

Cultural History along the Natchez Trace Parkway



Classroom Lesson:

History of the Natchez Trace (code 3HT)

➤ **Grade:**
3rd

➤ **Subject Areas:**
Language Arts
Social Studies

➤ **Setting:**
Classroom

➤ **Duration:**
2-3 class periods

➤ **Skills:**
Writing,
comprehending,
listening

➤ **AL Objectives:**
Social Studies
3,4,5,7,8,12,13
Language Arts
4, 9, 10

➤ **Vocabulary:**
Kaintucks,
National Park
Service

Summary: The teacher will read How the Natchez Trace Came to Be to the students and the students will write a summary report of the book with help from the teacher.



Materials Needed: How the Trace Came to Be, either printed as a book or as a PowerPoint, paper, pencils, for each student: notes page (attached) One official map of the Natchez Trace Parkway (call 1-800-305-7417 or visit www.nps.gov/natr)

Instructional Information

Alabama Objectives:

Social Studies (2010):

3. Describe ways the environment is affected by humans in Alabama and the world. 4. Relate population dispersion to geographic, economic, and historic changes in Alabama and the world. 5. Compare trading patterns between countries and regions. 7. Describe the relationship between locations of resources and patterns of population distribution. 8. Identify geographic links of land regions, river systems, and interstate highways between Alabama and other states. 12. Explain the significance of representations of American values and beliefs, including the Statue of Liberty, the statue of Lady Justice, the United States flag, and the national anthem. 13. Describe prehistoric and historic American Indian cultures, governments, and economics in Alabama.

Language Arts: 4) Use a wide range of strategies and skills, including retelling information, using context clues, and making inferences to identify main idea, to comprehend third-grade informational and functional reading materials. **9)** Compose narrative texts using an introductory paragraph, specific time frames, clear sequencing of events, and a conclusion. **10)** Apply mechanics in writing, including

capitalization of proper nouns and titles of people and appropriate end marks, abbreviations, and commas with dates.

Learning Objectives: 1) The students will) Listen to and retell a non-fiction story. 2) Compose a text relating to the story while using proper writing grammar and mechanics 3) Determine their location in relationship to that of the Natchez Trace Parkway. 4) Learn about the different people who have used the Natchez Trace over a period of time, 5) learn about their civic responsibilities in relation to a National Parkway.

Teacher Set: The teacher will show the students an official map of the Natchez Trace Parkway and have the students determine where they live in relation to the Parkway. The teacher will read How the Natchez Trace Came to Be to the students. The teacher will make sure that the students are taking notes as to when the Natchez Trace was formed, how it was formed, and who protects the Natchez Trace now. The students will use this information when they are writing the summary paper. The teacher will also help the students in remembering facts from the story. The teacher will

lead a reinforcing class discussion. Alternatively, the teacher may write the notes on the board after the story is read and then have the students copy the notes.

Teacher Overview: The Natchez Trace was formed many years ago by animals and subsequently, by the American Indians who followed game. In the 1700s, traders nicknamed Kaintucks floated down rivers that emptied into the Mississippi. They were on their way to sell their goods in the thriving port city of Natchez, the capital of the old southwest. Useless for travel back upriver, the flatboats were sold and the Kaintucks walked home hundreds of miles on the Old Trace. Winding through Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, the historic Natchez Trace Parkway was established in 1938 to commemorate this historic travel route. The roadway was completed in 2005.

The Old Trace was a critical element in the founding of the southeastern United States. Prior to Hernando deSoto's arrival on the Trace, it was a long-used travel route for American Indian tribes such as the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Natchez. Later during the Indian removal, it was crossed by the Trail of Tears. It was a federal postal route and was used by military giants such as Andrew Jackson and U.S. Grant. It is where Meriwether Lewis took his final steps on this earth.

- **Vocabulary**
 - Kaintucks- a person who traveled the Natchez Trace Parkway back home to the Ohio River Valley
 - National Park Service- part of the Department of Interior that is responsible for national parks, monument, and historical sites

Student Instruction: On the official Natchez Trace Parkway map, the students will collectively determine their location in relationship to the Parkway. The students will listen as the teacher reads How the Natchez Trace Came to Be. As the story is being read, the students should take notes on any information they think is important. The teacher will provide the note sheet for students to use. After the story is read, the teacher will lead the students in the writing process: 1. Planning - 2. Drafting - 3. Revising - 4. Editing - 5. Publishing. The teacher will keep the story available to students if they need to reread the story to find information. The students will complete the assignment in the classroom.

