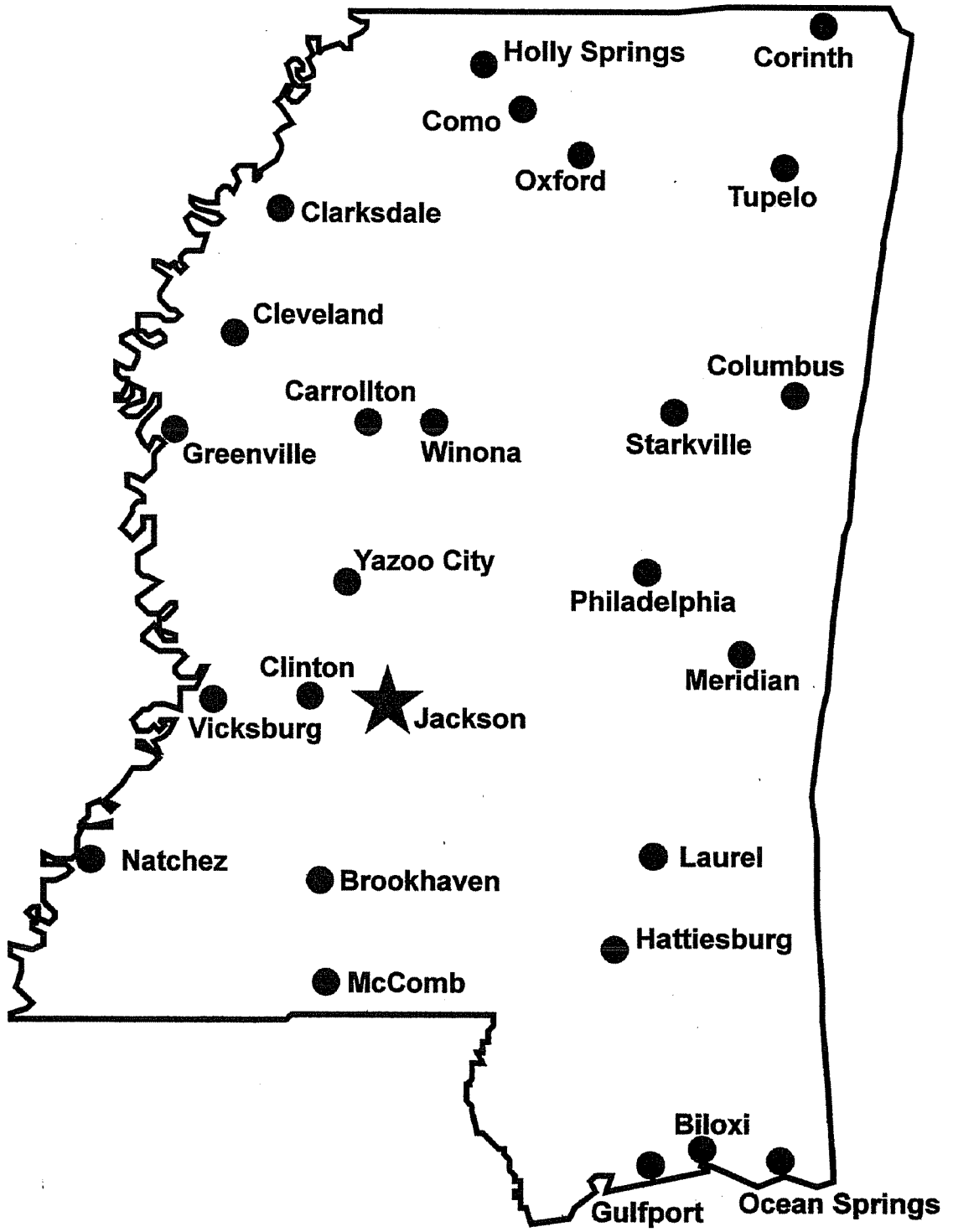


Figure N<sub>1</sub>



# Nc

## Student Handout

1. Excerpt from William Faulkner's short story, Mississippi.

*Big towns, for Mississippi: cities, we called them: Hattiesburg, and Laurel, and Meridian, and Canton; and towns deriving by name from further away than Ohio: Kosciusko named after a Polish general who thought that people should be free who wanted to be, and Egypt because there was corn there when it was nowhere else in the bad lean times of the old war which the old women had still never surrendered, and Philadelphia where the Neshoba Indians whose name the country bears sill remain for the simple reason that they did not mind living in peace with other people, no matter their color or politics. This was the hills now: Jones County which old Newt Knight, its principal proprietor and first citizen or denizen, whichever you liked, seceded from the Confederacy in 1862, establishing still a third republic within the boundaries of the United States until a Confederate military force subdued him in his embattled log-castle capital; and Sullivan's Hollow: a long narrow glen where a few clans or families with North Ireland and Highland names feuded and slew one another in the old pre-Culloden fashion yet banding together immediately and always to resist any outsider in the pre-Culloden fashion too: vide the legend of the revenue officer hunting illicit whiskey still, captured and held prisoner in stable and worked in traces as the pair to a plow mule. No Negro ever let darkness catch him in Sullivan's Hollow. In fact, there were few Negroes in the country at all: a narrow strip which extended up into the young man's own section: a remote district there through which Negroes passed infrequently and rapidly only by daylight.*

