

## **Redefining the Mississippi Delta: Blues, Civil Rights, and the Great Migration**

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**“In order to understand the world, one must first understand a place like Mississippi” William Faulkner, 1954.**

### **Introduction/Rationale**

In the summer of 2013, I made the decision to spend one week in the seemingly isolated Mississippi Delta as a participant in an N.E.H. seminar titled “The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, History, and Culture.” I anticipated the seminar might perfectly complement my studies of the Civil Rights movement this fall. Although I had lived in New Orleans, approximately five hours away from the Delta, I had never visited this region. In fact, I only spent time in the Mississippi Hills when I had to evacuate for a hurricane. I mistakenly believed that Mississippi was one of the last backwaters of the United States, a place where racism was rampant, a place where the physical landscape was dotted with fast food restaurants, and a place where politicians were unapologetically corrupt. In short, I undervalued the Delta’s significance to the South, let alone the United States. When I jokingly mentioned to friends and family that I was spending a week in the Delta, I received funny stares while others questioned my intent to spend my precious summer in a mosquito pit. They wondered what I could possibly learn in the Delta. Unlike other nearby cities such as New Orleans and Memphis, which have always attracted a steady flow of tourists, the Delta and its small towns such as Cleveland, Greenville, and Clarksdale are often overlooked.

Only recently has the state of Mississippi begun to celebrate its cultural heritage. Arguably, a big motivating factor is an economic drive to find new ways to generate revenue for an already poor state. One of the biggest initiatives in the state is being led by the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi and the Mississippi Blues Commission. Since 2003, more than 200 blues markers have sprung up throughout the region, attracting tourists worldwide interested in learning about the “birthplace of blues.” Only recently has the state begun to educate the children about their cultural heritage, including the blues and the Civil Rights movement. This was most evident when I spoke with local teachers who stated they simply never learned about the blues in school or the fact that African-Americans once had the right to vote in the 1890s. This is further exemplified by a bizarre event that took place nearly a decade ago. Dockery Plantation, once the residence of Charles Patton, “the father of the blues,” was on the verge of being bulldozed to permit a highway expansion, until a group

of Swedish bikers protested at Dockery for several weeks. Consequently, the site was saved.

The Delta has served as the backdrop for a number of events and initiatives that were critical to the evolution of the Great Migration, agricultural mechanization, the rise and fall of the Plantation South, and the Civil Rights movement. Nowadays, little cotton is grown in the Delta, instead mostly corn and soybeans. This is partly due to the demand for feedstock for bio-fuels and generous farm subsidies. However, the Delta was rightly referred to as the land of King Cotton in the past. Its favorable location near the Mississippi River and its fertile soil made it an ideal place for agriculture. Given the region's dependency on cotton cultivation, life in the Delta was significantly altered when this economic activity became totally mechanized. It was largely this process that made sharecropping extinct, resulting in a mass exodus to the North. There is also a notable heritage of racial violence in the Delta. Emmett Till was murdered in Money, Mississippi (which served as a catalyst for the Civil Rights movement). His face was beaten in by several white supremacists and thrown into a local river. Countless lynchings occurred during the Jim Crow years here. The Mississippi Delta has a complex and to a certain extent an uncomfortable past. Therefore, my intent for this unit is to not only highlight the positive attributes of the Delta but also tackle its negative past in the context of the Civil rights movement. I believe the historical legacy of the Delta is often portrayed to students in an unfairly negative light, devoid of any balanced analysis. In particular, students often learn about the Civil Rights movement within the geographical context of "the South" as a whole and simply fail to recognize the significance of particular regions such as the Mississippi Delta.

This unit is most appropriate for an Advanced Placement human geography course. I will use "blues culture" as a lens to understand the geographical history of the United States, specifically the Civil Rights movement in the Mississippi Delta. The content of this unit applies to agriculture, population, migration, folk and popular culture, religion, and ethnicity. This unit can serve as a model to develop creative ways in which the study of geography of music can be effectively incorporated within a curriculum that emphasizes "place-based" education. In general, I hope to emphasize the uniqueness of the Mississippi Delta because it's a story worth telling.

## **Demographics**

Conrad Schools of Science is a grade 6-12 magnet program focusing on excellence in Biotechnology and Allied Health. With outside funding from companies such as AstraZeneca and DuPont, the mission of the school is to prepare students of varying abilities for higher education at college or universities, or post-graduate entry into health care professions. Therefore, it provides a concentrated, focused curriculum coupled with real-world experiences and project-oriented work. The school has been in operation for seven years and serves a diverse student population. The school is located just outside of

Wilmington, Delaware and consists of students living within the city limits as well as the surrounding area. There is strong parental support. Parents attend school functions and the Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.) is attended by about 100 parents a month.

This year I'm piloting a freshman only Advanced Placement human geography class in addition to teaching the same course to 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students in a distance learning lab. While I teach several other secondary social studies classes, this geography content is most applicable to this seminar. The A.P. human geography course is academically rigorous and requires students to take an end of the year exam administered by the College Board. I'm the only teacher offering A.P. human geography in the district and the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade course is taught as yearlong distance learning course with two other high schools in the district, A.I. Dupont High School and McKean High School. The student enrollment is approximately fifteen students in the freshman only course and thirty students in the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade course. Since this is a distance learning course, I had to learn new and creative ways for how to incorporate web 2.0 tools into the classroom and to re-evaluate the delivery of my instruction. For example, I now maintain a website and a blog, and I use online videos and Gmail chat. Few technological limitations exist in the lab, greatly influencing how I implement my units.

The A.P. human geography course emphasizes the importance of geography as a field of inquiry and briefly discusses the emergence of academic geography in nineteenth century Europe. The course introduces students to the importance of spatial organization—the location of places, people, and events, and the connections among places and landscapes—in the understanding of human life on Earth. Geographic concepts emphasized throughout the course are location, space, place, scale, pattern, regionalization, and globalization. These concepts are basic to students' understanding of spatial interaction and spatial behavior, the dynamics of human population growth and movement, patterns of culture, economic activities, political organization of space, and human settlement patterns, particularly urbanization. Students learn how to use and interpret maps. Additionally, they learn to apply mathematical formulas, models, and qualitative data to geographical concepts. The course also makes use of the concept of the region, encourages students to consider the regional organization of various phenomena, and enables students to create regions in order to illustrate process. A significant outcome of the course is students' awareness of the relevance of academic geography to everyday life and decision making. This combination of the academic and the applied gives students a sophisticated view of the world and an understanding of the manifold applications of what they have learned in the course.

