

# Using Mississippi Footprints to Build a Community

**Objectives:** Students will learn to evaluate personal learning choices, synthesize information, develop insight into the characteristics of community building, and analyze their conviction and commitment to educational success.

The *Using Mississippi Footprints to Build a Community* lesson plan is adaptable for grades 2-4.

Curricular Connections		
<b>Common Core Language Arts</b>	Grade 2	W 1, 2, 5, 8; SL 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; L 1, 2, 3
	Grade 3	W 1, 2, 4, 5, 8; SL 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; L 1, 2, 3
	Grade 4	W 1, 2, 4, 5, 8; SL 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; L 1, 2, 3
<b>Social Studies</b>	Second Grade – School/ Neighborhood	3b; 3c; 5b
	Third Grade – Community/Local Government	3a; 3c; 5a
	Fourth Grade – Mississippi Studies	4c



“All teachers should be committed to building a community of learners to set in motion social mobility. The process of fulfillment is to connect relevance of learning for students and family using humanity, empathy, and compassion. The commitment of a quality, inclusive classroom allows for mistakes, productive conversations, and time for recovery. The culture of silence will diminish. Thus in healing, we recognize the value of the individual and allow them to rejoin the community again.”

Ruth Rondon currently teaches Special Education and Gifted at Coffeerville Elementary School in Coffeerville, Mississippi. She is a graduate of Rutgers University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science, and holds a Masters of Education from the University of Southern Mississippi. Ruth has also earned a Teacher Certification from the Teach Mississippi Institute at the University of Mississippi. Her many academic achievements include being chosen as a member of the three year pilot program Teacher Leadership Initiative. She was a participant in MDAH’s first annual Summer Teachers School in 2015.

**Materials:** *Who I Am*; markers or colored pencils; scissors; *Focus for Viewing*; strips of construction paper (5 per student approximately 8"x 1").

**Procedures:**

**Activity One: Who I Am**

1. Open class with a brief discussion of how, throughout Mississippi history, the pursuit of education became a critical means for African Americans to reclaim their humanity and the sacrifice that many people endured for the sake of sending their children to school. Topics to discuss include:
  - *Brown v. Board* (1954)
  - Freedom Schools (1964)
  - *Gong Lum v. Rice* (1924)
2. Distribute *Who I Am* handout to students.
3. Have students creatively write their names on the front side of the profile outline. On the reverse, students will answer the questions in each section to create a personal profile of themselves.
4. When completed, collect and set aside for Activity Three.

**Activity Two: Focus for Viewing**

1. Distribute *Focus for Viewing*. Explain to students that you will be asking them to do some writing based on the school photos they are about to view.
2. Distribute or project the selection of *School Photographs*.
3. Have students compare and contrast the classroom settings between then and now. As students examine the photographs, they will record information from the photographs on worksheet.
4. Discuss as a class the struggles faced by students pursuing Mississippi education in the past to understand motivational factors for change in the community today.
5. Offer students the opportunity to celebrate the courage of young people who risked their lives for a better education. Have them write a letter of thanks to a friend, family, or community member who fought for better education.

**Activity Three: Ordinary People Do Extraordinary Things**

1. Create a motivational paper chain as a daily reminder of what makes each person special in the class and a contributing member of the community (define community and review qualities of a community if necessary).
2. Begin by referring to the *Who I Am* handout, specifically the areas of 'Qualities of a Good Community' and 'Talents/ Skills/ Abilities.'
3. After a brief discussion about some of the students' talents, distribute five strips of construction paper to each student and ask them to review the five things they do well. Have students write one talent/skill per strip.
4. Students will create a mini paper chain by stapling the five talent strips together.
5. After students complete their individual chains, create one long class chain. Once the entire chain is constructed, lead a discussion about the talents making up the chain. Topics to discuss include:
  - That all students have talents.
  - The students in this class have many talents.
  - If the students in this class work together, they can accomplish anything.