2. Excerpt from Richard Wright's Black Boy.

*No pork or veal was ever eaten at Granny's, and rarely was there meat of any kind. We seldom ate fish and then only those that had scales and spines. Baking powder was never used; it was alleged to contain a chemical harmful to the body. For breakfast I ate mush and gravy made from flour and lard and for hours afterwards I would belch it up into my mouth. We were constantly taking bicarbonate of soda for indigestion. At four o'clock in the afternoon I ate a plate of greens cooked with lard. Sometimes on Sundays we bought a dime's worth of beef which usually turned out to be uneatable. Granny's favorite dish was a peanut roast which she made to resemble meat, but which tasted like something else.*

3. Excerpt from Eudora Welty's The Little Store.

*For her regular needs, she stood at the telephone in our front hall and consulted with Mr. Lemley, of Lemley's Market and Grocery downtown, who took her order and sent it out on his next delivery. And since Jackson at the heart of it was still within very near reach of the open country, the blackberry lady clanged on her bucket with a quart measure at your front door in June without fail, the watermelon man rolled up to your house exactly on time for the Fourth of July, and down through summer, the quiet of the early-morning streets was pierced by the calls of farmers driving in with their plenty. One brought his with a song, so plaintive we would sing it with him:*

*Milk, milk  
Buttermilk  
Snap beans – butterbeans-  
Tender okra – fresh greens...  
And Buttermilk*

*My mother considered herself pretty well prepared in her kitchen and pantry for any emergency that, in her words, might choose to present itself. But if she should, all of a sudden, need another lemon or find she was out of bread, all she had to do was call out, "Quick! Who'd like to run to the Little Store for me?"*

#### 4. Excerpt from Elizabeth Spencer's Ship Island.

*Out on the island that day, out on Ship Island, she had drifted in the water like seaweed, with the tide combing her limbs and hair, tugging her through lengths of fuzzy water growth. She had lain flat on her face with her arms stretched out before her, experiencing the curious lift the water's motion gave to the tentacles of weed, wondering whether she liked it or not. Did something alive clamber the small of back? Did something wishful grope the spiral of her ear, Rob caught her wrist and waked her-waked was what he did, though to sleep in water is not possible. He said he thought she had been there too long. "Nobody can deep their face in the water that long," was what he said.*

*"I did," said Nancy.*

*Rob's brow had been blistered a little, she recalled, for that had been back early in the summer, soon after they had met-but the changes the sun made on him went without particular attention. The seasons here were old ground to him. He said that the island was new, however-or at least forgotten. He said he had never been there but once, and that many years ago, on a Boy Scout picnic. Soon they were exploring the for, reading the dates off the metal signs whose letters glowed so smoothly in the sun, and the brief summaries of what those little boys, little military-academy boys turned into soldiers had endured. Not old enough to fill up the name of soldier, or prisoner, either, which is what they were-not old enough to shave, Nancy bet-sill, they had died there, miserably far from home, and had been buried in the sand. There was a lot more. Rob would have been glad to read all about it, but she wasn't interested. What they knew already was plenty.*

#### 5. Excerpt from Willie Morris's North Toward Home.

*I settled myself at the short wave with notebook and pencil and took down every pitch. This I did for four full innings, and then I turned back to the town station, where the Old Scotchman was just beginning the first inning. I checked the first batter to make sure the accounts jibed. Then, armed with my notebook, I ran down the street to the corner grocery, a minor outpost of baseball intellection, presided over by my young Negro friend Bozo, a knowledgeable student of the game, the same one who kept my dog in bologna. I found Bozo behind the meat counter, with the Scotchman's account going full blast. I arrived at the interim between the top and bottom of the first inning.*

*"Who's pitchin' for the Yankee's, Bozo?" I asked.*

*"They're pitchin' Allie Reynolds," Bozo said. "Old Scotchman says Reynolds really got the stuff today. He just set'em down one, two, three."*

*The Scotchman meanwhile, was describing the way the pennants were flapping in the breeze. Phil Rizzuto, he reported, was stepping to the plate.*

*"Bo," I said trying to sound cut-and-dried, "you know what I think? I think Rizzuto's gonna take a couple of fast called strikes, then foul one down the left-field line, and then line out straight to Boudreau at short."*

*"Yeah?" Bozo said. He scratched his head and leaned lazily across the counter.*

*I went up front to buy something and then came back. The count worked to nothing and two on Rizzuto-a couple of fast called strikes and a foul down the left side. "This one," I said to Bozo, "he limes straight to Boudreau at short."*

*The Old Scotchman, pausing dramatically between words as was his custom, said, "Here's the windup on nothing and two. Here's the pitch on its way-There's a hard line drive! But Lou Boudreau's there at shortstop and he's got it. Phil hit that one on the noze, but Boudreau's right there."*

*Bozo looked over at me, his eyes bigger than they were. "How'd you know that?" he asked.*

#### 6. Excerpt from Sterling D. Plumpp's Black Ritual.

*Quite another change came over me when I spent two years in the Army from 1964 – 1966 because I had grown older and had read more about other religions, particularly, Buddhism and Hinduism . I also read Sartre, Camus Kirkegaard, Henry Miller, and Arthur Miller and the thing I found out about religion, reality, truth, and life was that everything depended on how well the individual evaluated his own experiences. Thus I ceased calling myself anything and started to play music that really moved me-jazz, rock-and-roll, gospels, spiritual, blues, and sermons. I re-discovered in the Army jus how religious I was at my base and I accepted the fact. I no longer equated Black Religion with the confines of a church building and I knew it was a source of power within me. When I started to write, it was the spring of my experiences with the Black Church that gave energy and direction to my efforts. I'm religious and Black Rituals are as much a part of me as my hair, my eyes, my ears, my soul, but I've been taught various rational was to conceptualize my experiences and I can verbalize what I feel. When I left the Catholic Church, and after that the silly belief that I was an atheist, and returned to an acceptance of Black Religion on my own terms, it was the dawn of my mind, the awakening in me of an unnoticed sea.*

# Nd

## Time and Place: Influence on Mississippi Writer

### Student Activity

Part 1:

Use your timeline to write a paragraph to explain how events that occurred in the lives of Mississippi authors influenced the topics of their writing. (Take into consideration how these events affect attitudes and perspectives of self and society.) Support your answer with examples.

Part 2:

1. After reading the excerpt from William Faulkner's short story Mississippi describe how he reflects "a sense of place". (Include perception, feelings and attitudes of the author in addition to physical descriptions.)
2. In Richard Wright's Black Boy and Eudora Welty's The Little Store they both relate their experiences as children concerning "food on the table" and family predicament. Describe the similarities and differences and reasons for them.
3. In the short story Ship Island, Elizabeth Spencer describes her visit to the island. How does she relate past to present events?

How did she feel about the event that was reflected on the plaque?

Why do you think she felt different about it than Rob?

4. Willie Morris described a humorous-prank that he played on his friend Bozo in North toward Home. What was the prank?

How did the boy feel about Bozo?

How were the boys different? Similar? (Support you answer with facts from the story.)

5. What were the changes Sterling Plumpp went through concerning his view on religion?

What events led to these changes?

Why do you think he wrote on this topic?

How did his culture, past, and present influence his journey on his view of religion?

What was Plumpp's view of religion in the conclusion?

**O****LOCAL LANDMARKS IN  
MISSISSIPPI LITERATURE****Local Landmarks in Mississippi Literature**

**Cathy B. Miles  
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**COMPETENCIES:**

## State Competencies: Mississippi Studies

- Competency 1: Explain how geography, economics, history, and politics have influenced the development of Mississippi.
- Competency 3: Describe the relationship of people, places and environment through time.
- Competency 4: Demonstrate the ability to use social studies tools.
- Competency 6: Examine the cultural impact of Mississippi artists and writers.

## National Geography Standards

- Standard 1: How to use maps, globes and other geographic tools and technologies to acquire process and report information from a spatial perspective.

## National Social Studies Standards

- Standard 3: People, Places and Environment: social studies programs should provide for the study of people, places and environments.

## National History Standards

- Era 8: A Half-century of Crisis and Achievement
- Era 9: The 20<sup>th</sup> Century since 1945: Promise and Paradoxes

### The Five Themes of Geography

- **Location:**     *Absolute* - is the latitude and longitude (address) of a place. It is the "site" of a place.  
  
                          *Relative* - refers to where a place is in relation to other places/ things around it. It is the "situation" of a place.
- **Place:**           refers to the physical and human characteristics of a place or spot.
- **Human-Environment Interaction:** refers to how the environment influences us and how we depend, adapt, and interact with the environment.
- **Movement:**   refers to the idea that goods, people, and ideas move over distance and change through time.
- **Region:**         is an area characterized by a particular unifying or common feature or a set of features which distinguish the region from surrounding areas.

**PREVIEW:** The students will read the history and literature about local landmarks. They will use this information to discuss the 5 themes of geography, determine absolute and relative location of a place and discuss literary concepts. Please note that this lesson can be adapted to landmarks indigenous to your local area.

**OBJECTIVES:** As a result of this lesson the student will:

1. Identify the relative and absolute location of Ship Island, Round Island, and Old Spanish Fort.
2. Compare the history of Ship Island, Round Island, and Old Spanish Fort and the significance of their geographical location. (Themes of Geography)
3. Compare and contrast the characteristics of Ship Island, Round Island, and Old Spanish Fort.
4. Describe how the history of the landmark was reflected in the literature.
5. Create a poem or story about a landmark of significance to them and create a form of artwork that reflects how they feel about the landmark.

