

# GROWING UP Down the Bay

Children who grew up [Down the Bay](#), the area south of Government Street in Mobile, Alabama, have fond memories of the neighborhood. Shared experiences, local landmarks and organizations, and food traditions all come together to create a unique community culture. In this unit, students will learn more about what it was like growing up in the community in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century through historical evidence, including maps, and memories from the [Down the Bay Oral History Project](#).

Time Frame: Five 30-45 minute lessons

1. Down the Bay History
2. Meet You There
3. Let's Have Fun
4. Community Cookout
5. Growing Pains

## Objectives:

- Students will locate Down the Bay and other significant landmarks on maps of Mobile, Alabama
- Students will learn that oral history is the study of the past through stories and memories, often spoken out loud and recorded
- Students will understand that oral histories, maps, and historical documents are primary sources that add to our understanding of the past.

## Relevant Standards:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade:      8 – Describe the features of political and physical maps  
                      11 – Differentiate between primary and secondary sources  
                      12 – Utilize primary sources to examine the significance of individuals, cultures, celebrations, and historical events within the community and state
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:      8 – Differentiate between the features of a physical map and a political map, and explain how these features contribute to the map's purpose  
                      10 – Identify cardinal and intermediate directions  
                      15 – Identify and summarize legends, stories, and songs that contributed to the cultural fabric of the United States
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:      1 – Locate map features, using geographic terminology to describe them
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:      11a – Identify Alabamians who contributed to the growth of American culture post-World War II into the 1970s



**Supplies:**

1. Student Workbook (Print 1 for each student)
2. Growing Up Down the Bay PowerPoint
3. Craft supplies
4. Markers/colored pencils/crayons

**Key Terms:**

- Oral History: the study of the past through stories and memories, often spoken out loud and recorded
- Interview: A conversation where one person asks questions and another person answers to share information or stories
- Archive: A place where public records or historical materials are preserved and stored
- Adaptation: Changing the way something is done to fit new situations or surroundings

**Build On with an Exhibit:** This unit was based on the exhibit *Growing Up Down the Bay*. Each lesson corresponds to a banner in the exhibit. Your students can visit the exhibit [virtually](#) or you can request a traveling version (consisting of 6 pop-up banners) by emailing us at [cas@southalabama.edu](mailto:cas@southalabama.edu). The exhibit was created by students in the Spring 2024 Museum Methods in Archaeology course and it was adapted for educational use by USA students Nicole Shakespear and Sara Mahan.

**Lesson Procedures:** The unit consists of five lessons, each of which corresponds with a banner from the traveling exhibit. Each lesson includes background information about the topic, an audio clip from an oral history interview, a featured historical person or place from Down the Bay, an in-class activity, and a reflection question.

**Lesson 1: Down the Bay History (Slides 1-12)**

1. Slide 1: Introduce Down the Bay as a historic neighborhood in Mobile. The neighborhood has changed a lot, but we can learn what it used to be like through the memories of people who grew up there.
2. Ask students to read the “Learn” section on page 3 of their workbooks, either to themselves or aloud to the class
3. Slide 2: Introduce [John LeFlore](#) to the class. John LeFlore was a civil rights leader who grew up Down the Bay and worked as a postman in the community. He worked for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to fight for African American equality in employment and voting rights. Today, LeFlore High School is named after him.
4. Slide 3: Play audio clip for class or have students scan the QR code on page 3 of their workbook to hear Marjorie Kenny Jones share her memories of stores and businesses that were once located Down the Bay and how the neighborhood got its name.
5. Slides 4-11: Ask students to turn to page 4 in their workbook to complete the Down the Bay Journey map activity. Guide students through the neighborhood using the Down the Bay PowerPoint. As you introduce each landmark, students will trace the route on their map and mark the landmark location. We’ll start at Council School, which is still a school today, and then visit three landmarks that are no longer standing.



6. Slide 12: Ask students to respond to the reflection question, either with a partner or in writing.
7. Ask students to bring something from home that they can use in a class project for Lesson #2. Ideally, this would be something that would be disposable, like plastic cutlery, rubber bands, paper clips, paper cups, etc.