Student Task: The students will determine their location in relation to the Natchez Trace Parkway. The students will listen to How the Natchez Trace Came to Be. The students will take notes on the Note-Taking sheet as the story is being read. They are to focus on when the Natchez Trace was developed, how it was developed, and who protects it now. When the story has been read, the students and teacher will retell the story orally as a class discussion. This time, the teacher will write the information to complete the note sheet on the board for the students that did not to take good notes during the reading of the story. The teacher should make sure the students have all of the information in the report.

The students will then use their note sheet to compose at least one paragraph that summarizing the history of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Option: The teacher may encourage the students to illustrate their stories.

Option: The class may collectively retell the story as the teacher writes it on the board. The students will then copy the story from the board.

Teacher Closure: The teacher will allow several students to read their reports to the class.

Student Assessment: The students will be graded on the report. The teacher will grade the reports on grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.

Suggestions for re-teaching: The students will write a narrative story about someone or something traveling the Natchez Trace. In the story, the students may write about what the traveler saw on his journey down the Natchez Trace. The story can take place during any time-period. The story should let the student's imagination run wild about the Natchez Trace Parkway. This may be done

collectively, as a class with the teacher writing the story on the board or overhead and the students copying what the teacher writes.

Extension: Book a trip for the class to the Natchez Trace Parkway where they can have a ranger led program about the history of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Occasionally rangers are also available to visit classrooms.

The teacher may want to show a video. One is available on line called “Exploring Natchez Trace” from the link <http://www.vehix.com/video/vehix-adventures/exploring-natchez-trace/>. This short video shows footage and audio about some of the sites along the Natchez Trace Parkway.

CAUTION! This is a privately owned site and commercials accompanying the video may not be suitable for the classroom.

Learn about other National Scenic Trails that are historic. Visit <http://www.nps.gov/nts>

Class Discussion Suggestions:

Was that a true story or a made up story?

- Correct Answer: True Story – non-fiction

How do you know that?

- Answers will vary but may include that they have been on the Natchez Trace Parkway and visited the visitor center, researchers have learned about the past, people wrote about the past.

How did the Natchez Trace start? What happened next?

- Correct Answer: Animals used it - American Indians used it, European explorers used it, people who were trading and moving from one part of the country used it.

Who “owns” the Natchez Trace Parkway?

- Correct Answer: It belongs to everyone in our country.

Who “takes care” of the Natchez Trace Parkway?

- Correct Answer: Park Rangers and other people who work there have the job of taking care of the Natchez Trace Parkway but it is the responsibility of each citizen to make sure that the rangers are doing a good job. Citizens should also make sure they know the special rules that apply to the Natchez Trace Parkway so that they too can take care of this special place.

Why are there special rules concerning the Natchez Trace Parkway?

- Correct Answer: Because it is part of the National Park Service and the job of the National Park Service is to preserve and protect special places. They can only do that by having rules that protect the parks and everything in the parks.

How are some ways that regular citizens can take care of the Natchez Trace Parkway?

- Correct Answer: Enjoy hiking on the trails and tell other people about a good time enjoyed there. Do not pick flowers, not disturb the animals, obey the speed laws, learn about the Natchez Trace so that you know why it is a special and protected place. (other answers are acceptable)

What do you think it would have been like to travel the Old Natchez Trace? Why?

- Answers will vary. The teacher should make sure the students understand what would have been available for their use in various time periods.

Example of what to write on the board

When: The Trace was formed a long time ago before people lived around here. The paved roadway was finished in 2005.

How: Animals, Indians, people from across the ocean, and the Kaintucks walked from Natchez, MS to Nashville, TN for different reasons. All of their footsteps helped to flatten the dirt and the plants on the trail.

Who: The National Park Service protects the Natchez Trace, along with other National Parks, so that history may live on. The people of the United States can enjoy learning about the historic road.

Notes taking Sheet

When:

How:

Who: