

1. Exhibit Information for Teachers

Thanks for choosing to share this fascinating piece of Louisiana prehistory with your students!

The new, revamped Poverty Point Classroom Exhibit is an updated and expanded version of the well-loved Poverty Point exhibit that has been in circulation since 1986. The exhibit includes one DVD and three books, as well as artifacts and activities to teach your class about the Poverty Point site and culture.

The activities contained within the exhibit are designed to teach, but also to be fun. This section provides a preview of what's included, and is designed to help in planning the Poverty Point unit for your class. When the Poverty Point unit is complete, please return all items in the exhibit, including the clay.

If you have any questions, please call us at the Division of Archaeology (225-342-8166). We hope you enjoy these activities, and welcome your comments and suggestions!

Exhibit Contents

The Suitcase

- Artifacts
 - Many artifacts are included in the suitcase. A complete inventory of artifacts is in the table on the next page.
 - The artifacts can be introduced using a discovery learning or presentation technique.
 - The Artifact Investigation Worksheet in Section 4 and the Artifact Question Cards should be used with the discovery learning technique.
 - The Artifact Caption Cards may be displayed when using a presentation technique, or at the conclusion of the discovery learning technique.
 - Most of the artifacts in the suitcase are 3,500 years old. Students may examine and touch them, but please take care to avoid dropping or damaging the artifacts.

Note: Students **should not use any** artifacts from the suitcase for cooking, chopping, drilling, etc. They may create artifacts for use with the activities in the *Poverty Point Expeditions* guide. Also, students are encouraged to experiment with the atlatl and pump drill, which are included with the exhibit in the tube.

Artifacts	Quantity	Label
Poverty Point Objects	3	A
Replica Figurine	1	B
Beads	5-mounted to lucite	C
Steatite	1	D
Replica Dart Points	2-mounted to lucite	E
Microliths and Stone Core	7 microliths and 1 stone core, mounted to lucite	F
Plummets	2	G
Atlatl Weight	1	H
Celt (small ax)	1	I
Hematite/Magnetite	1	J
Sandstone	1	K

- *Poverty Point Expeditions* Guide
 - This hands-on activity guide is the cornerstone of the Poverty Point Classroom Exhibit. The activities in the guide relate to the items contained within in the suitcase and tube.
 - Before beginning the Poverty Point unit, refer to section II to select the *Poverty Point Expeditions* activities for your class. Section II lists all *Poverty Point Expeditions* activities and materials included in the exhibit.
- Binder
 - This binder contains the information necessary to complete the Poverty Point unit. In addition to the Exhibit Information for Teachers, the binder includes the following:
 - An Overview of Poverty Point
 - Information on *Poverty Point Expeditions* activities and artifact activities
 - Information on the DVD and books included in the exhibit
 - Related discussion topics
 - Overhead transparencies
 - *Poverty Point: A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley*
 - *Mounds of Earth and Shell*
 - *Archaeologists Dig for Clues*
 - *Indian Mounds of Northeast Louisiana: A Driving Trail Guide*
- ⇒ DVD and Books
 - DVD – *Poverty Point World Heritage Site*
 - The exhibit includes one DVD. Questions are provided in Section 5.

- Books
 - Three books are included in the exhibit. These books are located in the front and back pockets of the binder. Select the book or books most appropriate for your students.
 - *Mounds of Earth and Shell* can be used in elementary and some middle school classes.
 - *Archaeologists Dig for Clues* can be used in elementary and some middle school classes.
 - *Poverty Point: A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley* is mainly useful for high school classes. Questions for *Poverty Point: A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley* are provided in Section 6.
- Jump Drive
 - The jump drive includes a variety of information, including:
 - PowerPoints on Archaeology and Poverty Point
 - A PowerPoint version of the Overhead Transparencies
 - A short LPB video of The Ancient Mounds Driving Trail and Poverty Point
 - Step-by-step instructions of how to assemble the pump drill and video tutorial of how to operate it.
 - Instructions for the ceramic-making kit
 - A PDF of *Poverty Point: A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley*
- Ceramic-making kit
 - Five Ziploc bags containing:
 - 2 burlap cloth pieces
 - 2 small hemp strings
 - 2 large hemp strings
 - 2 seashells
 - 2 pointed wooden sticks
 - 2 blunt wooden sticks
 - Five Ziploc Bags of clay

The Tube

⇒ Prehistory Posters

- A set of five prehistory posters is included in the tube. These are labeled one through five in chronological order. The posters are necessary to complete the Time Line of History activity in *Poverty Point Expeditions*. Also, they can be displayed throughout the Poverty Point unit. **These posters are yours to keep.**