### Lesson 2: Let's Have Fun (Slides 13-20)

1. Slide 13: The kids who grew up Down the Bay were creative; when they didn't have money to buy new toys or games, they invented their own. In this section, we'll hear some of the ways kids made their own fun and we'll meet a successful inventor who grew up Down the Bay.
2. Ask students to read the "Learn" section on page 5 of their workbooks, either to themselves or aloud to the class
3. Slide 14: Introduce [Lonnie Johnson](#) to the class. Lonnie Johnson grew up Down the Bay and is an inventor, engineer, and scientist. He worked for the US Air Force and for NASA, where he worked on several space missions, including the Mars Observer, the Cassini-Huygens mission to Saturn, and the Galileo mission to Jupiter. He is best known for inventing the super-soaker.
4. Slides 15-18: Play audio clips for class or have students scan the QR code on page 5 of their workbook to hear memories about the games and toys kids invented in the past.
5. Slide 19: Ask students to respond to the reflection question, either with a partner or in writing.
6. Slide 20: Ask students to turn to page 6 in their workbook to complete the "Making Your Own Fun" activity. Students will use the item(s) they brought from home, as well as any art supplies or other materials they can find in the classroom, to create their own toy or game.

### Lesson 3: Meet You There (Slides 21-25)

1. Slide 21: There were many important landmarks for kids who grew up Down the Bay. Many people shared how they would meet at Texas Hill to go skating on Christmas Day or how they would spend Sundays at the Harlem Theater. In this section, you'll learn more about the important meet up spots in the neighborhood and draw a map of your community.
2. Ask students to read the "Learn" section on page 7 of their workbooks, either to themselves or aloud to the class
3. Slide 22: Introduce [Satchel Paige](#) to the class. Satchel Paige was one of many baseball players who grew up Down the Bay. Satchel Paige is one of the best pitchers in history, though he wasn't able to play in the major leagues for many years due to segregation. In 1965, when he was 59, he became the oldest player to pitch in a major league game.
4. Slide 23: Play audio clip for class or have students scan the QR code on page 7 of their workbook to hear Violetta Simpson's memory of skating on Texas Hill
5. Slide 24: Ask students to respond to the reflection question, either with a partner or in writing.
6. Slide 25: Ask students to turn to page 8 in their workbook to complete the "Map Your Neighborhood" activity. Students will examine the "Meet Up Spots" map and make a map of their favorite spots in their neighborhood. Don't forget to include a compass and a legend!



#### Lesson 4: Community Cookout (Slide 26-31)

1. Slide 26: Food was an important symbol of community Down the Bay. Many people shared memories of family recipes, local grocery stores and restaurants, and finding food around the neighborhood, like picking pecans, fishing, and gardening. Many grocery stores supported local residents by allowing them to start a line of credit, so they didn't have to pay their bills right away. In this lesson, we'll hear more about the importance of food.
2. Ask students to read the "Learn" section on page 9 of their workbooks, either to themselves or aloud to the class.
3. Slide 27: Introduce Naman's. Naman's was one of many grocery stores Down the Bay; in the past, there were many small corner grocery stores instead of the supermarkets we had today. The grocery store owners supported people in the community and knew their customers well. Many people have fond memories of shopping at Naman's, which is still around today.
4. Slides 28-29: Play audio clips for class or have students scan the QR code on page 9 of their workbook to hear Jamie Hobbs's memories of the special role food played Down the Bay. Play audio clip of Sydney Raine explaining the line of credit at grocery stores.
5. Slide 30: Ask students to respond to the reflection question, either with a partner or in writing.
6. Slide 31: Ask students to turn to page 10 in their workbook to complete the "Put it On My Books" activity. Students will use the price list to determine if they have enough money to buy everything on the shopping list.