**CONTENT:** Landmarks are important features on the landscape that can be studied to help us reveal important characteristics about American culture. Landmarks are usually designated because of some distinguishing feature that marks a locality. A landmark can be an anatomical structure that is frequently set aside for preservation, or a conspicuous object on the land used as point of orientation in locating other structures. There are many national landmarks such as Independence Hall in Philadelphia or the Capitol building in Washington D.C., and there are numerous regional and local landmarks.

This lesson is designed to incorporate geography, history, and literature in the study of landmarks. Although this lesson focuses on Ship Island, Round Island, and Old Spanish Fort, teachers can adapt the lesson to include familiar landmarks in their local area.

**SUGGESTED TIME:** Two 45 minute class periods or one ninety minute block period.

**MATERIALS:**

Map handout of Figure O1.  
 History/Literary excerpts (Student handouts Oa, Ob, Oc)  
 Student Activity sheet (Od)  
 Worksheet #1  
 Paper

**SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE LESSON:**

**METHODS OF PRESENTATION:** The teacher can hand out the materials and discuss in class, or students can be divided into 3 groups to work on the activities, or each group can be assigned to one of the 3 activities.

**OPENING THE LESSON:**

1. Review quote and discuss with students why reading literature is important. How can it help you learn about your local area?

Quote: "The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them." - Mark Twain

**DEVELOPING THE LESSON:**

1. Hand out map (Fig. O1) and use it to determine "relative" and "absolute" location. Give students coordinates for Ship Island (30° 12'N, 88° 57'W), Round Island

- (30°17'N, 88°33'W), and Old Spanish Fort (30°22'N, 88°33'W) to determine absolute location. Then discuss the relative location of these places.
2. Give students handout (Oa) on the history and literature of Ship Island and have them read it.
  3. Review themes of geography: location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region as they apply to Ship Island.
  4. Have students answer questions 1 through 6 on “Student Activity” sheet (Od). Discuss answers in class.
  5. Give students handout (Ob) on the history and literature of Round Island and have them read it.
  6. Review the 5 themes of geography as they pertain to Round Island. Have students answer questions 1 through 6 on “Student Activity” sheet (Od). Discuss answers in class.
  7. Give students handout (Oc) on the history and literature of Old Spanish Fort and have them read it.
  8. Review the 5 themes of geography as they pertain to Old Spanish Fort. Have students answer questions 1 through 6 on “Student Activity” sheet (Od). Discuss the answers in class.
  9. After all three readings have been discussed have students answer and discuss questions 7 and 8 on the “Student Activity” sheet (Od).
  10. As an optional extension to this lesson, have students write a poem or story about a certain landmark that they like and report to class. Students can also create artwork to accompany their story.

**CLOSING THE LESSON:** Summarize this lesson by closing it with a few pertinent questions for students to respond to: 1) Why is it important to have personal landmarks? 2) Can literature give us a perspective of a place? 3) Are landmarks valuable things to study in order to give us an insight as to the geography, history, and literature of a place or landmark.