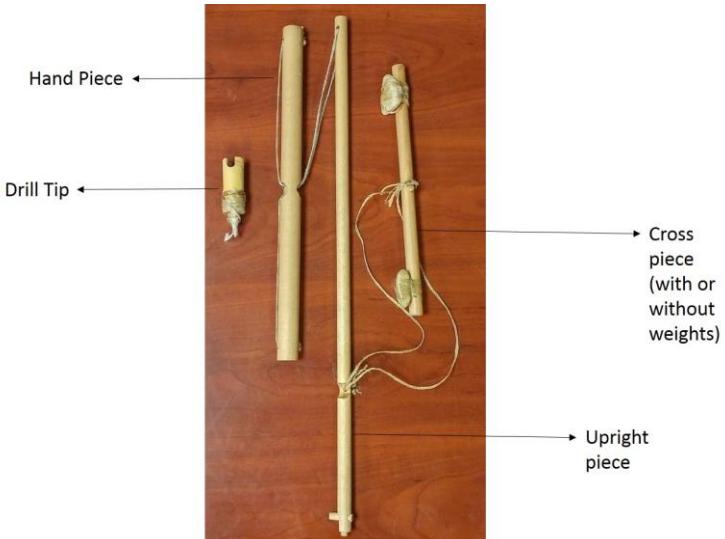
⇒ Poverty Point World Heritage Site poster (**please return**)

⇒ Atlatl

- A replica atlatl is included in the exhibit. See the activities Atlatl Antics and The “Do It Yourself” Atlatl in *Poverty Point Expeditions* for an explanation of use.
- No dart is included. Directions for constructing a dart can be found in The “Do It Yourself” Atlatl.

⇒ Pump Drill

- The partially assembled replica pump drill is for use with the Prehistoric Pump Drills activity in *Poverty Point Expeditions*. A wooden tip is permanently mounted in place of a stone drill point.
- Some assembly is required:
 - Secure the crosspiece to upright piece by wrapping with braided straps and tying in a bow.
(Tying in a bow makes untying easier.)
 - Put the upright piece through the hole in the handpiece.
 - Make sure string is not twisted around upright piece.
 - To operate, follow directions in the Prehistoric Pump Drills activity in *Poverty Point Expeditions*.
- For detailed assembly instructions, see pages 17-25 of this binder. To operate, see video tutorial on jump drive.



⇒ Pump Drill Adapter Tip

- The adapter is fitted with a replica stone drill point. If you would like to demonstrate the pump drill with the stone point, or prefer to allow students to drill with it, the adapter can be put on over the wooden tip (do not remove the wooden tip).
- Slide the adapter onto the drilling end, taking care to align the pre-cut notches with the adapter dowel to keep the adapter tip secure during use. The adapter will be snug.

Using the Contents

- ⇒ Become familiar with *Poverty Point Expeditions*.
 - Since each item in the exhibit is associated with *Poverty Point Expeditions* activities, it is important to begin by reviewing Section 2. A complete list of *Expeditions* activities, along with the necessary materials that are included in the exhibit, appears in Section 2.
- ⇒ Choose the activities that are appropriate for your class.
 - Introduce your class to Poverty Point with An Overview of Poverty Point (Section 3) followed by a brief question and answer period.
 - The Student Fact Sheet contained in Section 3 and Overhead Transparency 12 highlight many important concepts presented in An Overview of Poverty Point.
 - Follow An Overview of Poverty Point with the Time Line of History activity in *Poverty Point Expeditions*.
 - If time permits, many or all of the activities can be done in any order.
- ⇒ Preview the DVD for your class.
- ⇒ Select the appropriate book or books to accompany the Poverty Point unit.
- ⇒ Familiarize yourself with the artifact activities in Section 4.
 - Decide on a discovery learning or presentation approach with the artifacts.
 - Familiarize yourself with the Artifact Caption Cards, Artifact Question Cards, Artifact Investigation Worksheet, and Overhead 11.
- ⇒ Decide if you will use the replica tools and ceramic-making kit. Also, there's a model Indian hut lesson featured in *Poverty Point Expeditions* that would be a great group activity.
 - Learn how to use the replica atlatl. Decide on whether or not to make a dart.
 - Learn how to assemble and use the replica pump drill. Decide whether or not to add the adapter tip.
 - Plan how your class will use the ceramic-making kit. You can split students into four groups and have them make clay bowls, plates, etc. Use the items in the kit to make impressions in the clay.
- ⇒ Consider ending the Poverty Point unit with the Related Discussion Topics in Section 7.