In my opinion, all Delaware students should have access to a geography course at their high school. This is why I permit any interested high school student to take my course, even as an independent study. In my A.P. human geography, I make geography fun by having students “do geography” by using case studies, going on field trips in the local community, and doing interactive activities that get them moving. Geography is not

memorizing countries or doing textbook work. Most importantly, students need to personally relate to the content and in a real-world context. By teaching geography in the classroom, I give students a sophisticated view of the world and I increase each student's awareness of the relevance of academic geography to everyday life and decision making.

### **Enduring Understandings**

1. Students will learn about blues music and its relationship to *place*.
2. Students will be able to define the Mississippi Delta in a cultural and historical context and describe its significance.
3. Students will learn about the origin and diffusion of folk culture in the Mississippi Delta.
4. Students will be able to analyze the “push” and “pull” factors of African-Americans during the Great Migration.
5. Students will understand how sharecropping, racial injustice, and rural poverty in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century reflected everyday challenges of living in the Mississippi Delta by African-Americans.
6. Students will understand why the Mississippi Delta was an epicenter of the Civil Rights movement.

### **Essential Questions**

1. What is blues music?
2. What is the relationship between blues music and *place*?
3. Why is the Mississippi Delta historically and culturally significant?
4. Where did the folk culture of the Delta originate and diffuse?
5. Why did African-Americans leave the Delta during the Great Migration (push and pull factors)?
6. How does the Delta blues reflect the challenges of sharecropping, racial injustice, and rural poverty in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century African-American life?
7. Why was the Mississippi Delta an epicenter of the Civil Rights movement?

### **Background**

**“You Who Live in the North: Do not think that Mississippi has no relevance to you...My Mississippi is everywhere” –James Meredith**

While the Mississippi Delta is a real place, many might argue that Mississippi is much more of a mindset, or a perceptual region. James Cobb famously claimed that the Delta was the South's South, “a mirror within a mirror, capturing not just the South's but the Nation's most controversial traits in merciless sharp detail.”<sup>1</sup> This statement is valid for a variety of reasons. For example, one might be surprised to learn that the Delta was one of the last great wildernesses in the United States, incredibly swampy with tons of water.

Consequently, the Delta was one of the last places in the South to be cleared for cotton and plantation life due to this inhospitable climate. Until 1820 the Delta was an undeveloped “island” whose fertile soil was covered with dense hardwood forests and bayous. Settlers began to develop the Delta as part of the expanding cotton empire around 1835, and after the Civil War its land was cleared and plantations developed with black labor. One writer described the region as “cotton obsessed, Negro obsessed, and flood ridden, it is the deepest South, the heart of Dixie, American-s super-plantation belt.”<sup>ii</sup> During the post-Civil War period, thousands of black freedmen migrated to the Delta to clear and farm its fields. They were recruited by labor agents who promised higher wages and civil rights which had been lost in other parts of the state. Therefore, the Delta economy was founded upon the labor of African-Americans who cleared fields, built levees to protect them from floods, and cultivated their crops. This starkly contrasts with the images of plantation life often perpetuated in historically inaccurate films such as “Gone with the Wind.”

Since its founding through the 1930s, the Delta was dominated by “politically powerful gentleman planters, peopled by Black sharecroppers, Italian immigrants, Chinese, Lebanese, and Jewish merchants.”<sup>iii</sup> The early development of the Delta generated the class and social distinctions of America today, making the Delta an appropriate case study for students. For instance, they might be surprised to learn that Chinese cemeteries and old boarding schools dot the cultural landscape of this region. In fact, most of the South’s packaged pork rinds are still made in a small factory owned by third generation Chinese living in Clarksdale, a Delta town. However, the dominant ethnic group in the Delta was and continues to be African-Americans<sup>iv</sup>

Early life in the Delta for African-Americans was particularly difficult, they endured daily humiliation and denigration and constant reminders of their subservience each time they came into contact with whites. For example, African-Americans were never addressed by whites as “Mr.” or “Mrs.” and were often referred to by their first names, no matter how prestigious their position within black society.<sup>v</sup> In the Delta, planters were accustomed to absolute political and social deference from an economically dependent middle class as well, as a disenfranchised and socially repressed laboring class. Post-Civil-War, black sharecroppers essentially worked the field rented from the landowner for a share of the crops. To obtain seed, tools, food, and living quarters, a sharecropper had to get a line of credit from the landowner and repay the debt with yet more crops. Undoubtedly, the sharecropper system burdened poor African-Americans with high interest rates and heavy debts. Instead of growing food they could eat, sharecroppers were forced by landowners to plant extensive areas of crops such as cotton that could be sold for cash.<sup>vi</sup> Black sharecroppers complained that they always ended the farm year in debt, “All right, you start picking cotton and about settling time you done picked out about twenty-five bales of cotton and go in to settle...Now this thirteen hundred dollars what he loaning you, you done made that already, but he done popped his finger on it.”<sup>vii</sup> One cannot undervalue the difficulties of sharecropper life; picking cotton was an

incredibly difficult job. Cotton had to be picked by hand or on the picker's knees and the sharecroppers were paid based on how much cotton was picked. Picking cotton was a family event and helped to perpetuate a cycle of poverty for sharecroppers struggling to pay back debts to the plantation owner as evidenced by the aforementioned quote. Not until the mechanization of agriculture, beginning in the 1930s when machinery started to replace pickers, did those pickers begin to imagine work off of the cotton field.

