

# Cultural History along the Natchez Trace Parkway



Classroom Lesson:

American Indian Mound CSI (code 4AI)

➤ **Grade Level:**

5<sup>th</sup> grade

➤ **Subject Areas:**

Social Studies, Civics,  
Geography, Native  
American Studies

➤ **Setting:**

Classroom

➤ **Duration:**

1 class period

➤ **Skills:**

➤ Inference, deduction,  
research

➤ **AL Objectives:**

Social Studies:3

➤ **Vocabulary:** Illegal,

law, daub, artifact,  
mound, Woodland  
Period, Mississippian  
Period

**Summary:**

Students will participate in a mock investigation of a theft from a Native American mound. They will learn about the mounds as they investigate.



**Materials Needed:** For teacher: Booklet: Indian Mounds of Mississippi or other reference information about Native American mounds on the Natchez Trace Parkway. Map indicating the location of lesson mounds. Various pictures of artifacts found in the mounds or American Indian

Traveling Trunk.

For each individual student or team: Mound grid, Historian's Notes, Thief's Notes and picture page (black and white and color print versions are included), pen or pencil. Copy of the portion of a map of the Natchez Trace Parkway that includes the mounds in the lesson. Excellent resources are found at <http://www.nps.gov/history/seac/deltapro.htm> and <http://www.cr.nps.gov/seac/outline/index.htm>

## Instructional Information

### Alabama Objectives:

3) Distinguish differences among major American Indian cultures in North America according to geographic region, natural resources, community organization, economy, and belief systems.

**Learning Objectives:** The students will be able to: 1) name 5 Native American mounds in Mississippi 2) describe characteristics of mounds in two different time periods 3) explain the difference between mounds in two time periods 4) locate specific mounds on a map. 5) use deductive reasoning skills. The lesson can be used as either a cursory introduction or a review of prior student learning.

**Teacher Set:** Show the students pictures of mound artifacts from different time periods. Explain that it is illegal to take artifacts from National Park areas because they are protected by law. Explain to the students they will be pretending they are criminal investigators. Explain that as students

they will be reviewing two different Native American mound types located in Mississippi along the Natchez Trace Parkway.

**Teacher Overview:** The students will compare and contrast Native American mounds from two time periods. They will use deductive reasoning to determine which objects belong to which mounds in either of the two time periods.

**Student Instruction:** Have students locate the five mounds addressed in this lesson on a Natchez Trace Map and circle those locations. Hand out copies of the Mound Grid, the Note Cards and the Historian's Notes. Hand out to each team a copy or read the attached Background Story.

**Student Task:** Look carefully at the Historian's notes. Compare the Historian's notes with the notes from the thief. Using the Mound Grid, fill in the information using the historian's notes. Figure out which artifact belongs to which site and write the correct Note Card number in the space next to the correct mound name.

**Teacher Closure:** Go over the correct answers and explain how the correct answers fit that particular mound. e. g., the card symbol shows a flat top mound so the mound must be from the Mississippian period. Have the students discuss whether or not they think the Historian is guilty (no correct answer). Ask what additional information they would need to determine whether or not the historian is guilty. Ask students to discuss whether or not it is appropriate that historic artifacts are protected by law.

**Student Assessment:** Participation in the activity and follow-up discussion.

**Suggestions for re-teaching:** Have the students draw pictures of and label the parts of the two main types of mounds on the Natchez Trace. Have students do report on a specific Native American mound.

**Teacher Clue Helps:**

**Cue Card description hints:**

Card 1: very large flat mound (Emerald) Manchac incised pot shard

Card 2: Domed top mound. The number 6, bones exposed to heat, dead bodies (Bynum)

Card 3: Dome top mound, bones exposed to heat, dead bodies (by process of elimination, Pharr Mounds)

Card 4: Flat top mound, creek, bear, round "plow layer" stone disc (Bear Creek)

Card 5: Domed mound with 2 inside, bones exposed to heat, dead bodies, two different types of artifacts (Boyd)

Historian Note doodles are completely insignificant and for effect only. If students ask, tell them that is the phone number to the local Pizza store.

Teacher Read- Background story:

Joe Tourista found a box at Old Town Overlook on the Natchez Trace Parkway. When he opened the box, he found several items. He recognized some of the items as ancient American Indian artifacts so he immediately called you, a Park Ranger on the Natchez Trace Parkway. When you looked into the box this is what you saw: Five plastic zip bags, each bag contains a 3x5 card with doodle drawings that appear to be some sort of codes. Also you see the ancient American Indian artifacts.

You carefully take the box to the Park Historian who is frantic, and she tells you that she is on the way to the hospital to be with her sister who is about to have a baby. She ALSO tells you that the Regional Director of the National Park Service from Atlanta, Georgia is making a surprise visit and will be here soon.

The Director will not be happy if he sees an unprotected and unlabeled box of stolen artifacts on a Park Ranger's desk. The historian asks you to please quickly and carefully investigate each bag and try to figure out where each bag came from. She hands you her notes on Mississippi mound builders and then runs out the door. You wonder if her behavior is a bit suspicious.