#### Lesson 5: Growing Pains (Slides 32-35)

1. Slide 32: In the 1960s and 1970s, Down the Bay was transformed by development projects. Interstate 10 was built right through the neighborhood and people were separated from stores, churches, and friends and family. Even though this changed the neighborhood, kids living Down the Bay still found ways to have fun. In this lesson, we'll learn how Down the Bay has changed.
2. Ask students to read the "Learn" section on page 11 of their workbooks, either to themselves or aloud to the class.
3. Slide 33: Introduce the [Excelsior Band](#) to the class. The Excelsior Brass Band was founded in 1883 by members of the Creole Fire Company No. 1, many of whom lived Down the Bay. The Excelsior Band remains an important part of Mobile culture over 140 years later. Though Down the Bay has changed, the legacy remains through traditions like the Excelsior Band.
4. Slide 34: Play audio clip for class or have students scan the QR code on page 11 of their workbook to hear Floyd Eric Draine recall sliding down the newly constructed Interstate bridge on a cardboard box.
5. Slide 35: Ask students to respond to the reflection question on page 11, either with a partner or in writing.
6. Ask students to turn to page 12 in their workbook to complete the "Oral History Interview" activity. Students will pair up; one student will ask the interview questions to the other and make notes of their answers in the workbook. Then they will switch roles.
7. Optional: Ask students to interview a family member and present what they learned to the class.

Got any questions? Have feedback on the lesson? Want to find more information about Mobile history? Get in touch with us at [cas@southalabama.edu](mailto:cas@southalabama.edu) or visit our [website](#).



# Down the Bay Journey

## Answer Key



- 1 - The Ditch at Virginia and South Lawrence Streets
- 2 - Our Alley at intersection with Texas Street
- 3 - Harlem Theater at South Dearborn and Selma Streets



# "Put it On My Books"

## Answer Key

**Ma Saves Pa's Dough At CUT/LOW**  
**NEW STORE HOURS 10 To 9 DAILY** Till 10 p.m. Friday  
THRU PRICES GOOD FOR MON. - THUR. - FRI. Monday Thru Thursday 10 to 6 Saturday **DISCOUNT FOODS**

**Frozen Lemonade or Orangeade** 6 oz. Can **10¢**

**Wilson Corn King Lean Canned Picnic** 3 lb Can **\$1.59**  
Additional Can \$1.19

**Kroff's Velveeta** 2 Lb. Box **68¢**  
Additional Box \$1.00

**STRAWBERRIES** 5 lb. **88¢** | **SLICED BACON** lb. **46¢**

**Co-Op Brand BUTTER** Lb. **58¢**

**Wilson's Chunk Style Bologna** Lb. **28¢**  
Also 28 to 30¢ Per Lb.

**Fresh Lean Pure GROUND BEEF** 3 Lb. **\$1.00**

**Wilson's Genuine PORK CUTLETS** Lb. **68¢**  
Wilson's Ring Bologna 3 Lb. \$1.19

**Chocolate Flavor Drink** 12 oz. Can **29¢**

**JUNE PEAS** 1 lb. Can **19¢**

**CREAM CORN** 1 lb. Can **17¢**

**SUGAR** 10 lb. **\$1.48**

**APPLE SAUCE** 6 oz. Can **6¢**

**POTATO CHIPS** 1 lb. Bag **55¢**

**Fresto Hardwood Charcoal** 20 Lb. Bag **97¢**

**CAKE MIXES** Pkg. Only **10¢**

**WHEATIES** Economy Box **39¢**

**MACARONI** 2 lb. **39¢**

**Cider Vinegar** 16 oz. Jar **77¢**

**Vets Dog Food** 11 Can **\$1.11**

**GRADE A MILK** 1/2 Gallon **39¢** | **ICE CREAM** 5 qt. **\$1.39**

**Golden Valley Pork and Beans** 300 Size Can **8¢**

**Gerber's Strained BABY FOOD** jar **8¢**

**Potatoes** 20 Lb. Bag **88¢**

**CANNED MILK** 7 lb. **\$1.11**

**WHITE BREAD** Loaf **25¢**

**GIANT TIDE** Large Economy Pkg. **77¢**

**PEANUT BUTTER** 3 lb. **98¢**

**BOOK MATCHES** 3-oz. **28¢**

**All Flavors KOOL AID** Pkg. **3¢**

**YELLOW ONIONS** 3 Lb. **28¢**

**WATERMELONS** 98¢ each

**CANTALOUPE** 4-oz. **\$1.11**

**RADISHES** Bush **5¢**

**ANACIN** 1.20 Oz. x 100 Tablets **\$1.09**

### Mom's List

Lemonade	<u>0.10</u>
Ground Beef	<u>1.00</u>
Butter	<u>0.58</u>
Macaroni	<u>0.39</u>
Sugar	<u>1.48</u>
Baby Food	<u>0.08</u>
Total	<u>\$3.63</u>