Since African-Americans could not vote, whites were able to maintain regional and state dominance in political affairs. However, the onset of the Great Depression at least temporarily threatened the traditional planter economy and upset the stability of Delta society, resulting in great efforts to suppress the African-American community. The Great Depression plunged the Delta's economy into crisis, and the Roosevelt New Deal recovery program introduced the first ongoing federal presence in the region since the end of Reconstruction. Arguably, the New Deal failed to drastically improve living conditions for the poorest African-Americans in need, rather, Delta planters allied with the Federal government and worked even harder to preserve the sharecropping economic system. Delta planters argued that the sharecropping system was beneficial during hard times, providing tenants with guaranteed housing, clothing, and food.<sup>viii</sup> Additionally, during harvest times, planters intentionally tried to suspend relief programs which offered higher wages because it competed with the pay offered by planters. During the Great Flood of 1927, Delta planters discovered during the flood that federal aid could actually be used to restore the labor control that the high water had threatened to disrupt.

Sharecropping in the Delta became less common with the formal introduction of farm machinery, and a decline in the amount of land devoted to cotton reduced the demand for labor, creating an economic push factor for African-Americans. Furthermore, socially and politically, push factors such as racial oppression, Jim Crow, *de jure* and *de facto* segregation greatly compelled African-Americans in the rural Delta to migrate North in pursuit of better opportunities. Jim Crow refers to a system of state and local laws that were established following the Civil War with the intention of limiting the rights of African-Americans. This included the creation of separate educational institutions for whites and African-Americans, segregation of public facilities, and voting laws that effectively denied African-Americans the right to vote. Despite rigorous attempts by a white planter class to control African-Americans, major events like the Great Flood of 1927 and Great Depression greatly accelerated an exodus from the Delta.

### **African-American Migration and the Great Migration**

Thousands of African-Americans left the Delta for better economic and social opportunities in the North, aiding in the cultural diffusion of Delta culture, particularly certain music genres (blues, gospel, soul) and soul food. After 1940 blacks increasingly moved North in large numbers seeking better jobs and living conditions. Between 1955 and 1960, sixty percent of the black migrants to Chicago were from the South, and three-

fourths of these were Mississippi-born. For Shelby Brown and many other Delta residents, Chicago became a symbol of escape from the rural South, “one thing about Chicago, people told me that money was even growing on trees there.” In simple terms, migration is a permanent move to a new location.<sup>ix</sup> Reasons for migrating include moving for economic reasons and cultural and environmental factors, although not as frequently. Simply put, most people most migrate for economic reasons.<sup>x</sup> In respect to the Delta, many African-Americans chose to migrate due to environmental push factors such as the Great Flood of 1927 and the mechanization of agriculture. The Great Flood of 1927 “shattered the myth of a quasi-feudal bond between Delta blacks and the southern aristocracy, in which the former pledged fealty to the latter in return for protection. It accelerated the great migration of blacks north and altered both southern and national politics.”<sup>xi</sup> Southern African-Americans migrated in two main waves, pre-World War I and once again in the 1940s and 1950s. Both World Wars stimulated economic expansion in factories, opening up new job opportunities. This labor demand offered African-Americans the chance to essentially quadruple their salaries in 24 hours. Money and dignity existed in the North.

The prospect of economic opportunities in the booming North acted as a pull factor, encouraging African-Americans to leave familiar Mississippi for urban cities along the Mississippi River such as Memphis, St. Louis, and eventually more far reaching cities such as Chicago, which was situated near Highway 61 and 66 and a major railway system. As evidenced by the significant changes in population that took place in half a century, the Delta served as a major feeder for urban Chicago, the “city with big shoulders.” In Chicago, the black population grew from 44,000 in 1910 to 109,000 in 1920, and then to 234,000 in 1930.<sup>xii</sup> Undeniably, there was a powerful perception of equal opportunity in the North. In response to this mass migration, Southern planters tried to stop the migration. Some towns levied heavy “licensing fees” on labor agents to prevent them from coming around. Some threatened to put them in jail. Local propaganda against migration was perpetuated by planters, politicians, and the press. For example, a headline from the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* read “South is better for Negro, say Mississippians. Colored people found prosperous and happy.”<sup>xiii</sup>

This “Great Migration” had a huge cause and effect on the proliferation of Civil Rights organizations (NAACP and Urban League), the growth of black owned businesses, and the evolution of a new, urban black consumer culture. For example, the Pullman porters were the first and largest black owned labor union and the Chicago Defender (largest black owned newspaper in the world) became the voice of Black America. Years later, it was in Chicago that Emmett Till’s mother famously requested that her fourteen year old son, whose face had been violently beaten, not be covered up at his funeral. Emmett Till had been murdered in Money, Mississippi and thrown in a nearby river after he supposedly whistled at a white woman in the Bryant grocery store in the center of town. As the plantation workforce relocated to northern cities, southern music traveled with it and in doing so reshaped American culture in numerous ways.<sup>xiv</sup>

## Delta Blues

As previously mentioned, one of the defining characteristics of the Delta, is its musical heritage: the land where Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson wrote the lyrics that eventually made the Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton wealthy. African-Americans most likely created the blues in the southern United States around the 1890s or early 1900s. While the music developed decades after slavery, the blues can be tied back to African traditions. Drums were central to the original African cultures of the enslaved, but their usage was largely banned in the United States during the slavery era. One exception to this rule was French occupied New Orleans, specifically Congo Square. Every Sunday, slaves were permitted to dance and play “non-European” instruments in a square, providing a physical space for Africans to collaborate and experience a creative outlet of expression. Blues music also developed out of a dominant oral tradition. Prior to the emergence of blues, enslaved African music included work songs and field hollering. Slave songs similar in theme to blues were composed by musicians who voiced black suffering and used music to relieve those who had been mistreated. Like slave singers, blues musicians would latter comment on events in their own community through their music. The blues musicians were witnesses to problems of the black community. Arguably the original intent of the blues was to uplift listeners and to not necessarily make the singers and listeners depressed as commonly presumed. Common themes in blues music included expressing experiences of the individual, political isolation, freedom of travel, dissatisfaction, and segregation, unequal education for African-Americans, humor, and good fortune<sup>xv</sup>

