



Habitat



Activity 1-16

# A Bayou Journey in 1880

Adapted from BTNEP/LSU AgCenter: *Coastal Land Loss and Restoration*

## Focus/Overview

Guided imagery is useful for evoking images and allowing the students to feel the mood of the imagery and think in a different way about a topic. This activity can help unlock creative thoughts.

## Learning Objective

The learner will...

- understand how the Louisiana landscape has changed over the last 120 years.

## Louisiana Grade Level Expectation (Science)

5: GLE-26	Identify and describe ecosystems of local importance (LS-M-C3).
-----------	---

## Materials List

- swamp sounds or other appropriate environmental music
- tape recorder or CD player

## Background Information:

This guided imagery of Last Island in 1880 transports the listener to the historic past. The selection is written to encourage visual imagery and emotions. Remember, students may prefer to share responses about how they feel in writing.

## Advance Preparation

1. Locate and set up tape player/CD player with background music.

## Procedure

1. This activity is called a guided imagery exercise. That means I will guide your thoughts by reading a passage that will create many images in your mind. When you read or listen to a story, images flow through your mind. They can be pictures of what is going on, and they can be sounds and even smells. Also, things you hear can make you feel certain emotions. [Turn off the lights and play a tape of swamp sounds or other environmental music.]
2. Take a deep breath and relax. Get comfortable in your chair, take another deep breath, breathe out slowly. Close your eyes and relax. You will listen and concentrate on what the passage tells you. Be aware of the images going through your mind. Read **A Bayou Journey to Last Island in 1880 (Blackline Master #1)**.
3. After reading the passage, turn on the lights and ask the students to stretch and become fully alert.
4. Ask students to share their thoughts, mental images and feelings. Use the following guide questions, asking other appropriate questions as needed. To avoid reluctance to share, you can have the students write their responses on cards, collect and share them anonymously with the whole class.
  - What would you have done on the island if you were taking the journey?
  - How did the story make you feel?
  - How would you feel if you could take a journey like the one in the story?
  - What were some of the images you saw in your mind as the story was read?
  - What would be the major differences seen if a young person decided to try the journey today?
  - Would it be possible to make this journey today? If not, why?
  - How would you travel to reach the Isles Dernieres today? In what ways would the islands be different?

## BTNEP Connection

Habitat

## Grade Level

5

## Duration

30 minutes

## Subject Area

science, history

## Setting

classroom

## Extension

language arts

## Vocabulary

barrier island

## Original Source

"Guided Imagery" in BTNEP/LSU AgCenter: *Coastal Land Loss and Restoration*, Activity 10.



[www.btnep.org](http://www.btnep.org)

## Blackline Master

### 1. A Bayou Journey to Last Island in 1880

#### Assessment

- None suggested

#### Extensions

##### Language Arts:

- Write a poem about the Isles Dernieres.
- Write an imaginary journal entry telling of a journey to the Isles Dernieres in 1850, and then write an entry for today.

#### Resources

##### BTNEP Resources:

*Portrait of an Estuary*, publication by LSU AG and BTNEP

##### Websites:

Freudenrich, Craig C. How Stuff Works. No date. **How Barrier Islands Work**, accessed July 7, 2005 at <http://science.howstuffworks.com/barrier-island.htm>.

*Topics include: Introduction to How Barrier Islands Work, What are Barrier Islands? Barrier-island Ecology, The Shifting Sands, Changing the Shifting Sands.*

Mendelssohn, Irv. LSU Department of Oceanography. No date. **Vegetation and Ecology of Barrier Islands** accessed July 7, 2005, at <http://www.biology.lsu.edu/webfac/lurbatsch/BarrierIslands.html>

*Description of vegetation types, barrier island zonation, and environmental factors controlling vegetation.*

##### Tradebooks:

Wright-Frierson, Virginia. 1998. **Island Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk on a Barrier Island**. Simon & Schuster Children's Edition. 40 pp. ISBN: 0689815638

*Before the sun rises, an artist and her daughter slip out of their cottage into the morning air to explore and record the treasures of their North Carolina barrier island. They sketch, paint, and observe the sights around them and as night falls they return to their cottage, bringing back pieces of their island home to compile this scrapbook of a special time and place. Age Range: 6 to 9*

##### References:

Hansen, Gunnar. 1996. **Islands at the Edge of Time: A Journey to America's Barrier Islands**. Island Press. 240 pp. ISBN: 1559632526.

