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# Poverty Point

## 1700 B.C. to 1100 B.C.

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Middle School  
Social Studies  
Prehistoric Cultures

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### Overview

The PowerPoint presentation tells about the monumental earthworks at Poverty Point, a World Heritage Site in West Carroll Parish. It had the largest earthworks of its time in North America.

### Objectives

Students will learn about the Poverty Point site.

Students will learn that the people who built the Poverty Point earthworks did not grow crops.

Students will learn about the sources of stone that the Poverty Point people used.

Students will learn about artifacts the Poverty Point people made.

### Activities

Student activities and worksheets include:

- Build a Model
- Internet research
- Map skills
- Review questions
- Creative writing

Teacher answer sheets are provided.

### Related Resources about Poverty Point

See [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology)

- Traveling Exhibit of Artifacts for the Classroom
- Interactive Online Exhibit
- Virtual Book

### Vocabulary

Archaeologist  
Archaeology  
Artifact  
Atlatl  
Bayou  
Celt  
Hunter-Gatherers  
LiDAR  
Mound  
Ore  
Pendant  
Plaza  
Plummet  
Posthole  
Ridge  
Site  
Timeline  
Trade Network  
Waterway

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

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Internet Research**

### *Artifacts at Poverty Point*

Access the interactive exhibit for Poverty Point at [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology). Explore all you want of the site! When you're through, choose one artifact group. Write a brief description of the artifact, or prepare a short PowerPoint presentation. Remember to include information on what the artifact is, the material it was made from, the origin of the material, and possible uses of the artifact. Present this information to the class.

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

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Group Activity**

### *Build a Mound*

Access the interactive exhibit for Poverty Point at [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology). Explore all you want of the site! When you're through, get into small groups and make a model of one of the mounds from Poverty Point. You can use clay or dirt. Be sure to provide information, such as which mound it is and what you know about the mound. Include information such as the age of the mound and any other characteristics you learned from this module or the interactive exhibit.

### *Build a Model of Poverty Point*

Access the interactive exhibit for Poverty Point at [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology). Explore all you want of the site! When you're through, build a model of the site. Divide into small groups and assign each group parts of the site. Select members from each group to put the site together, while others work on labels for each feature. You can use clay or dirt. Be sure to provide information on each feature, such as what it is and what you know about it. Include information such as the age and any other characteristics you learned from this module or the interactive exhibit.

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

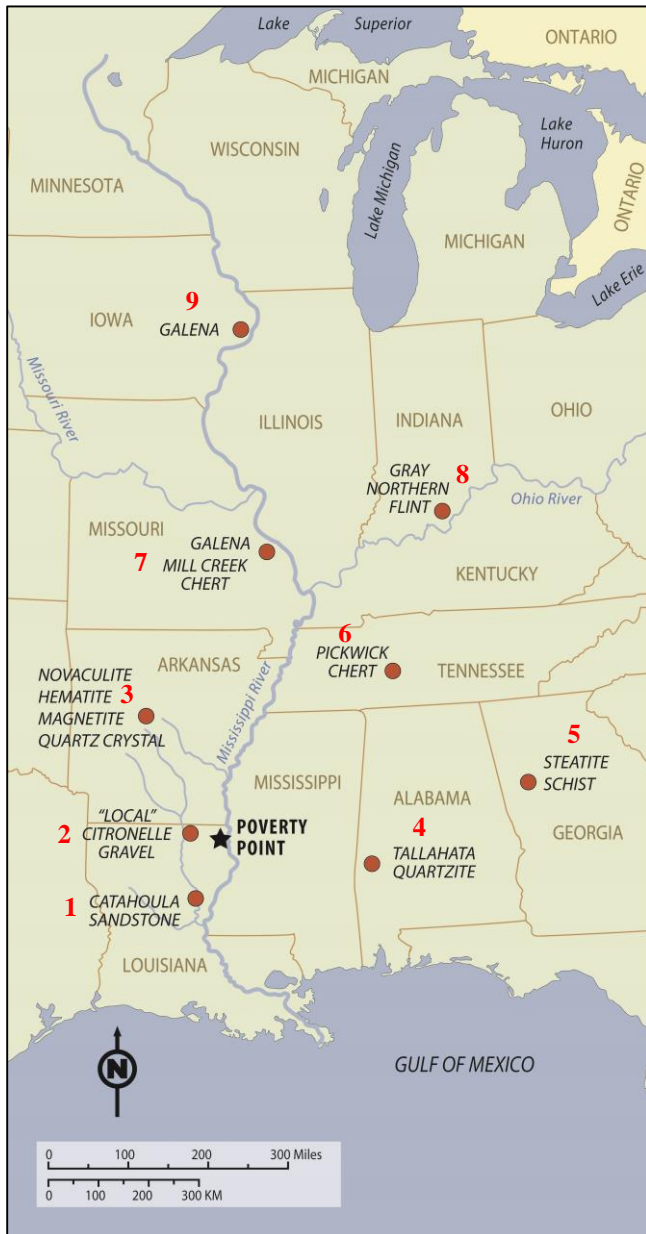
Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Maps and Distance

Material found at Poverty Point came from other places. Use the map below to estimate the distance in miles or kilometers of the origin of stone and ore from the site. This map is also on slide #18.



- 1. Catahoula Sandstone: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. "Local" Citronelle Gravel: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Hematite: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Tallahata Quartzite: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Steatite: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Pickwick Chert: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Mill Creek Chert: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Gray Northern Flint: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Galena: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**True/False**

Poverty Point people were hunter-gatherers.

True  False

All artifacts at the site were made from local materials.

True  False

Poverty Point was part of a large trade network.

