FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / 3–5 / 04

The Coast Beneath Our Feet

CULTURE & SOURCES • context, care & extension

Why this place, why this lesson?

Louisiana coastal wetlands are ecologically and culturally significant. Students examine both natural systems and the people who live and work near the coast.

Broader perspectives

Include multiple coastal communities, including Indigenous and working-waterfront perspectives when using sources produced by or with those communities. Avoid framing residents as merely victims or wetlands as empty spaces.

A culturally responsible teaching protocol

Name the makers — Identify artists, communities and cultural bearers by name where sourced and relevant.

Differentiate study from appropriation — Students may analyze techniques and contexts without copying sacred, ceremonial, or culturally restricted imagery.

Avoid a single story — Offer multiple identities, geographies and points of view, including everyday life rather than only festivals.

Give students agency — Students can choose a different relevant subject and retain the same artistic learning goal.

Check the record — Distinguish primary testimony, museum interpretation, observation and speculation; cite the actual source.

Ask permission — Obtain permissions for interviews, photographs, student work displays and public sharing when required.

Lesson-specific caution

Use current place names and community-led sources; avoid using tribal motifs or naming specific tribal practices without verified primary sources. Focus on place, ecology and relationships.

Verified starting points for teachers

• **Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority: K–12 educational resources**
https://coastal.la.gov/resources/educational-resources/

• **Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana: community-led cultural information**
https://chitimacha.gov/

• **Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Arts Content Standards**
https://doe.louisiana.gov/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/louisiana-arts-content-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=4

• **Studio Thinking framework: Eight Studio Habits of Mind**
https://www.studiothinking.org/the-framework.html

Student reference log

Who created the image, object, quote or source?

When and where did the work or event occur?

What does the source actually say or show?

Which elements are my own interpretation?

Do I have permission to reuse the material?

Extension for advanced or returning artists

Compare two time periods using public restoration maps, noting what the evidence does and does not prove.

About the instructional design

This lesson is a free original adaptation of the teacher-provided 2026 Artistic Investigations document. Its ten-stage inquiry structure and reflective goal-setting are preserved. The accompanying author resource, Fostering Artistic Growth: A Teacher's Guide to Instilling Studio Habits of Mind, informs the studio-habit emphasis. The full text of that published book was not supplied or reproduced.

The eight Studio Habits of Mind originate with Project Zero / Studio Thinking research. This independent resource does not imply endorsement by the book publisher, Louisiana Department of Education, cultural organizations, or Studio Thinking.