

**National Endowment For The Humanities
Delta State University
Delta Center for Culture and Learning
“The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, Culture and History of the
Mississippi Delta”**

**Project: “A Memory Box from the Mississippi Delta” (TK-12)
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Description of project:

“A Memory Box from the Mississippi Delta” will promote historical, social, musical, literary and geographic knowledge of a specific region of the United States by engaging students in a series of hands-on and field experiences in storytelling, history, geography, music, literature, and in a community project that encourages awareness and participation to learn, share, respect, and value cultural diversity in our rural community, our country, and the world.

By learning the history of the Mississippi Delta, we bring an interesting region of our country to our rural community in the State of Washington. Middle school and high school freshmen research topics on the history, geography, civil rights movement, and music from the Mississippi Delta area to fill a memory box with maps, flags, music, recipes, books, biographies, pictures, and important historical/geographical facts. Then, students prepare visual and oral presentations to share their new knowledge of the Mississippi Delta region with their classmates, elementary school students, and community at large.

“A Memory Box from the Mississippi Delta” will be added to our district’s global competence curriculum that helps us prepare students to become citizens of an interconnected and interdependent global society. While researching topics about the Mississippi Delta, our rural students will develop and improve their social skills that embrace tolerance, cooperation, a sense of responsibility, and appreciation of our common humanity: the key elements of global competence. By bringing the Mississippi Delta into our classrooms, we will encourage students to value the history, music, culture, and the many traditions of this customarily stereotyped and misunderstood, but critical region of the United States.

a) Goals:

1. To promote interest in the Mississippi Delta among rural TK-12 students.
2. To learn about the Mississippi Delta’s rich history, music, and culture.
3. To study similarities and differences between the Mississippi Delta and our own region in Central Washington.

b) Research Topics:

- a. Geography: Where is the Mississippi Delta located?
- b. History: “untold” stories of plantations, slavery, emancipation, the Civil War, the Great Flood of 1927, the Civil Rights Movement, etc.
- c. Literature: Tennessee Williams, William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, etc.
- d. Storytelling: living heritage testimonials
- e. Music: Birthplace of the Blues and Rock and Roll
- f. Cuisine: traditional recipes from the area
- g. Tourism: the Crossroads; many historical markers, etc.

c) Suggested Contents of the Memory Box:

1. Maps of the region
2. Flag of the state of Mississippi
3. Books (different age levels)
4. Timelines for history
5. Fact lists
6. Biographies of “famous” people from the Mississippi Delta
7. Recipes: Catfish, pulled pork, “koolickles”, bbq chicken, etc.
8. Music; B.B. King, Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Elvis Presley, etc. (several CD’s)
9. Realia (authentic artifacts and souvenirs from the area)
10. Pictures/videos
11. Brochures

The Bibliography provided by the Delta Center for Culture and Learning to participants in the NEH Landmarks of American History Program.

As expected, this project is a **work in progress** as more information will be added or modified as the project’s author continues his personal online research and the reading of books and articles included in the program’s reading assignments.