#### **Activity Four: Journal Writing**

1. Remind students that journals are used to freely explore their thoughts and feelings while creating a source of ideas for their writing.
2. Distribute the *Journal Writing* handout to students and have them respond to the following prompts:
  - In what ways, if any, has your appreciation and knowledge of being part of a community changed after viewing photographs of students in previous eras and creating the talent paper chain?
  - Have you learned any skills or perspectives that may be useful to you in your future classes, career, or personal life? If so, please explain.
  - How can history be useful in making a better community?
3. Allow students to share with the class.

#### **Activity Five: Sharing Motivating Factors**

1. Divide the class into two groups.
2. Using the topic “From the Eyes of a Child - Motivating Factors for Pursuit of Knowledge,” assign each group one of the following projects:
  - Create a bulletin board incorporating the class motivational paper chain.
  - Write an article for the school newspaper reporting on the class motivational paper chain.
3. Allow Students to share with the class.

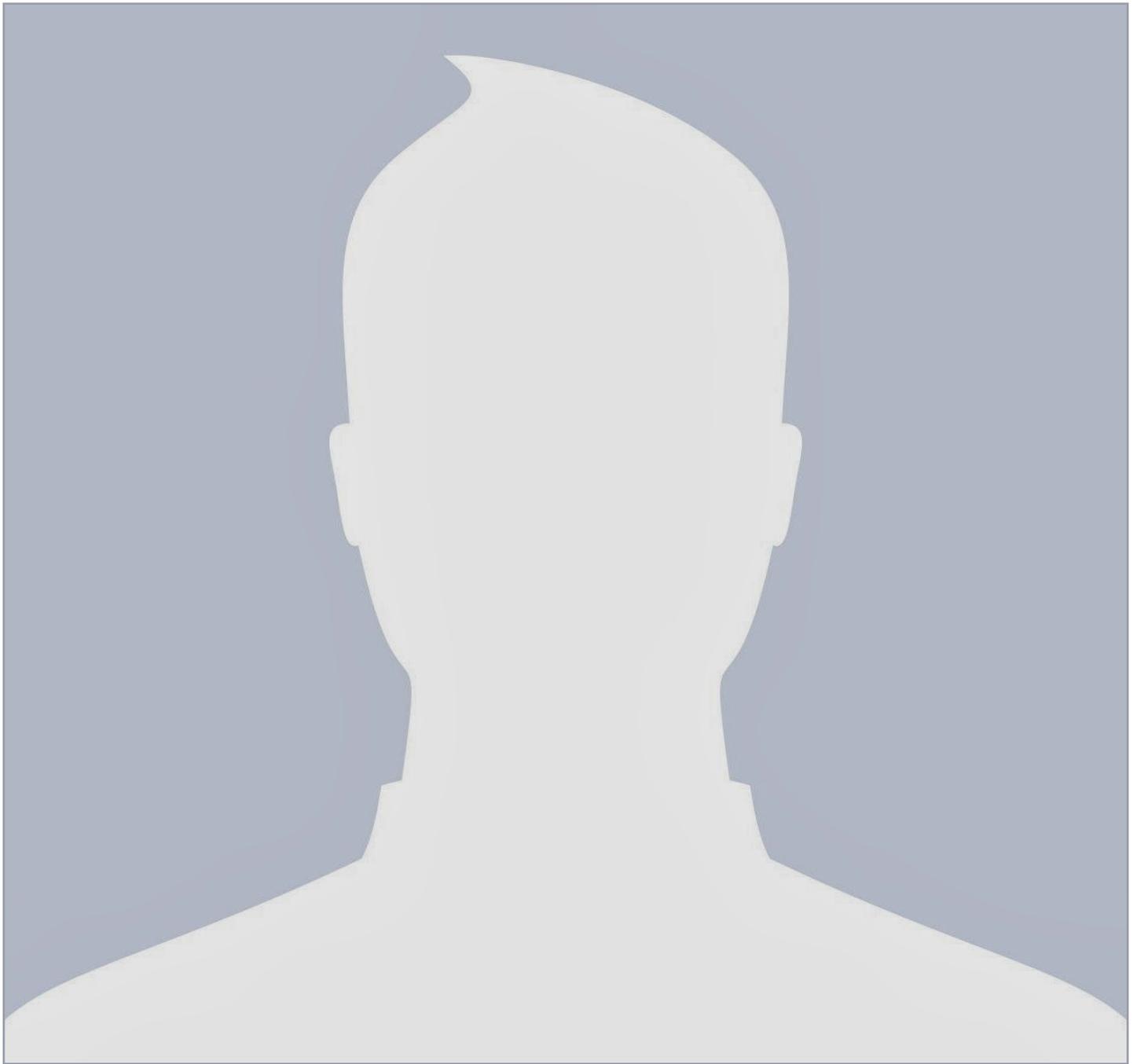
#### **Extension Activity:**

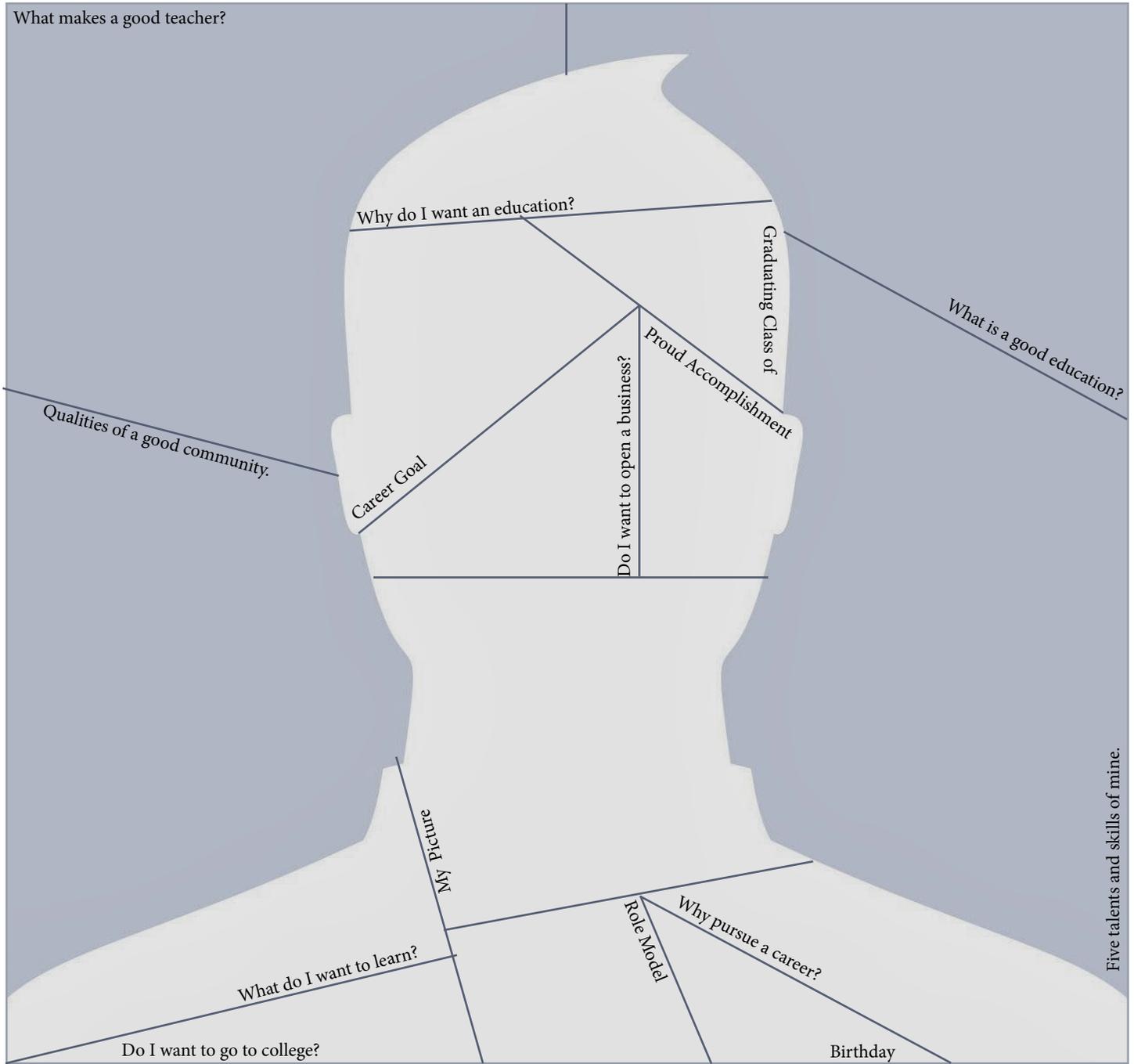
Research the components of a model public school system including finances, organizational skill, technology, knowledge, and political will and its implications on the community.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