**EVALUATING THE LESSON:** Teacher can assemble test questions from this lesson.

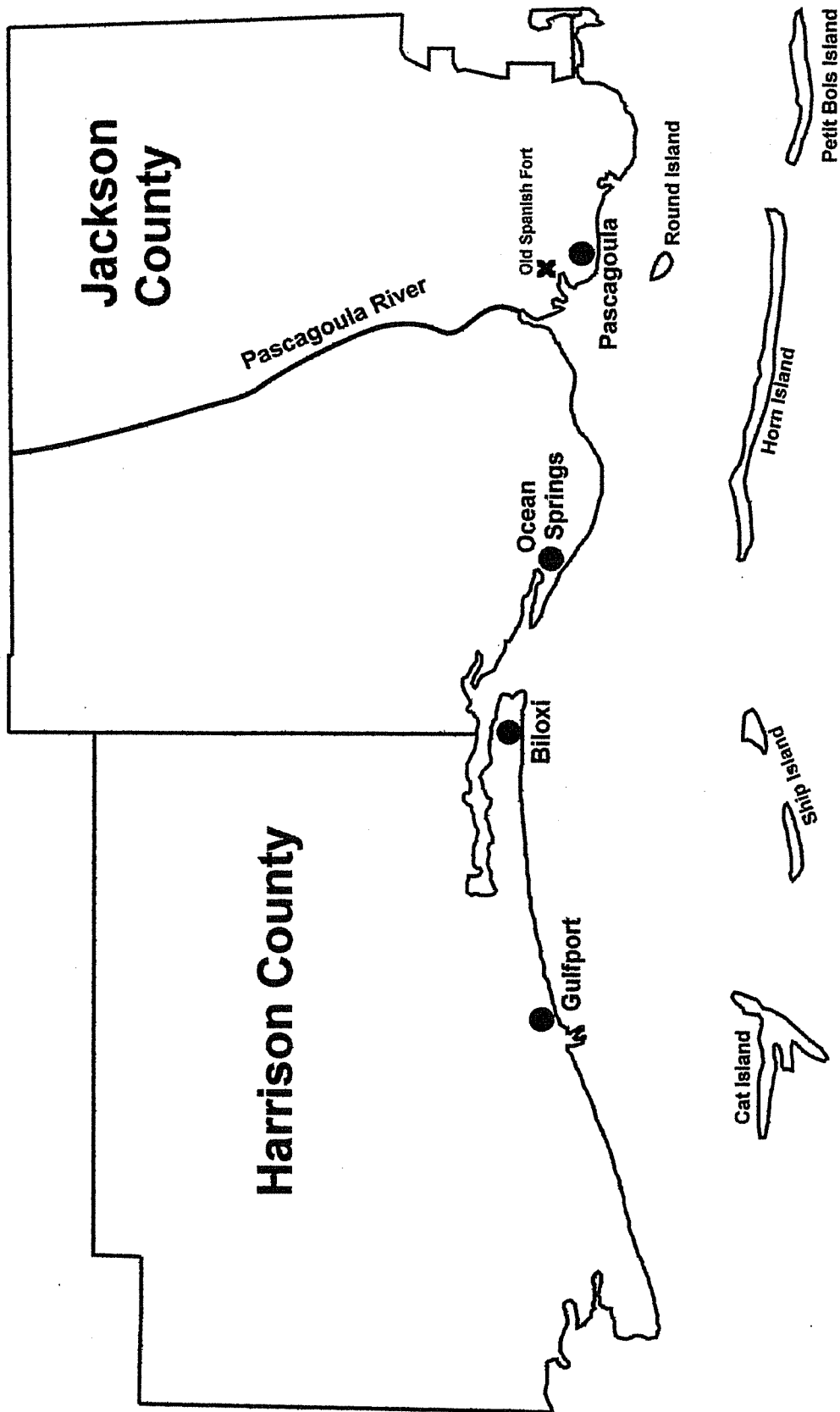


Figure O<sub>1</sub>

# Oa

## Student Handout

### I. Ship Island

#### A. History

The Barrier Islands form the southern boundary of the Mississippi Sound. In 1699 d'Iberville established the first French settlement on the Gulf Coast on the east-end of Ship Island. At this time Biloxi was the capital of French Louisiana and Ship Island served as a port through which men and supplies were sent inland. In 1722 New Orleans became the capital and the settlement dwindled. During the War of 1812 Britain used Ship Island as a base for its armada to attack New Orleans. In 1814 American gunboats attacked the armada on Lake Borgne and were defeated by Britain. Although the Americans lost the battle, it bought them time to fortify New Orleans where they defeated Britain in the Battle of New Orleans.

At a short time prior to the firing on Fort Sumter, the construction of a fort began on the west-end of the island, but was delayed because the chief engineer lost his life to yellow fever and a hurricane hit. The confederate army seized and completed the fort which they named Fort Twiggs. The confederates eventually abandoned Ship Island because of Union blockade. The Federal blockade runner Massachusetts saw the smoke and landed on the deserted island and put out the fire. David Farragut used the island as a starting point to capture Confederate New Orleans. The fort then became known as Fort Massachusetts and served as a federal prison for confederate prisoners of war where many died of malaria.

Presently, it is a recreation spot that can be reached by private or charter boat. Among the things to see is the view from the observation deck where most of the island is visible. Also, at the entrance of the fort is a plaque dedicated to the Confederate POWs.

#### B. Excerpt from Elizabeth Spencer's short story Ship Island.

Out on the island that day, out on Ship Island, she had drifted in the water like seaweed, with the tide combing her limbs and hair, tugging her through lengths of fuzzy water growth. She had lain flat on her face with her arms stretched out before her, experiencing the curious lift the water's motion gave to the tentacles of weed, wondering whether she liked it or not. Did something alive clamber the small of her back? Did something wishful grope the spiral of her ear, Rob caught her wrist and waked her – waked was what he did, though to sleep in water is not possible. He said he thought she had been there too long. "Nobody can keep their face in the water that long," was what he said.

"I did," said Nancy.

Rob's brow had been blistered a little, she recalled, for that had been back early in the summer, soon after they had met—but the changes the sun made on him went without particular attention. The seasons here were old ground to him. He said that the island was new, however—or at least forgotten. He said he had never been there but once, and that many years

ago, on a Boy Scout picnic. Soon they were exploring the fort, reading the dates off the metal signs whose letters glowed so smoothly in the sun, and the brief summaries of what those little boys, little military-academy boys turned into soldiers had endured. Not old enough to fill up the name of the soldier, or of prisoner, either, which is what they were—not old enough to shave, Nancy bet—still, they had died there, miserably far from home, and had been buried in the sand. there was a lot more. Rob would have been glad to read all about it, but she wasn't interested. What they knew already was plenty, just about those boys.

# Ob

## Student Handout

### 2. Round Island

#### A. History

Round Island is a small island named for its shape and is located four miles south of Pascagoula. During 1849 it was used as a base for a revolutionary group to free Cuba from Imperial Spain oppression. The southerners supported the cause by providing money and manpower. When the U.S. Government became aware of the situation, the navy put a stop to advent because they thought it to be a conspiracy in which the South would use Cuba as a slavery state in order to upset the balance in the Senate. Southerners felt their State's Rights had been violated, which added more animosity growing between the North and the South.

A lighthouse was erected in 1854 to guide boats and ships into the Pascagoula Port due to the commercial growth of the city. Today the island is a recreation spot that can be reached by boat. The lighthouse has been deteriorating for years and finally fell on September 27, 1998 due to Hurricane Georges. Efforts are currently underway to rebuild the lighthouse.

#### B. The following is a poem by Sandra Eisler in tribute to the Round Island Lighthouse in 1997 before it actually fell.

##### Round Island Lighthouse

Before the turn of the century, I've guided them in,  
 Your great-grandfather, your cousins and kin.  
 My light led many safely home  
 From evening dusk to early dawn.  
 Through the nights of Stormy weather,  
 When lightning bolts shot straight from heaven.  
 I never once let them down,  
 Cause I was a beacon for the Mississippi Sound.  
 Now here I am, for all to see  
 Just a shell of what I used to be.  
 Come take a look, see for yourself  
 In time to come there will be nothing left.  
 The water's lapping far too close,  
 Erosion is taking its toll the most.  
 Whatever it takes, it's worth the pain  
 Don't let my life go down in vain.  
 I plead with you, to all join hands  
 And take a strong and mighty stand...  
 So I'll not fall in the shifting sand.

# Oc

## Student Handout

### 3. The Old Spanish Fort and the Legend of Singing River

#### A. History

The Old Spanish Fort, now called the LaPointe-Krebs House was built in 1718 by the French-Canadian Joseph Simon LaPointe. It is the oldest residential building in the South and is the only representative of the Colonial Period in the region. The building was not actually a fort or part of one, it was a carpenter shop that LaPointe built to live in until his estate was finished. According to a drawing by Dumont du Montigny, the estate consisted of ten buildings enclosed in a stockade. The Old Spanish Fort sits off the Pascagoula River overlooking Krebs Lake, known to the Pascagoula Indians as Chatagoula. The Old Spanish Fort became the ancestral home of the Krebs family when LaPointe's daughter married Hugo Krebs and turned the estate into a plantation. Hugo Krebs was known in Pascagoula as a surgeon and inventor. It is said that Hugo invented the cotton gin years before Eli Whitney.

The Old Spanish Fort Museum and the LaPointe-Krebs House is leased to the Jackson County Historical Society by the citizens of Jackson County. A visitor today will see the house, a small family cemetery, and haunting mossy live-oaks which seems mystical to those who appreciate the land of the Pascagoula Indians and the legends of the Singing River.

#### B. The following is the Legend of Singing River as officially adopted by the city of Pascagoula.

The famous Singing River (Pascagoula) is known for its very mysterious music. The singing sound, like the swarm of bees in flight is best heard in late summer and autumn months, in the stillness of the late evening. Barely caught at first, the music seems to grow nearer and louder until it sounds as though it comes directly under foot.

An old legend connects the sound with the mysterious extinction of the Pascagoula tribe of Indians. The Pascagoula were a gentle tribe of contented, indolent, innocent, inoffensive people while on the other hand the Biloxi were a tribe calling themselves "first people" and extremely jealous of their position. Anola, a princess of the Biloxi tribe, though betrothed to a chieftain of her people, loved Altama, a young chieftain of Pascagoula and fled with him to his tribe. The spurned and enraged Biloxi chieftain led his Biloxi braves to war against Altama and the neighboring Pascagoula, whereupon Altama begged his tribe to give him up for atonement. The Pascagoula swore they would either save the young chieftain and his bride, or perish with them. However, when thrown into battle against terrible odds, they soon lost hope of victory. Outnumbered they were faced with either subjection to the Biloxi or death. They chose death. With joined hands, their women and children leading the way into the Pascagoula River, the braves followed, each chanting his song of death, until the last voice was hushed by the dark engulfing waters.

# Od

## Student Activity

### Local Landmarks in Mississippi Literature

**Answer the following six questions for each of the three landmarks.**

**Answer questions 7 and 8 for all three landmarks.**

1. Describe how the themes of geography are reflected in the history and/or literature (Location, human-environment interaction, place, region and movement).
2. What is the significance of geography of its history?
3. How was the history reflected in the literature?
4. How was the concept of “past and present” reflected in the literature?
5. Describe how economics played a role in the history of the landmark.
6. Give an example of how culture, customs, beliefs, and/or traditions were represented in the history or the literature.
7. Give three examples of the similarities in these landmarks. (Physically, historically, economically, etc).
8. Give three examples of the differences in these landmarks. (Physically, historically, economically, etc).

# P ORIGIN AND DIFFUSION OF THE BLUES

## Origin and Diffusion of the Blues

Laura Denise Pickett  
Picayune Memorial High School

### COMPETENCIES:

#### State Competencies: Mississippi Studies

- Competency 3: Describe the relationship of people, places and environment through time.
- Competency 4: Demonstrate the ability to use social studies tools.
- Competency 6: Examine the cultural impact of Mississippi artists and writers.