The Division of Archaeology would like to thank David Griffing, Dennis LaBatt, and Mark Fox of the Poverty Point State Historic Site for replicating the atlatl, figurine, stone drill point, and stone points in the exhibit.

Thanks to Dr. Robert Connolly and Dr. Jon Gibson for their input on the artifacts and caption cards, and to Debbie Buco for her comments and critique.

2. Poverty Point Expeditions Guide

- ⇒ *Poverty Point Expeditions* is a useful tool for teaching the Poverty Point unit. This book uses hands-on activities focusing on a variety of topics dealing with the Poverty Point site and culture. Each of the activities is interdisciplinary and meets the requirements of the Louisiana Curriculum Standards.
- ⇒ In order to familiarize your class with Poverty Point, begin with An Overview of Poverty Point on page 1 of *Poverty Point Expeditions* or in Section 3 of this notebook.
- ⇒ Following the overview, an appropriate activity to begin with is Time Line of History because it serves as a good transition from the introductory material to other activities.
- ⇒ The other activities can be done in any order. The following chart shows which materials are included in the classroom exhibit.

Activity	Page	Items Included
An Overview of Poverty Point	1	Overheads 1-4, 4-Overlay, Overhead 12, condensed overview, Student Fact Sheet
Time Line of History	6	Prehistory posters
Our Poverty Point Addresses	11	Overhead 5
Topography Training	16	
Building a Mound for the Birds!	24	Overhead 6
The Run for the Ridges	30	
Home, Home on the Ridge	33	
Wattle You Build Next?	40	
Atlatl Antics	45	Overhead 7
The "Do It Yourself" Atlatl	54	Atlatl
Poverty Point Cooking Balls	60	Overhead 8
Cooking in an Earth Oven	64	
Poverty Point Ovens: Getting the Temperature Right!	69	Overhead 8
Prehistoric Pump Drills	80	Entire pump drill, adapter tip
Perplexing Poverty Point Figurines	87	Overhead 9
Bird Gods? Fox Man? Long Tail? Too Good to Myth!	92	Overhead 10
Artifacts All Over the Place	97	Pre-cut and sorted artifacts

3. Student Lesson on Poverty Point

- ⇒ The condensed overview should be accompanied by the overview transparencies included in Section 8. They are labeled 1 through 4 (and 4-Overlay) in the order they will be used.
- ⇒ The Student Fact Sheet (page 9) can be given out to accompany the overview, or, if time is very limited, used in place of the lesson.
- ⇒ Try not to reveal too much information about the artifacts themselves if you're planning to use the Artifact Question Cards and Artifact Investigation Worksheet with a discovery learning approach.

An Overview of Poverty Point – Condensed Version (Full-length version is in *Poverty Point Expeditions*)

Transparency 1: Poverty Point is both the name of a place and a way of life. The place is the Poverty Point site and the way of life is Poverty Point culture. The Poverty Point site is located in West Carroll Parish in northeast Louisiana. Today Poverty Point is an archaeological site, but 3,500 years ago it was an important American Indian village. It was a center for government, religion, and trade. The site was not called Poverty Point by its builders. It was named after the Poverty Point plantation, which occupied the same land at a much later time.

Transparency 2: The Poverty Point site is composed of ridges and mounds overlooking Bayou Maçon (mā sən). The earthworks at Poverty Point include six concentric rings of ridges, which form a C-shaped design around a large plaza. The outermost ring of ridges measures over ¾ mile from north-to-south. The ridges currently range from about one to six feet high. There are also several mounds at the Poverty Point site. The tallest is Mound A, which is thought to resemble a bird in flight. Other mounds include Mound B, Mound C (also called Dunbar Mound), Mound D (also called Sarah's Mound), and Mound E (also called the Ballcourt Mound).

Transparency 3: The Poverty Point Indians had an extensive trading network. Imported materials were used to make certain objects unlike those that earlier or later Indians made. Most of these objects were made from rocks brought to the Poverty Point site from far away. Sandstone was brought in from central Louisiana (F on map). Hematite and quartz crystal were brought in from Arkansas (D on map). Notice that many source areas for trade materials are along rivers. American Indians transported these materials to the Poverty Point site using the river as a type of highway system.

Transparency 4: These objects, called artifacts, are unique to the Poverty Point Indians and help archaeologists identify Poverty Point culture. Many of the items were used as tools, such as the stone point, cooking calls, and plummets. Poverty Point Indians also made decorative items like stone beads and figurines. American Indians at other sites during the same time made the same type of artifacts. Archaeologists think they all had the same way of life, or culture. Thirty-five hundred years ago, all American Indians who made similar artifacts shared the Poverty Point culture.

POVERTY POINT IS BOTH A PLACE AND A WAY OF LIFE

What is Poverty Point Culture?