***Who I Am***

**Directions:** On the blank side, creatively write your name. On the back side, answer the questions within the spaces provided.





NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

***Focus for Viewing***

**Directions:** Examine and analyze the school photographs from Yalobusha County, Mississippi, and answer the following questions.

1. What perspective do these photographers have? Observe people, objects, and activities. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

2. What is inspiring to you? Give 2-3 examples. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

3. What was motivating the students to continue to pursue their education? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

4. Does this information add to your understanding of the importance of education? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

5. Based on what you observed, complete the phrase of the prompts below:

• I learned that... \_\_\_\_\_

---

• I noticed that... \_\_\_\_\_

---

• I was surprised when... \_\_\_\_\_

---

• I was upset when... \_\_\_\_\_

---

• I was happy when... \_\_\_\_\_

---

*Focus for Viewing*



*Negro School building, old, 1958, Coffeerville, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Negro School building, old, 1958, Coffeerville, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Negro School building, 1958, Coffeerville, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*William School, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School Gymnasium, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School , Grade 3, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School , Classroom, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School , Grade 3, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School, Combination Auditorium and Classroom, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Oakland School, Secondary Classroom, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Coffeerville High School, 7th Grade, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Coffeerville High School, Homemaking, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Coffeerville Elementary School, West Side Exterior, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Coffeerville Elementary School, 1st Grade, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



*Coffeenville Elementary School, 4th Grade, Yalobusha County, Mississippi. MDAH Archives and Records Services.*



**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY LESSON PLANS**

**TEACHER EVALUATION**

COMPLETE BOTH SIDES AND PLEASE MAIL OR FAX TO THE ADDRESS ON THE NEXT PAGE. THANK YOU!

TEACHER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL NAME & ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL (OPTIONAL) \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

LESSON TITLE *Using Mississippi Footprints to Build a Community*

1. In your opinion, did this unit elicit better than average student response; if so, how?
2. Which segments of the unit exceeded your students' attention span?
3. Will this unit be of assistance to you in developing future classroom activities; if so, how?
4. How did this unit add to your earlier teaching on the same subject?
5. Would this teaching unit be handier to use as a:  
\_\_\_ multi-day unit      \_\_\_ multi-week unit      \_\_\_ other
6. Were the activities and lessons appropriate for your students? How?

Please rate the following lesson materials and activities by circling the appropriate number.

4=excellent, 3=good, 2=average, 1=inadequate

Directions and Notes	4	3	2	1
Curricular Connections	4	3	2	1
Student Worksheets	4	3	2	1
Interactive Activities	4	3	2	1
Historic Images	4	3	2	1
References and Resources	4	3	2	1

Activity One: Who I Am	4	3	2	1
Activity Two: Focus for Viewing	4	3	2	1
Activity Three: Ordinary People Do Extraordinary Things	4	3	2	1
Activity Four: Journal Writing	4	3	2	1
Activity Five: Sharing Motivating Factors	4	3	2	1
Extension Activity	4	3	2	1
Overall Unit	4	3	2	1

We would appreciate any additional comments on this teaching unit and any suggestions for improvement. Comments may be entered in the space below.

**Museum Division**  
**Mississippi Department of Archives and History**  
 P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205  
 Phone: 601-576-6800 Fax: 601-576-6815  
[outreachprograms@mdah.state.ms.us](mailto:outreachprograms@mdah.state.ms.us)