However, you must work quickly because you are left holding the bags! You must work carefully and discover where the items were taken from!

You study the cards and realize they may help you figure out the homes of the stolen artifacts. You guess that each bag holds artifacts from a different mound location. (You quickly take photos of the artifacts in the bag so you can put the real ones in a secure location.) You also make a grid to help figure out what goes where and start studying the historian's notes.

**\*Read this if you do not have the travel trunk "artifakes".**

### Student Instructions and Input:

Study the symbols on the cards.

- Ask the students: “What do you think the symbols represent?” (*acknowledge any reasonable answers*)
- Ask the students: “Why do you think someone made these note cards?” (*correct answer: who ever took the artifacts must have made notes in symbols to keep track of the location where they were found*).
- Ask the students: “Why do you think the thief may have written symbols rather than words?” (*correct answer: The thief probably did this because if he or she were discovered holding the goods, no one would quickly realize the meaning of the notes and that the artifacts were from locations where people are not allowed to collect artifacts. If a Park Ranger saw an artifact with a mound name, they would immediately recognize that there was a theft.*)

Read to students or print out instructions below.

1. Look at the historian's notes.
  - A. You see a mumbo jumbo of notes and doodle pictures
  - B. You assume that only some of the doodles are important
  - C. You see where the historian circled and underlined important facts.
2. Enter the information you see on the Historian's notes into your Mound Grid Worksheet.
3. Compare the grid sheet to the codes cards from the bags and the photos you took of the artifacts (or artifacts<sup>\*</sup>) found in the bag.

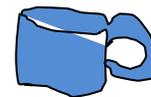
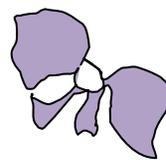
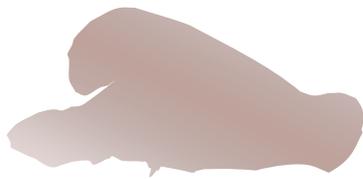
**\* Read this if you are using the plastic “artifakes” from the travel trunk.**

Mound Grid Worksheet

Name	Bag/Card Number	Woodland or Mississippian	Human Remains Yes or No?	What kind of artifacts found here?
Bear Creek Mound				
Pharr Mounds				
Bynum Mounds				
Boyd Mounds				
Emerald Mounds				

Name	Bag/Card Number	Woodland or Mississippian	Human Remains Yes or No?	What kind of artifacts found here?
Bear Creek Mound	4	Mississippian	no	Stone discs
Pharr Mounds	3	Woodland	yes	Green Stone pipes Axe heads Stone points (arrowheads) Copper ornaments
Bynum Mounds	2	Woodland	Yes Cremated & unburned 4+	Green Stone pipes Axe heads Stone points (arrowheads) Copper ornaments
Boyd Mounds	5	Woodland, Late Woodland & Mississippian	Yes, many	Green Stone pipes Axe heads Stone points (arrowheads) Copper ornaments Different pottery types Larto red pottery
Emerald Mounds	1	Mississippian	no	Daub Manchac pottery

### Mound Grid ANSWER SHEET



**Woodland Time Period: 1000 BC-AD 1000 - hunter-gatherers permanent settlements.**



• Dome shaped, used for burial. Mounds 3 to 18 feet high diameter 50 to 100 feet.

• Often contain ceremonial burial artifacts from other parts of the country.

- ✓ greenstone pipes
- ✓ copper ornaments
- ✓ axe heads
- ✓ stone points
- ✓ Pottery usually marked with cord and Late Woodland has some larto red pottery



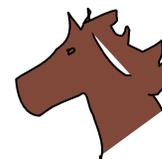
**Mississippian Time Period: AD 1000 - AD 1700**

- Rectangular, flat topped. 8 to 60 feet tall. → 
- Centers of social and political activity. Had temples or homes on top. 
- Usually do not have many burials or burial artifacts.
- Most have burned daub (mud plaster)
- Pottery decorated with lines  

**Bear Creek Mound** Mississippian Time Period: about 45 miles north of Tupelo. Burials outside mounds... and pottery disks plowed up by farmers

**Pharr Mounds** Woodland Time Period: about 23 miles north of Tupelo.

- ✓ Ceremonial artifacts from other parts of the country.
  - Greenstone pipes, axe heads, stone points, copper ornaments
- ✓ Eight mounds.



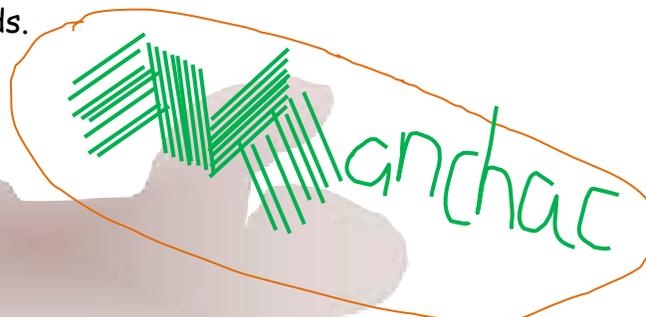
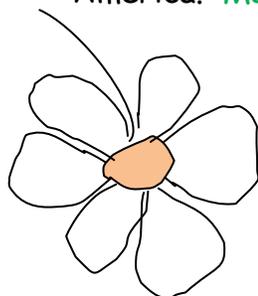
**Bynum Mounds** Woodland Time Period: about 28 miles southwest of Tupelo.