True  False

**Short Answer**

What is the oldest earth mound at Poverty Point, and how old is it? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the people at Poverty Point build the earth mounds? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What crops did the people at Poverty Point grow? \_\_\_\_\_

**Essay**

Name two characteristics that make the Poverty Point site unique for its time. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Creative Writing Exercise

### *Trade at Poverty Point*

Pretend you are an Indian from another area visiting Poverty Point during the time the site was active. You are there to trade, and have brought your whole family. Write about your trade goods and how you and your family lived. Refer to the artifact slides in this module of items found at the site to get ideas of possible trade goods. Or, you can access the interactive exhibit for Poverty Point at [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology) for more information on this site.

Archaeologists know that people lived on top of the ridges. Use the painting below to describe which ridge and location was your home. When you were not making/selling your trade items, perhaps you and your family participated in earth mound building, hunting and fishing, or ceremonial activities. Include information on how you and your family spent some of your time. Archaeologists do not know how long any particular group or family might have stayed at the site. So, for this exercise you are free to determine how long you and your family remained at Poverty Point.

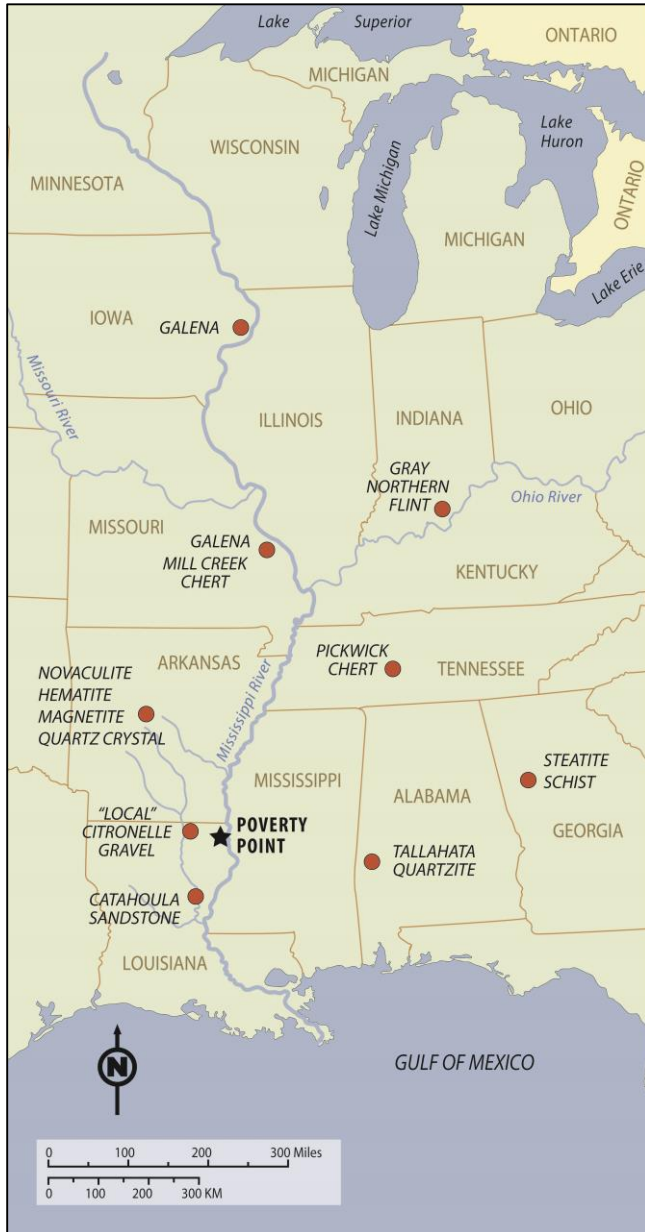


## For the Teacher

### Answers

#### Maps and Distance

Material found at Poverty Point came from other places. Use the map below to estimate the distance in miles or kilometers of the origin of stone and ore from the site. This information is also on slide #18.



1. Catahoula Sandstone:  
about 100 miles or 160 kilometers
2. "Local" Citronelle Gravel:  
about 50 miles or 80 kilometers
3. Hematite:  
about 200 miles or 321 kilometers
4. Tallahata Quartzite:  
about 200 miles or 321 kilometers
5. Steatite:  
about 400 miles or 643 kilometers
6. Pickwick Chert:  
about 350 miles or 563 kilometers
7. Mill Creek Chert:  
about 400 miles or 643 kilometers
8. Gray Northern Flint:  
about 500 miles or 800 kilometers
9. Galena:  
about 650 miles or 1,046 kilometers

## For the Teacher

### Answers

#### Review

##### True/False

Poverty Point people were hunter-gatherers.

True  False

Most artifacts at the site were made from local materials.

True  False

Poverty Point was part of a large trade network.

True  False

#### Short Answer

What is the oldest earth mound at Poverty Point, and how old is it? Mound B is the oldest mound at Poverty Point. It was built about 1600 B.C.

How did the people at Poverty Point build the earth mounds? The people at Poverty Point used woven baskets filled with dirt to build the earth mounds.

What crops did the people at Poverty Point grow? The people at Poverty Point did not grow any crops.

#### Essay

Name two characteristics that make the Poverty Point site unique for its time. Poverty Point was a large site built by hunter-gatherers. It had the largest earth mounds of the time. Many people lived at the site. Poverty Point people lived at the site year round. Poverty Point was part of a large trade network. Poverty Point people made lots of unique items.



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This is one in a series of modules about Louisiana archaeology. Each module has a PowerPoint presentation and associated student activities. The series is called “Learn about Louisiana’s Past through Archaeology.”

The presentation is intended for educational use. Please use image credits where provided.

Please visit the Division of Archaeology website for additional teaching materials and educational resources at: [www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology](http://www.crt.la.gov/DiscoverArchaeology).

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