Available Line of Credit \$10

Can you get everything on

Mom's List?

☒ Yes or No

### Grandma's List

Cake Mix	<u>0.10</u>
Bologna	<u>0.28</u>
Potato Chips	<u>0.55</u>
Apple Sauce	<u>1.00</u>
Milk	<u>0.39</u>
White Bread	<u>0.25</u>
Total	<u>\$2.57</u>

Available Line of Credit \$5

Can you get everything on

Grandma's List?

☒ Yes or No



# GROWING UP

## Down the Bay

### Student Workbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Welcome!

This week, we will explore the rich history of a special community called Down the Bay, located in Mobile, Alabama. This community has a vibrant past, filled with stories of creativity, resilience, and togetherness.

We will learn about Down the Bay through **oral histories**, or stories from people who lived in the community and experienced it firsthand.

## **Workbook Contents:**

Lesson 1: Down the Bay History (p. 3-4)

Lesson 2: Let's Have Fun (p. 5-6)

Lesson 3: Meet You There (p. 7-8)

Lesson 4: Community Cookout (p. 9-10)

Lesson 5: Growing Pains (p. 11-12)



# Lesson 1:

## Down the Bay History



### Learn

Down the Bay is a historic neighborhood in Mobile, AL. It is located south of downtown Mobile.

The neighborhood has changed a lot in the last 50 years, but we can learn about what it used to be like through the memories of people who grew up there.

### Meet:

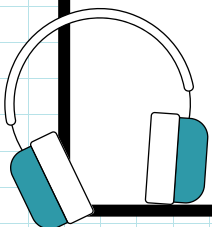
John LeFlore



Courtesy of Janet Leflore, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama

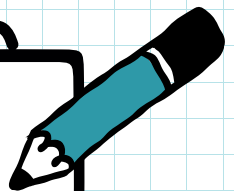
### Listen

In this interview clip, Marjorie Kenny Jones remembers what life was like Down the Bay and how the neighborhood got its name.



### Reflect

What people, places, or traditions make your community special?





# Down the Bay Journey

**Directions:** Your teacher will take you on a tour of Down the Bay. Trace the route and mark each landmark on the map below.





# Lesson 2:

## Let's Have Fun



### Learn

Kids who lived Down the Bay made their own fun. They gathered to play games like kickball and four-square.

They even made up their own game, which they called top ball. With a little imagination, anything could become a toy.

### Meet: Lonnie Johnson



Courtesy of Johnson Research and Development Inc.

### Listen

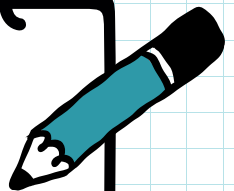
Hear how kids Down the Bay made their own toys and games in these interviews with Clauzell McCovey, Leonard Stiell, Denise McAdory, and Anna Watson.



### Reflect

What do you and your friends do for fun?

Have you ever invented a game?





# Making Your Own Fun

**Directions:** Make your own toy or game! Find materials that aren't usually used for toys. Use your imagination to create something new! Below are some examples of what kids made Down the Bay for inspiration.



**Bottle Caps:**  
Baseball



**Chinaberry Seeds:**  
Pop Gun



**Soda Bottle:**  
Baby Doll



# Lesson 3:

## Meet You There

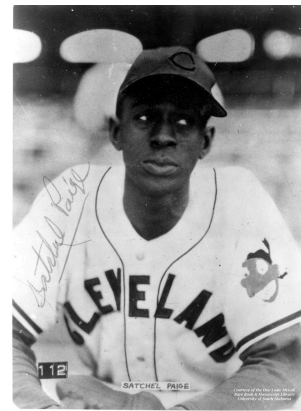


### Learn

Every neighborhood has its meet up spots. In the 1950s and 1960s, kids Down the Bay went skating on Texas Hill and spent Sundays at the Harlem Theater.