Many Mississippi blues singers began to play music with a homemade instrument known as a “one-strand on the wall.” As a child, B.B. King built and played a one-strand. Delta blues were primarily sang in juke joints and house parties, lasting until those in attendance went home. Though most blues verses used today in the Delta are not original, singers prided themselves on being able to create verses spontaneously. Furthermore, blues singers are often associated in folk tradition with Voodoo because their music, like charms gave them special power over women.<sup>xvi</sup> For example, “Jelly Jaw” Short of Port Gibson sang “I am a snake doctor man, gang of womens everywhere I go.” Short’s reference to snakes is a Voodoo image frequently developed in blues verses. Later blues songs would address topics related to the Civil Rights movement. The blues is often viewed as music of protest, but it’s usually not thought of as being particularly political. This is because a lot of blues songs used coded words. Blues emerged in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Although initially during the Reconstruction era, African Americans could vote in Mississippi, this right, along with other freedoms were eventually stripped away due to the implementation of “black codes” and the formal and informal “Jim Crow” laws. To openly criticize the government was thought to be too dangerous at this time. Blues musicians also informally commented on poverty, economic situation etc. Once blues musicians moved up north, they more openly commented on segregation. During the 1960s, they became more openly vocal.<sup>xvii</sup> For example, B.B. King’s blues

song titled “Why I Sing the Blues,” included lyrics about topics such as slavery, poverty, substandard housing, and employment discrimination.

Beyond its musical influence, the region served as the backdrop for a number of events and initiatives critical to the evolution of both the Civil Rights movement and the Southern Diaspora, processes ultimately responsible for the demise of the plantation system in the Deep South.<sup>xviii</sup> During the height of the Civil Rights movement, the Mississippi Delta was seen as a “testing ground for democracy” due to its highly racist environment. The Citizen’s Council, a white supremacist organization, was founded in Mississippi and openly racist senators such as James Eastland represented the extreme views of white Southerners. During the 1950s, organized civil rights protest activity in Mississippi consisted largely of NAACP-instigated desegregation petitions and voter registration efforts.<sup>xix</sup> In the 1960s, more radical grassroots efforts were implemented by organizations such as S.N.C.C., C.O.R.E., and S.C.L.C.

## **Strategies**

I recognize that strictly relying on lecture as a sole teaching strategy in the classroom is going to lead some students to fail. Therefore, I use as many appropriate teaching strategies as possible and I intentionally limit most lectures to no more than thirty minutes. On balance, I prefer discussions to lectures because they give students the chance to sort content, generate questions, and play “what if” scenarios. However, when teaching the content of this unit, some direct instruction will be necessary in order to get students to critically think about both geography and history. Furthermore, many of my students may never visit the Delta, a rural place in the United States. Therefore, I am the sole representative of this content. It is my hope that students will develop a heightened awareness of blues music and become more culturally sensitive and appreciative of African-American contributions to the musical narrative.

## Utilization of Musical Themes to Teach Geography

Pairing music with geographic concepts aids in not only building necessary background knowledge but also makes geography fun and enjoyable. Arguably, music universally appeals to all students. I quickly learned in my A.P. human geography class that few students had any familiarity with the blues music. By studying the content of blues songs, students will learn about the experiences and struggles of working-class Southerners who created the music, including the legacies of slavery and cotton economy in the South, the development of Jim Crow, the Great Migration, and the Civil Rights movement. Additionally, students will better comprehend the political and social issues involved in African-Americans’ struggle for equality in the United States. Lastly, by utilizing a place-based educational approach, I will be able to immerse students in the local heritage, cultures, landscapes, opportunities and experiences of this often forgotten region. Overall, an incorporation of musical themes represents one way to facilitate a geographical

understanding of important phenomena and offers great potential to tap into student experiences.

### Maps to Develop Geographic Awareness

I use maps in my classroom on a frequent basis. Therefore, throughout this unit, students interact with physical, political, historical, and thematic maps. In the minds of most students, geography primarily entails the rote memorization of where places, rivers, resources, and other phenomena are located. In this unit, students will explore regional geography and culture while also learning about the cultural legacies of migrations of people from region to region in the United States. This unit will also help introduce students to the idea of a region and its relationship to music, specifically the blues music. Hopefully, students will gain a more sophisticated view of the South.

### Graphic Organizers/Vocabulary Development

Graphic organizers are used frequently in my course to aid in students' comprehension of the material. At the beginning of each unit, I pass out a graphic organizer with a list of the vocabulary terms along with a knowledge ranking system. This pre-assessment asks students to identify which words they already know (1), which words they somewhat know (2), and which words are completely new to them (3). This helps students tap into their prior knowledge and prioritize which words they should focus on. Aside from ranking the words, students are often asked to generate examples, non-examples, and identify characteristics of each term. As a teacher, I ensure they receive multiple opportunities to interact with the vocabulary by requiring them to maintain a *Quizlet* account to create electronic flashcards, play games, and quiz themselves (a great anchor activity), encouraging peer instruction (students create games using SmartBoard tools i.e. jeopardy, wheel of fortune), and quizzing students on a frequent basis (fill in the blank, matching, multiple-choice). During whole class discussions, students are required to speak the "geography lingo."

### Collaborative/Group Work/Peer Teaching

I often put students into heterogeneous groups and permit students to change seats often in order to improve student motivation and learning. I encourage group work because the novelty and variation provided by other learners increases learner momentum and relevance. Furthermore, I put students into groups because consistent feedback helps learners improve framework for learning and gather critical feedback. I make sure that cooperative activities are structured so that students can take ownership for major information points.

### Music

I plan to play at least one blues song in every class because music functions as one of the most important and informative forms of cultural expression. It offers students the ability to read song lyrics for information, point of view, and argument. Most importantly, blues is considered a uniquely American form of cultural expression. This matters because blues music is one of America's major cultural legacies. An entire generation of blues musicians is disappearing, along with their distinct culture.