*Islands at the Edge of Time is the story of one man's captivating journey along America's barrier islands from Boca Chica, Texas, to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Weaving in and out along the coastlines of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina, poet and naturalist Gunnar Hansen perceives barrier islands not as sand but as expressions in time of the processes that make them. Along the way he treats the reader to absorbing accounts of those who call these islands home - their lives often lived in isolation and at the extreme edges of existence - and examines how the culture and history of these people are shaped by the physical character of their surroundings.*

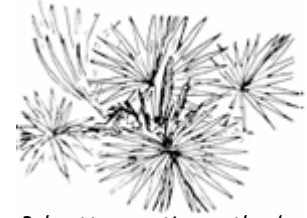
Learning Point Associates, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, no date, **Adolescent Literacy: Instruction, Reading Strategy: Guided Imagery**, accessed July 7, 2005 at <http://www.ncrel.org/litweb/adolescent/strategies/guided.php>.

## Guided Imagery Reading:

**A Bayou Journey to Last Island in 1880**

Imagine it is the summer of 1880. You are 14 years old and it is summertime. You have been working at the sugar plantation but have decided to take a break and ride your horse down the bayou ridge of Bayou Sale to see if you can reach Isles Dernieres. You have heard it's easy if the conditions are right, and that the fishing is good there. You don't have a boat, so traveling to the island that way is not possible. As you set off, you're excited to be out alone on a journey you have never before taken.

You begin at Dulac, taking with you a fishing pole and a supply of fresh water. Your horse makes his way between tall palmettos, and in places it is hard to push between the huge fan-shaped leaves. Old, sturdy live oak trees shade the way, their massive branches hanging low over the bayou. Thickets of marsh cane grow close to the bayou in places. Further away from the ridge along which you journey, huge old cypress trees tower. They are at least 1,000 years old. You've recently heard talk in town that a new lumber company plans to harvest this timber to build houses and businesses in Houma.



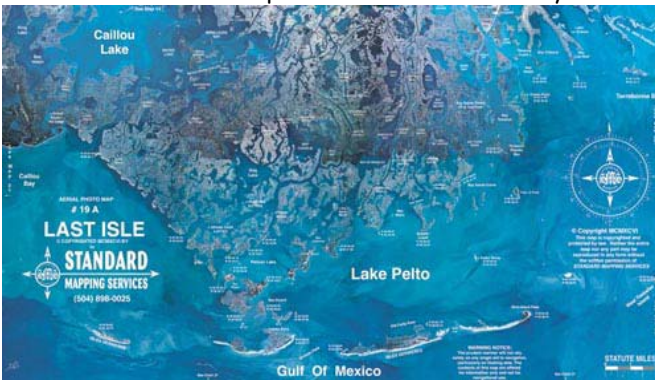
*Palmetto, a native wetland plant.*

After a while you stop to fish, watching a great egret that is doing the same thing. You catch a nice fish and after cooking the fish on a small fire and eating it, you continue on your way. All around there is wildlife and signs of wildlife. Several marsh deer dart into the trees. You see the marks left by a bear. Muskrat and mink scurry out of your way. You see a family of otters playing in the bayou. The trees are alive with birds of all kinds.

You travel for several hours until you come to a bayou that meets Bayou Sale and blocks your path. You encourage your horse to wade chest deep across the narrow waterway. Once on the other side, you realize how tired you are. The noon sun is beating down, so you stop to rest. You fall asleep with your back against a trunk of an oak. Later, refreshed, you continue along the bayou.

You notice several changes. There are fewer trees, and you can now see far across the open marsh a great expanse of green grass. The birds are also different - now you see spoonbills, rails and other marsh birds feeding in the water. A little later you begin to spot terns, gulls and frigate birds flying overhead. You continue to follow the tree-lined ridge as the sounds, the smells and the sights change, telling you that you are nearing the Gulf of Mexico and the barrier islands.

As evening draws near, you arrive at a shack, nearby is an enclosure for horses. You leave your horse with a man who will keep it in the enclosure until you return from the island. Two men operate a ferry pulled by ropes that takes you across the narrow body of water separating the Isle Dernieres from the mainland. At last you are on the island! Time to catch supper and sleep. Tomorrow you will explore the sandy beach, watch the pelicans and their young, and look for the remains of the old village and hotel destroyed by the great storm your grand-père told you about. Perhaps you will find buried treasure left by Pirate Jean Lafitte, who lived here years ago!



*READING NOTE: When you read the text, use your normal voice. Read the text slowly and clearly, pausing at appropriate spots to allow listeners to develop the images in the story.*