Many remember playing "top ball." This game uses bottle caps for baseballs and broomstick handles as bats.

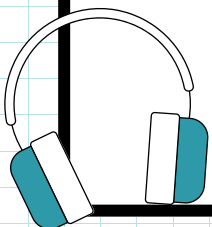
### Meet: Satchel Paige



Courtesy of Marshall Wormley, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama.

### Listen

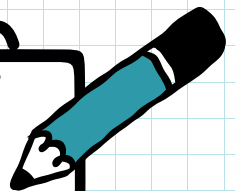
In this interview clip, Violetta Simpson remembers how she would meet her friends to go skating on Texas Hill at Christmas time.



### Reflect

What are some of your favorite spots to meet your friends?

What do you like to do there?





# Map Your Neighborhood

**Directions:** Think of some of your favorite places to visit in your neighborhood. Use the “Meet Up Spots” map for guidance. In the space below, draw a map of those places. Include your home and the path you take to get there. Draw a compass and legend for orientation.



# Lesson 4:

## Community Cookout



### Learn

Down the Bay, food was a symbol of community. Children were sent to the corner store to pick up groceries, often on a line of credit.

Families gardened and kept chickens, while kids fished and foraged for food. Many families provided home-cooked meals for others in need.

### Visit:

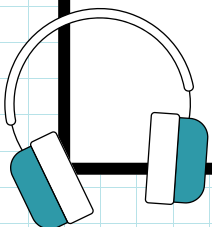
#### Naman's Grocery



Julius E. Marx Collection, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama.

### Listen

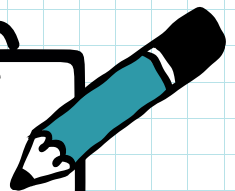
In this interview clip, Jamie Hobbs remembers the importance of food Down the Bay, especially during Mardi Gras.



### Reflect

What are some of your favorite recipes?

Does your family eat any special foods?





# "Put it On My Books"

**Directions:** Use the price list to calculate the total cost of the items from each list. Determine if Mom and Grandma can buy the groceries on their line of credit.

**Ma Saves Pa's Dough At CUT/LOW**  
**NEW STORE HOURS 10 To 9 DAILY** Till 10 p.m. Friday  
THRU 10 to 6 Saturday DISCOUNT FOODS  
THRU 10 to 6 Saturday DISCOUNT FOODS