## Technology

Technology is undoubtedly an incredibly powerful, appropriate, and relevant pedagogical approach for social studies teachers. Technology can help students in A.P. human geography analyze and interrogate both historical and contemporary events and issues from multiple perspectives. This pedagogical approach is considerate of the newest crop of students, currently in K-12, who developed under the digital wave and became completely normalized by digital technologies. It is a fully integrated aspect of their lives. The use of technology in the classroom is an appropriate approach worth exploring because American classrooms must prepare students for future careers in institutions (business, industry, medicine, government, and science) which will expect them to be proficient in the use of computers and to be innovative and creative thinkers. Basically, they'll be expected to harness the power of various technological tools in an increasingly interconnected world. But teachers should determine how technologically proficient students are and what their attitudes and beliefs are towards innovation before implementing anything in the classroom. Furthermore, teachers need to educate themselves (informally or formally) and be open to learning about different types of technology.

In a culminating project, students will create a digital story of a Delta sharecropper who migrates North during the Great Migration. Students will use images, maps, and blues music to tell an engaging and personal story. Their narratives will demonstrate an understanding of the role images play in a story and they'll create or find appropriate images to tell their stories. Students will be evaluated by a rubric that assesses the following: point of view, dramatic question, voice, soundtrack, images, grammar, and economy. At the conclusion of the unit, my high school students will present their projects to the sixth grade students when they are studying the Civil Rights movement in their English classes. This offers my students a great opportunity to showcase their projects and impact a larger student audience.

## Jigsaw Activity

In the jigsaw activity, students are first assigned to a group. Then the teacher puts them into smaller groups (expert groups) with the people who were given the same song. They discuss it and use guided questions provided. The purpose is for them to become an expert on the song. The second part of the activity involves peer teaching. The teacher

puts students into different small groups with people who had different articles. Each person's job is to explain to the "teaching group" the highlights of the article using questions discussed with the "expert group" as a guide. Each member of the teaching group explains their particular section in turn. Once everyone in the group has shared their material, the teacher should have them discuss questions that tie in with the main focus of the unit. Simpler options are to have the students read the assigned selections and then summarize the main points expressed in it. Cooperative learning opportunities such as the one mentioned above have been attributed to gains in three major areas- academic achievement, intergroup relations, and social and affective development.

### Lesson 1: What is blues music?

Anticipatory Set: Direct students to fill out a K.W.L. chart (know, want to learn, learned) about blues music and share responses. Write answers on a sticky notes and post onto board. Introduce essential questions and essential understandings. Next, place students into small heterogeneous groups and distribute large sheets of paper and colored markers. In order to excite students about the unit, tell students you plan to play 30 second clips of several influential and famous blues singers. Tell them their job is to actively listen to each blues song and to record phrases and words heard or to write down emotions felt while listening to the music. Additionally, students can draw images to represent a particular song. Instruct the student groups to use their own marker. This will encourage accountability and participation from all students. The teacher should intentionally play at least one early recording, preferably one from Charles Patton (father of Delta blues), and at least one song to represent the "Delta sound" and another one to represent the "Chicago sound." Keep in mind, Delta blues has a more organic sound while Chicago blues musicians used an electric guitar, creating a distinct sound. Suggested musicians include Muddy Waters, B.B. King, or Robert Johnson (Delta blues). Afterwards, have each group share their "graffiti" paper. Provide students with a basic description of blues music before transitioning to the main activity.

Activity: Since students will most likely lack previous knowledge about blues music, it's recommended to briefly lecture about the topic. The Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame museum has an excellent introductory video accessible on their website for teachers titled "On the Road." The first fifteen minutes of the video discuss the basic characteristics of blues music including: the twelve bar structure, repetition, call and response, and traditional blues lyrics consisting of a single line repeated four times in AAB. A clear example of how this pattern is used can be found in the song "Hound Dog" by Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller, which was popularized by both Big Mama Thornton and Elvis Presley. Segue into a brief discussion about the origins of the blues by discussing field hollers and work songs. A field holler was an unaccompanied song that individual African American agricultural laborers sang while working in the fields. The field holler was often a lament, or mournful song. Their vocal style was a main element of the blues. Next, tell students that work songs were sung by groups of laborers while performing jobs, often those that required precise timing, such as adjusting railroad tracks. An example of work songs can

be found in the film *O Brother Where Art Thou* (2000) in the opening clip titled “Po’ Lazarus.” Lastly, tell students that call and response is a musical form where members of a group echo a phrase called out by the group leader. This form, found widely in Africa, is expressed in African American religious music, work songs, and the blues, where instruments often “answer” vocal lines. Students should know the major instruments of the blues including: the diddley bow, the acoustic guitar, electric guitar, the harmonica, fife and drum bands, the washboard, and improvisation instruments such as bones, spoons or sticks. If time permits, discuss some of the common themes portrayed through blues lyrics such as dissatisfaction, segregation, expressing experiences of the individual and political isolation. The themes of the blues will be taught again in the third lesson.

Assessment: Instruct students to fill out their K.W.L. chart and answer the following question: In your own words, what is blues music?

## Lesson Two: Delta Blues

Anticipatory Set: Introduce this lesson by asking students to describe the South (vernacular region) in their own words. Unsurprisingly, students will most likely describe the South using stereotypes such as “southerners usually talk with a heavy drawl” or “eat lots of grits.” Next, give students a brief introductory quiz titled “Where in America?” For each question, ask students to write down the region they believe is the correct answer. Use the following questions: What Southern region is called “home” by many citizens in Gary, Detroit, Flint, Chicago, Oakland, New York, and other major U.S. cities? In what area did African-Americans own two-thirds of the farms in 1900? What southern region is widely known as the birthplace of the blues (and also gave to birth Rock ‘n’ Roll)? What southern region had more lynchings than any other in the years between 1870 and 1930? What region has been called by the National Park Service “The cradle of American culture” and by James Cobb “the most southern place on Earth?” This is an intentionally tricky quiz. The Mississippi Delta is the correct answer for all five questions. After giving the quiz, using a web 2.0 presentation tool such as *Prezi*, show images of the Mississippi Delta. Suggested images might be Mississippi blues markers. Next, show students a YouTube clip titled “Road Trip USA: Mississippi” created by The Guardian. Journalist Richard Grant goes on a road trip exploring the eccentricities of the region, from the lobby of the famous Peabody Hotel in Memphis to the crossroads in Clarksdale, Mississippi where legendary guitarist Robert Johnson supposedly sold his soul to the devil. On the way he takes in a gospel service and blues session on a porch, and meets a Chinese store owner with a deep Mississippi drawl. While students are watching the clip, have them write down examples of Delta culture. If time permits, the teacher can show clips from *Bizarre Food America* which has a segment on Highway 61 or clips from the film *Down in the Delta*.

Activity: Have students geographically locate and label the following on a Mississippi map: The Mississippi Delta and the four other regions of the state: Hills, Pines, Coast, River/Capital. Also, Mississippi River, Greenville, Indianola, Natchez, Vicksburg, New

Orleans. Discuss difference between the Hills and the Delta. The Hills is considered to be the home of “country” music while the Delta is the home of the blues. Instruct students to create a visual representation of the region Delta.

Assessment: Instruct students to create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting Delta culture to their own local culture i.e. Mid-Atlantic or Philadelphian cultures to identify major differences and similarities.

### Lesson 3: Why the Mississippi Delta Matters

Anticipatory Set: Ask students the following questions as a bell ringer: List words that you associate with the Civil Rights movement. Record student responses onto the board and encourage them to circle related words. Next, ask students the following questions: Where did the Civil Rights movement occur? Why did it occur? Stress to students that the movement arguably occurred nationwide, but the South was the epicenter of the movement due to Jim Crow and events like the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Mississippi Freedom Summer. Segue into a discussion about some of the major causes for the movement such as inequality (education, voting rights) and *de facto* and *de jure* segregation (explain the differences between these two terms). Provide basic background information about harsh living conditions and limited opportunities (social, economic, political) for African-Americans in the Mississippi Delta. If possible, provide visual examples of Jim Crow.

Activity: Introduce the main activity by reminding students that blues music often highlighted the struggles of African-Americans in the South. Stress that blues music served as an outlet of creative expression and directly addressed themes not only related to Delta life but also the Civil Rights movement. Provide students with a handout listing lyrics from blues musicians discussing topics such as sharecropping, laboring in cotton fields, the Great Migration, and Jim Crow. For example, play a song titled “Dry Spell Blues” by Son House which talks about the boll weevil, a small insect that devastated crops because it fed on cotton buds and flowers. Other recommended songs are “Cotton Farmer Blues” by Sampson Pittman which provides detail about the process of selling crops at a bad rate set by storeowners or the song “Mississippi Cotton Pickin’ Delta Town” by Charley Pride who sung about the tough work on the cotton fields. Lastly, one of the first early blues songs to mention Jim Crow was Maggie Jones’ “Northbound Blues.” She sang about the train as a way to get away from the racism she experienced under Jim Crow laws. While students listen to the suggested blues songs, encourage them to highlight key words associated with the introductory discussion.

Assessment: Require students to answer this essential question as a Pass Out of Class: How does the Delta blues reflect the challenges of sharecropping, racial injustice, and rural poverty in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century African-American life?

### Lesson 4: The Great Migration

Anticipatory Set: Instruct students to answer this question: Why do people migrate? Introduce the “Great Migration” and provide a brief background reading. Tell students that thousands of African-Americans left the Delta due to previously discussed reasons for better opportunities in cities like Memphis and Chicago. As review activity, have students create a T-chart listing the push and pull factors of the Great Migration. Play “Cotton Patch Blues” by Tommy McCleannan, a blues musician who moved to Chicago and lamented that “his woman” was still picking cotton in Mississippi.

Activity: Have students read the poem titled “The South” by Langston Hughes and ask them to consider the following questions: What does the poem reveal about life in the South? What does the poem suggest is the solution to life in the South? What does the poem reveal about life in the North? Next, have students listen to Hughes recite his poem “One Way Ticket.” After listening, discuss what the poem suggests about conditions in the South. What solution is offered for the problems that African-Americans must deal with in the South? If needed, depending on the background knowledge of the students, provide students with basic information about the Great Migration. Show a clip from the film *Godfathers and Sons*. Follow up the film by discussing whether or not the poems accurately depict life in the South for African-Americans and if the poems capture the dream and the reality of life in the North.

Assessment: Play the blues song “When Will I Get to Be Called a Man” by Big Bill Bronzy, a Delta blues musician. Ask students to record lines that offer information about Southern and Northern life, as well as expectations of what life in the North would hold.

## Lesson 5: Delta Blues, Protest, and the Civil Rights Movement

Anticipatory Set: Introduce lesson and tell students they will learn about the connection of blues to political and social protest. Ask students to define “protest” and to provide real-world examples.

Activity: Tell students they will listen to a series of blues songs addressing discrimination in the South, Jim Crow laws, and the Civil Rights movement. Distribute computers and have different students in each group listen to pre-selected songs. In this jigsaw activity, students will become mini-experts before teaching their group members about their songs. The first suggested song is titled “Black Brown and White” by Big Bill Broozy, which addresses discrimination at stores, work and in the military.

J.B. Lenoir’s song titled “Down in Mississippi” is incredibly powerful while Louisiana Red’s “Ride on Red” talks about taking his own bus ride out of the South. A fourth suggested song is “Why I Sing the Blues” by B.B. King which includes lyrics about topics including slavery, poverty, substandard housing, and employment discrimination. Lastly, another suggested song is from Sam Cooke, a native of Clarksdale, Mississippi, titled “A Change is Gonna Come.” Sam Cooke, a soul singer, was highly influenced by blues music and his upbringing in the Delta.

Assessment: Have students to conduct research on the Internet to find another blues or soul song that tackles issues relevant to the Civil Rights movement, requiring them to explain their rationale.

## Lesson 6: Extension Activity

Extension Activity # 1: A great tool on the web for students to use is blogging. This activity can take place in or out of the classroom. Essentially, the teacher posts a question, an image, or an article for students to examine and they put their responses into an electronic format accessible to all. This activity is particularly beneficial for students who do not voice their opinions frequently in class. Another benefit of blogging is that students can also comment on each others' work.

Extension Activity #2: As a culminating activity, students can create a digital story of a Mississippian from Delta who migrates to the Chicago during the Great Migration. As discussed earlier, students can present their digital stories to younger students learning about the Civil Rights movement.

## Resource List

*American Experience: The Murder of Emmett Till*. Accessed on July 21, 2013. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/>. Excellent website to utilize for student research or to show clips of the moving documentary.

Asch, Christopher M. *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggle of James O Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer*. New York: The New Press, 2008. This can be used as teacher resource that highlights the grassroots struggle of Fannie Lou Hamer in the land of racist Senator Eastland.

Barry, John. *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How it Changed America*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997. Award winning book about the Great Flood of 1927 and how it negatively impacted life in the Mississippi Delta.

Berlin, Ira. *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations*. New York: Vikings Press, 2010. This is comprehensive resource about the Great Migration.

“Blues Archive: University of Mississippi Libraries.” Accessed on July 21, 2013. [http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/general\\_library/archives/blues/](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/general_library/archives/blues/). This is an excellent online resource for research about blues music.

Cobb, James C. *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. This is an influential book about the Mississippi Delta which highlights the uniqueness of this region.

Cobb, James C. “Somebody Done Nailed Us on the Cross”: Federal Farm and Welfare Policy and the Civil Rights Movement in the Mississippi Delta. *The Journal of American History*. (1990): 912-936. This is another excellent resource by James Cobb about the impoverished Delta.

Dattel, Gene. *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: the Human Costs of Economic Power*. Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 2009. This is a great teacher resource about the impact of cotton cultivation in the South.

Dierenfield, Bruce J. *The Civil Rights Movement*. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2008. This is the book read in our Civil Rights seminar for the Delaware Teacher Institute.

Dittmer, John. *Local People: The Struggle for the Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994. This book discusses the importance of local people in the Civil Rights movement in Mississippi.

Egerton, John. *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South*. North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. This book is appropriate for the teacher interested in learning more about the often deemphasized time period before the classic Civil Rights movement in the 1960s.

Faulkner, William. *The Faulkner Reader*. New York: Random House, 1954. William Faulkner spent a significant amount of time in the Delta. Faulkner quotes can be read in class as a “hook” to interest students in the learning about the Delta.

Ferrence, Matthew. “Breaking the Filibuster of Race: the Literary Resonance of the Emmett Till Murder.” *Arkansas Review* 41.1 (Spring 2010): 45-62. Exploration of Emmett Till case through literature, *Wolf Whistle*. Academic reading for teachers.

Ferris, William. *Blues From The Delta*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1978. A great introductory book about Delta blues, including interesting photos.

Gioia, Ted. *Delta Blues: The Life and Times of the Mississippi Masters who Revolutionized American Music*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008. This is a suggested reading for a teacher interested in acquiring a more in depth knowledge of Delta blues.

Giesen, James. G. *Boll Weevil Blues: Cotton, Myth, and Power in the American South*. University of Chicago Press, 2011. This is a great academic reading for teachers.

Gregory, James. *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. This a great academic reading for teachers.

Griffin, Larry J. “Race, Memory, And Historical Responsibility: What Do Southerners Do With A Difficult Past?” *University of North Carolina*, Chapel Hill, (2008), 1-4. This is an excellent article that can be shared with upper-level students.

Harrison, Alferdteen. *Black Exodus: The Great Migration from the American South*. The University Press of Mississippi, 1992. This is a recommended reading for teachers.

Holley, Donald. *The Second Great Migration: The Mechanical Cotton Picker, Black Migration, and How They Shaped the Modern South*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2000. This book provides the reader with more background knowledge about the second wave of the Great Migration.

“In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience.” Accessed on July 14, 2013. <http://www.inmotioname.org/home.cfm>. This is an awesome interactive website that brings the Great Migration alive.

*Lalee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton*, 2001. Unnerving discussion about the culture of poverty, chaotic dependency, and de facto segregation.

“LBJ Presidential Library.” Accessed on July 31, 2013. <http://www.lbjlibrary.org/>. Lyndon B. Johnson had his telephone conversations taped and one of them includes a conversation with Senator Eastland about the missing civil rights activist.

Lee, Chana K. *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer (Women in American History)*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000. This is a fantastic treatment of Fannie Lou Hamer, an influential civil rights activist from the Delta.

Lemann, Nicholas. *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America*. New York: Vintage, 1991. A lengthy reading about the Great Migration that is most appropriate for teachers.

Lomax, Alan. *The Land Where the Blues Began*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1993. Alan Lomax played an instrumental role in recording dying blues musicians.

“Mississippi Blues Trail” Accessed August 7, 2013. <http://www.msbluestrail.org>. This is a wonderful website with a detailed curriculum appropriate for secondary students.

Norris, Michele. “The Mix: Songs Inspired By The Civil Rights Movement.” *NPR*, July 9, 2013. Accessed on August 8, 2013. [www.npr.org/2013/07/09/199105070/the-mix-songs-inspired-by-the-civil-rights-movement](http://www.npr.org/2013/07/09/199105070/the-mix-songs-inspired-by-the-civil-rights-movement). The content from this website can be used to teach any civil rights themed lesson.

“North by South.” Accessed August 8, 2013. <http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/main1.htm>. This Internet resource is great for teaching about the Great Migration.

Palmer, Robert. *Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History, from the Mississippi Delta to Chicago's South Side to the World*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 1982. This is an academic reading for teachers.

Rubenstein, James M. *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011. This student textbook can be used in A.P. human geography.

Sugarman, Tracy. *We Had Sneakers, They Had Guns: The Kids Who Fought for Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009. Highly engaging reading about the youth movement in Mississippi.

Strait, John B. "Experiencing the Blues at the Crossroads: A Place-Based Method for Teaching the Geography of Blues Culture." *The Journal of Geography* 111, (2012): 194-209. This article stresses the importance of place-based education.

Strait, John B. "Geographical Study of American Blues Culture." *The Journal of Geography* 109, (2010): 30-39. This article discusses the relationship between music and geography.

"Teach Rock." Accessed November 19, 2013. [www.teachrock.org](http://www.teachrock.org). Phenomenal resource for teaching blues music in the classroom. This online curriculum was just released and offers 40 plus lessons for teaching about rock 'n' roll.