#### National Geography Standards

- Standard 1: How to use maps, globes, and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies.
- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.
- Standard 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 17: How to apply geography to interpret the past.

#### National Social Studies Standards

- 1. Culture: social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- 3. People, Places and Environments: social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

**PREVIEW:** This lesson is designed to help students understand the origins, construction and spread of the blues from Mississippi to other parts of the United States. It will also give students insight into an individual Mississippi blues artist and his/her works. The students will also learn to map the spatial movements of these artists, thus hopefully showing a pattern of historical migration (Great Migration) and movement in the United States.

**OBJECTIVES:** As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Describe the origins of blues.
2. Describe how blues is constructed.
3. Explain the pattern of blues diffusion in the United States.
4. Identify a Mississippi blues artist.
5. Use a U.S. map to map movement.
6. Recognize the correlation between the artists, his/her migration, and the time period.

**CONTENT:** Blues evolved out of the oppressive environment of the South during the 1890s (especially in the Mississippi Delta). It developed from the fieldhollers of those working on the railroads, levees, and land clearing crews. Southern prisons also contributed to the blues tradition through work songs of death row, murder, prostitutes, the warden, and the hot sun.

Blues construction is an engagement of a singer in a call-and-response with his guitar. He would sing a line, and the guitar would answer it. Blues lyrics are often intensely personal, frequently contain sexual references, and often deal with pain (of betrayal, desertion, and unrequited love) and unhappy situations (such as jobless, hungry, broke, away from home, lonely, or downhearted).

Blues began to spread from the Mississippi Delta with W.C. Handy, who got the sound from an unknown guitar player he heard at a train station in Mississippi. He popularized the blues about 1911-14 with songs such as "Memphis Blues" and "St Louis Blues". These are some of the first written blues songs. During the 1920s, 30s and 40s, Alan and John Lomax were recording blues from the various state prisons in the South. Also during the '30s and '40s, blues spread northward with the migration of many blacks from the South. Again in the late 1940s and early 1950s in northern cities such as Chicago, you could hear basic Mississippi Delta blues as another wave of Mississippi musicians moved North.

**SUGGESTED TIME:** 1 block schedule day or (50-60 minutes) period.

**MATERIALS/RESOURCES:**

1. List of Mississippi blues artist (Table Pa)
2. Map of United States (Figure P1) and answer key to Figure P1 (located in

- Appendix)
3. Blues Artist Report Criteria (Table Pb)
  4. Color pencils or markers
  5. Construction and copying paper
  6. Web sites:
    - a. //SHS.Starkville.K12MS.US/mswm/MSWritersAndMusicians/music.html.
    - b. [www.blueflamecafe.com/](http://www.blueflamecafe.com/)
    - c. [www.msmusic.org](http://www.msmusic.org)
  7. Atlas or road maps of Mississippi and the United States
  8. Suggestion: purchase "Mississippi Blues Musicians" map for your classroom. Order from: Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame, P O Box 1270, Clinton MS 39060. (phone: 601-924-0313) (price: \$10.00 est.)

### SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE LESSON:

OPENING THE LESSON: Introduce the lesson by asking students the following questions:

1. What is blues?
2. Where did the blues begin?
3. Name some cities known for the blues?
4. Name some blues artists from Mississippi.
5. From what places in Mississippi did these artists come?
6. When was he/she famous?

Write some of their responses on the board for later reference.

### DEVELOPING THE LESSON:

1. Present information discussed in the "Content" portion of this lesson (10 minutes).
2. Divide students into groups of 2 or 3.
  - a. allow each group to choose 2 or 3 artists from Mississippi Blues Artists List (Table Pa)
  - b. give each group a map of the U.S.
  - c. give each group the criteria for the report (Table Pb)
  - d. provide students with web addresses that can be used
3. Give students about 15-20 minutes of research time (in library or on computer).
4. Give students 20-25 minutes to put report together.

CLOSING THE LESSON: Put time periods from content on the board (1920s and 30s, 1930s and 40s, 1940s and 50s, 1950s and 60s, and 1960s and 70s). Have students arrange their artists under these time periods and show their patterns of movement (see Answer Key P in Appendix for "Board Sample.")

Questions:

1. What patterns do you see?
2. Are there any deviations from the pattern?
3. Why did they move or stay?
4. What else may have been going on during these periods that may have affected their movement?

**EVALUATING THE LESSON:** Lesson will be evaluated through the report and responses to above questions.

## Table **Pa**

### List of Mississippi Blues Artists

- |     |                                  |     |                                    |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Booba Barnes                     | 17. | Mississippi John Hurt              |
| 2.  | Lucille Bogan                    | 18. | Skip James                         |
| 3.  | Big Bill Boonzy                  | 19. | Robert Johnson                     |
| 4.  | Gus Cannon & the Jug Stompers    | 20. | Tommy Johnson                      |
| 5.  | Sam Chatmon                      | 21. | Albert King                        |
| 6.  | Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup          | 22. | B.B. King                          |
| 7.  | Eddy Clearwater                  | 23. | Magic Sam                          |
| 8.  | Willie Dixon                     | 24. | Charles Musselwhite                |
| 9.  | David "Honeyboy" Edwards         | 25. | Charley Patton                     |
| 10. | Luther Johnson                   | 26. | Jimmy Reed                         |
| 11. | Eugene Powell                    | 27. | Sunnyland Slim                     |
| 12. | Bukka "Booker T Washington)White | 28. | Muddy Waters                       |
| 13. | John Lee Hooker                  | 29. | Big Joe Williams                   |
| 14. | Big Walter Horton                | 30. | Sonny Boy Williamson (Rice Miller) |
| 15. | Son House                        | 31. | Elmore James                       |
| 16. | Howlin Wolf                      |     |                                    |