**Frozen Lemonade Orangeade** 6 oz. Can **10¢**

**Wilson Corn King Lean Canned Picnic** 3 lb Can **\$1.59**  
Additional Can \$1.19

**Kroff's Velveeta** 2 Lb. Box **68¢**  
Additional Box \$1.19

**STRAWBERRIES** 5 <sup>lb.</sup> **88¢** | **SLICED BACON** <sup>lb.</sup> **46¢**

**Co-Op Brand BUTTER** <sup>lb.</sup> **58¢**

**Wilson's Chunk Style Bologna** <sup>lb.</sup> **28¢**  
Also 10 to 100 Pk. \$1.19

**Fresh Lean Pure GROUND BEEF** 3 <sup>lb.</sup> **\$1.00**

**Wilson's Genuine PORK CUTLETS** <sup>lb.</sup> **68¢**  
Wilson's Ring Bologna 3 <sup>lb.</sup> \$1.19

**Chocolate Flavor Drink** 12 <sup>oz.</sup> **29¢**

**JUNE PEAS** 1 <sup>lb.</sup> **19¢**

**CREAM CORN** 1 <sup>lb.</sup> **17¢**

**SUGAR** 10 <sup>lb.</sup> **\$1.48**

**APPLE SAUCE** 6 <sup>oz.</sup> **\$1**

**POTATO CHIPS** 1 <sup>lb.</sup> **55¢**

**Grade A Milk** 1 <sup>gal.</sup> **39¢** | **ICE CREAM** 5 <sup>qt.</sup> **\$1.39**

**Golden Valley Pork and Beans** 300 Size Can **8¢**

**Gerber's Strained BABY FOOD** jar **8¢**

**Potatoes** 20 <sup>lb.</sup> Bag **88¢**

**Canned Milk** 7 <sup>lb.</sup> **\$1**

**WHITE BREAD** Loaf **25¢**

**GIANT TIDE** Late Summer Price **77¢**

**PEANUT BUTTER** 3 <sup>lb.</sup> **98¢**

**BOOK MATCHES** 3 <sup>lb.</sup> **28¢**

**All Flavors KOOL AID** Pkg **3¢**  
Right to Learn Quantities Reserved

**Yellow Onions** 3 <sup>lb.</sup> **28¢**

**WATERMELONS** **98¢** each <sup>lb.</sup>

**CANTALOUPE** 4 <sup>lb.</sup> **\$1**

**RADISHES** 1 <sup>lb.</sup> **5¢**

**ANACIN** 1 <sup>lb.</sup> **\$1.09**

## Mom's List

Lemonade \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ground Beef \_\_\_\_\_  
 Butter \_\_\_\_\_  
 Macaroni \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sugar \_\_\_\_\_  
 Baby Food \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total \_\_\_\_\_

Available Line of Credit: \$10  
 Can you get everything on Mom's List?  
 Yes or No

## Grandma's List

Cake Mix \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bologna \_\_\_\_\_  
 Potato Chips \_\_\_\_\_  
 Apple Sauce \_\_\_\_\_  
 Milk \_\_\_\_\_  
 White Bread \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total \_\_\_\_\_

Available Line of Credit: \$5  
 Can you get everything on Grandma's List?  
 Yes or No



# Lesson 5:

## Growing Pains



### Learn

The construction of the Interstate in the 1960s cut the neighborhood in two. People were separated from stores, restaurants, friends, and even family members.

But kids also made the interstate into a slide, riding down on cardboard boxes. They remind us even in hard times, you can still have fun.

### Meet:

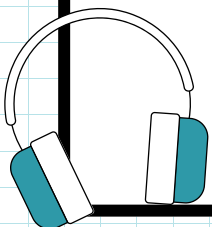
### The Excelsior Band



Courtesy of Michael Thomason, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama

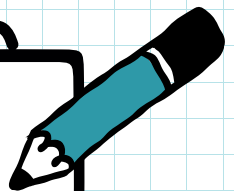
### Listen

In this interview clip, Floyd Eric Draine remembers how he slid down the Interstate 10 Bridge on cardboard boxes with his friends.



### Reflect

If you had to leave your neighborhood, what would you miss the most about it?

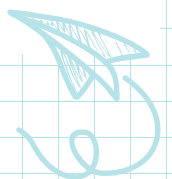




# Oral History Interview

**Directions:** Partner with a classmate. Interview them by asking the questions below. Write down what they say to record their answers.

1. Where do you live?
2. Who do you live with?
3. What are some of your favorite memories of your community?
4. What is one of your family traditions?
5. What do you like to do for fun?





# The End

Congratulations, you finished your Down the Bay Journey!  
You've learned more about Mobile's history and practiced  
oral history by recording memories.

## **To Learn More:**

Listen to more oral history interviews about  
Down the Bay on JagWorks:  
[https://jagworks.southalabama.edu/dtb\\_oral\\_hist/](https://jagworks.southalabama.edu/dtb_oral_hist/)

Visit the University of South Alabama Archaeology Museum  
6050 USA S. Drive, Mobile, AL 36688  
Open Tuesday-Friday, 10 am - 4 pm

Visit the Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
5901 USA Drive North, Mobile, AL 36688  
Call (251) 341-3900 to schedule a visit

Visit the Mobile Local History and Genealogy Library  
753 Government Street, Mobile AL 36602  
Open Monday-Saturday, 9 am - 5 pm