Watson, Bruce. *Freedom Summer: The Savage Season that Made Mississippi Burn and Made America a Democracy*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2010. This is a moving read about Mississippi's violent era.

Woodruff, Nan E. *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 2003. This is an incredible resource for teaching specifically about the civil rights movement in the Delta.

Yafa, Steven. *Big Cotton: How a Humble Fiber Created Fortunes, Wrecked Civilizations, and Put American on the Map*. New York: Viking, 2004. This academic book highlights the role of cotton in the Delta.

Whitfield, S.J. *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. This book details the trial of Emmett Till and why it attracted national attention.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*. New York: Random house, 2011. Deals with the Great Migration, three separate stories, Los Angeles to California, Delta to Chicago, Florida to Harlem.

## Appendices

A.P. human geography is a college level course offered nationwide that doesn't necessarily adhere to any state standard because standards vary greatly nationwide. Each A.P. teacher is held responsible for devising a rigorous curriculum (semester or yearlong) that ultimately prepares students for a comprehensive College Board exam issued annually each May. Since this geography unit can be taught in a regular high school course, I will identify the most relevant Delaware state standards. This unit's content targets three of the four geography standards for high school students. History standards are also addressed, especially since this unit can be potentially taught in a United States history course (college prep, honors, or Advanced Placement).

Geography standard one requires students to develop a personal geographic framework, or "mental map," and understand the use of maps and other geographics. All lessons in this unit encourage students to develop their mental map of the South, more specifically the Mississippi Delta. Secondly, geography standard three requires students to develop an understanding of the diversity of human culture and the unique nature of places. Undoubtedly, the first four lessons address this standard by providing instruction about the folk culture of the Mississippi Delta and why it's a culturally significant place. Lastly, the last two lessons help students to develop an understanding of the character and use of regions and the connections between and among them (geography standard four). By having students create digital stories of the Great Migration, students more acutely understand the connections between the Mississippi Delta, the Mississippi Basin, and the Great Lakes region.

The Great Migration and the Civil Rights movement are two major units of study in a United States history course. Therefore, the content in this unit is appropriate. Using blues music as a lens to study this significant period in history offers an engaging and interesting approach. The two most relevant standards are history standard one and four. History standard one states "students will analyze historical materials to trace the development of an idea or trend across space over a prolonged period of time in order to explain the patterns of historical continuity and change." History standard two states: "Students will develop historical knowledge of major events and phenomena in world, United States, and Delaware history" (Content)

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- <sup>i</sup> James C. Cobb. *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 1.
- <sup>ii</sup> William Ferris. *Blues From The Delta* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1978), 1.
- <sup>iii</sup> Cobb, 153.
- <sup>iv</sup> James M. Rubenstein. *The Cultural Landscape* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011), 219.
- <sup>v</sup> Cobb, 163.
- <sup>vi</sup> Rubenstein, 212.
- <sup>vii</sup> Ferris, 6.
- <sup>viii</sup> Cobb, 191.
- <sup>ix</sup> Rubenstein, 80.
- <sup>x</sup> Nicholas Lemann. *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America*. (New York: Vintage, 1991), 32.
- <sup>xi</sup> John M. Barry. *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*. (New York: Simon and Schulster, 1997), 422.
- <sup>xii</sup> Lemann, 16.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Lemann, 17.
- <sup>xiv</sup> John B. Strait. "Geographical Study of American Blues Culture." *The Journal of Geography* 109, (2010), 31.
- <sup>xv</sup> Ferris, 28.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Ferris, 77.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Strait, 34.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Cobb, 230.
- <sup>xix</sup> Cobb, 232.

Curriculum Unit  
Title

*Redefining Mississippi: Delta Blues, Civil Rights, and the Great Migration.*

Author

Melissa B. Tracy

**KEY LEARNING, ENDURING UNDERSTANDING, ETC.**

1. Students will learn about blues music and its relationship to *place*.
2. Students will be able to culturally define the Mississippi Delta and explain its significance.
3. Students will know the origins and diffusion of folk culture in the Mississippi Delta.
4. Students will be able to analyze the push and pull factors of the Great Migration.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT**

1. What is blues music? What is the relationship between blues music and *place*?
2. How should one culturally define the Mississippi Delta? Why is this region significant?
3. Where did the folk culture of the Delta originate and diffuse?
4. Why did African-Americans leave the Delta during the Great Migration (push and pull factors)?
5. How does the Delta blues reflect the challenges of sharecropping, racial injustice, and rural poverty in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century African-American life?
6. Why was the Mississippi Delta an epicenter of the Civil Rights movement?

**CONCEPT A**

Blues Music

**CONCEPT B**

Historical and Cultural Legacy of the Delta

**CONCEPT C**

The Great Migration & The Civil Rights movement

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A**

What is blues music?  
What is the relationship between blues music and *place*?

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B**

How should one culturally define the Mississippi Delta? Why is this region significant?  
Where did folk culture in the Delta originate and diffuse?  
How does the Delta blues reflect the challenges of sharecropping, racial injustice, and rural poverty in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century African-American life?

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C**

Why did African-Americans leave the Delta during the Great Migration? Push and pull factors?  
Why was the Mississippi Delta an epicenter of the Civil Rights movement?

**VOCABULARY A**

Blues (Delta, Memphis, Chicago)  
Place  
Site vs. situation

**VOCABULARY B**

Culture	Jim Crow
Folk Culture	Poverty
Diffusion (Hierarchical, Migrant, Contagious)	
Sharecropping	Segregation (de jure & de facto)

**VOCABULARY C**

Great Migration  
Push and Pull factors (Economic, Social, & Political)

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES**

1. Cobb, James C. *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
2. Dierenfield, Bruce J. *The Civil Rights Movement*. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2008. This is the book read in our Civil Rights seminar for the Delaware Teacher Institute.
3. Ferris, William. *Blues From The Delta*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1978.
4. Gregory, James. *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
5. "Mississippi Blues Trail" Accessed August 7, 2013. <http://www.msbluestrail.org>.