## Table **Pb**

### Mississippi Blues Artist Report Criteria

Report of your artist should include:

1. brief biography
2. what made him/her famous
3. time period he/she achieve greatest success
4. type of instrument(s) used by artist
5. Map showing movement and time of movement of the artist
  - a. where and when the artist was born
  - b. place(s) and time(s) artist moved to be successful
  - c. where and when artist died or where artist lives now.

Information should be put together in report form.

# Movement of Mississippi Blues Artists

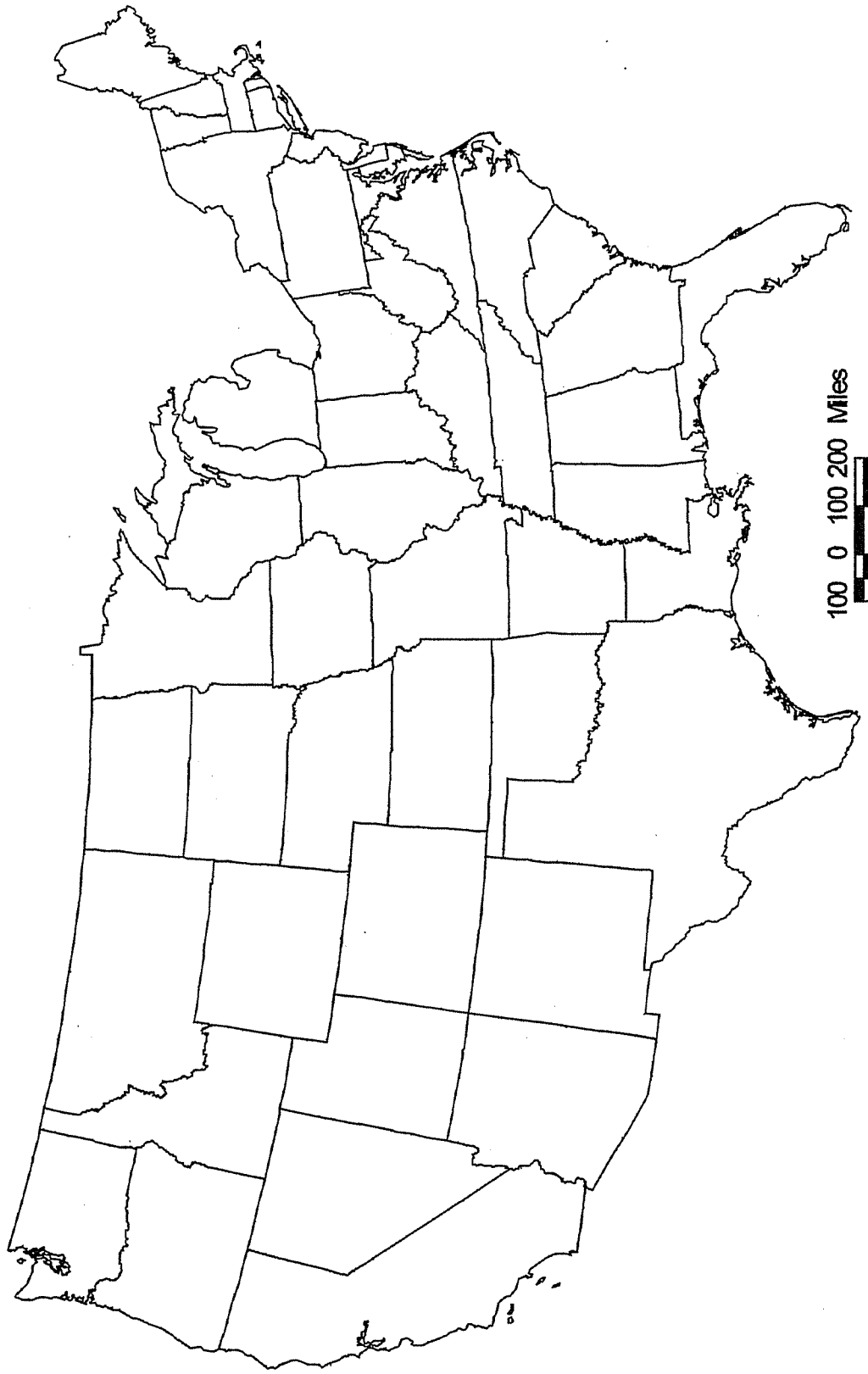


Figure P<sub>1</sub>