Ceremonial burial artifacts from other parts of the country. Six mounds.

**Boyd Mounds** BOTH Late Woodland and Mississippian Periods: about 155 miles southwest of Tupelo and 6 miles north of Jackson. Pottery from both Woodland and Mississippian, Six mounds. Mound 2 is really three mounds in one.

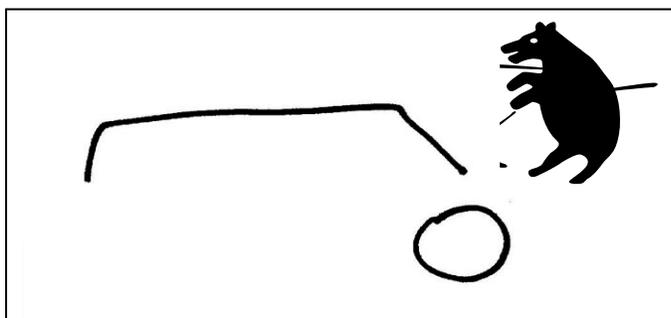
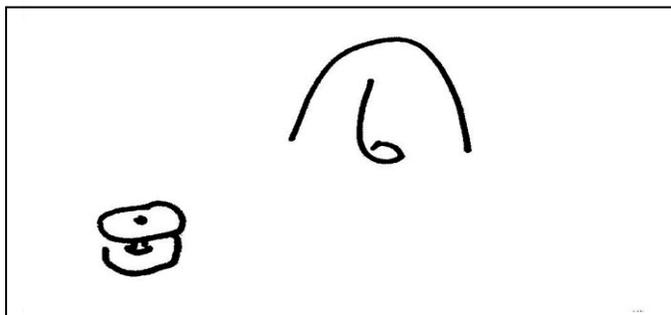
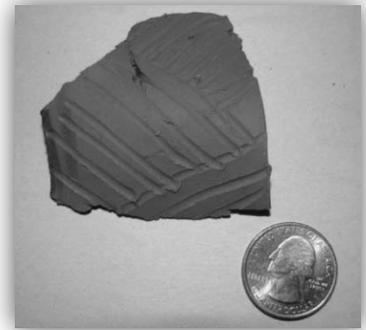
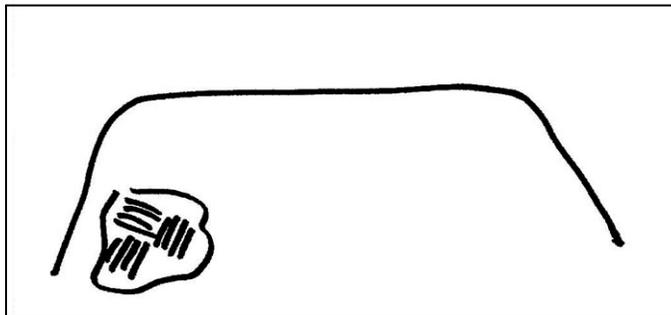
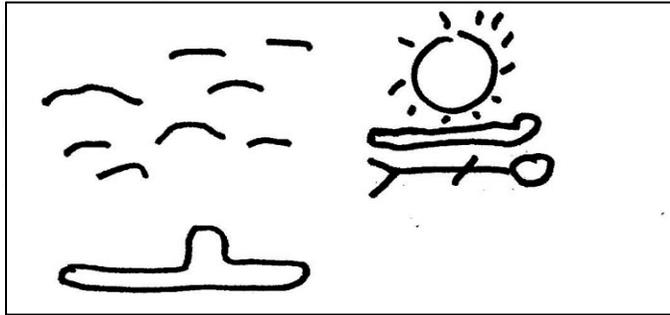
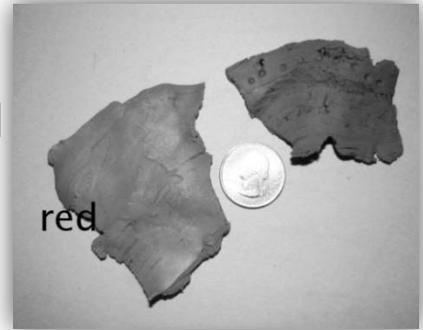
555-6805

**Emerald Mound** Mississippian Time Period. about 10 miles north east of Natchez, Mississippi about 250 miles southwest of Tupelo. One of largest mounds in North America. **Manchac incised** pottery shards.



Cards found in bags

Photos you took of artifact in bag



Cards found in bags

Photos you took of artifact in bag