- 👉 Culture is a way of life. We have culture and Poverty Point people also had culture.
- 👉 Archaeologists see culture that existed in the past, like Poverty Point culture, through things people made and used.
- 👉 Poverty Point culture existed 3,500 years ago. Archaeologists see Poverty Point culture through artifacts, mounds and ridges, and other things the Poverty Point people left behind.

What is the Poverty Point Site?

- 🌐 The Poverty Point site is a place where Poverty Point Indians lived about 1500 BC.
- 🌐 The Poverty Point site was the center for government, religion, and trade for the Poverty Point culture.
- 🌐 It is located in West Carroll Parish in northeast Louisiana.
- 🌐 It is made up of 6 ridges around a central plaza. The outer northern and southern ridges are 3/4 mile apart.

An Overview of Poverty Point

Study Guide - Student Version

1. What does "culture" in Poverty Point culture mean?

2. The Poverty Point site is in which parish?

3. The Poverty Point site is in which part of the state?

4. When did the Poverty Point culture exist?

5. What activities took place at the Poverty Point site?

6. Describe the earthworks at Poverty Point.

An Overview of Poverty Point

Study Guide - Teacher Version (with answers)

1. What does "culture" in Poverty Point culture mean?

A WAY OF LIFE

2. The Poverty Point site is in which parish?

WEST CARROLL PARISH

3. The Poverty Point site is in which part of the state?

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

4. When did the Poverty Point culture exist?

3,500 YEARS AGO

5. What activities took place at the Poverty Point site?

THE POVERTY POINT SITE WAS THE CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT,
RELIGION, AND TRADE.

6. Describe the earthworks at Poverty Point.

THE EARTHWORKS CONSIST OF 6 RIDGES FORMING A C-SHAPE.

ADDITIONAL CORRECT ANSWERS ARE:

THE ENDS OF THE OUTER RIDGES MEASURE 3/4 MILE APART.

THERE ARE SIX MOUNDS.

THE LARGEST MOUND IS MOUND A OR THE BIRD MOUND.

4a. Artifact Activities

- ⇒ All artifacts contained in the classroom exhibit suitcase are real except the replica dart points and figurine. **These artifacts are 3,500 years old. Please handle the artifacts with care and avoid dropping or damaging them.** The artifacts in the suitcase should only be used with the Artifact Caption Cards, Artifact Question Cards, and Artifact Investigation Worksheet. They should **NOT** be used to cook with or be attached to replica tools, such as the atlatl and pump drill.
- ⇒ The Artifact Caption Cards can be used to inform students about the artifacts. Each artifact and its matching caption card is labeled.

Artifacts	Quantity	Label
Poverty Point Objects	3	A
Replica Figurine	1	B
Beads	5-mounted to lucite	C
Steatite	1	D
Replica Dart Points	2-mounted to lucite	E
Microliths and Stone Core	7 microliths and 1 stone core, mounted to lucite	F
Plummets	2	G
Atlatl Weight	1	H
Celt (small ax)	1	I
Hematite/Magnetite	1	J
Sandstone	1	K

- ⇒ Alternately, for a discovery learning approach use the Artifact Investigation Worksheet in Section 4 and/or the Artifact Question Cards. Students may work alone, in groups, or as a class with the teacher coordinating. You may choose to have students examine one or several artifacts from the suitcase. If this technique is used, remember not to give the students too much information about the artifacts before beginning.
- ⇒ If the discovery learning approach is used, display the Artifact Caption Cards when the inquiry activity is complete.
- ⇒ Overhead Transparency 11 can be used with either technique to show the comparison between tools we use today and those used by prehistoric Indians. Overhead Transparency 4 and 4-Overlay show some Poverty Point artifacts.



Artifact Investigation Worksheet

Describe the following characteristics of your artifact(s):

Color:

Texture:

Shape:

Size:

How do you think it was used?

What is it made of?

Have you ever seen similar objects? Describe them.

What objects today take the place of this one?

Draw a picture of the artifact(s) you're studying:

4b. Pottery in Archaeology Activity

Archaeologists study pottery for many reasons. Pottery can tell us how Native Americans used local materials, such as clay, what designs different cultures thought important, etc. Below are some fun facts about pottery in Louisiana and some questions to get you started!

Fun Facts

- ⇒ The first clay pots in Louisiana date to around 4,500 years ago. The first Poverty Point Objects date to around 4,000 years ago.
- ⇒ Pottery, unless ground up, will pretty much last forever – that's why archaeologist spend so much time with it!

Make your own pottery!

Take the items from your clay-making kit. Your kit should contain:

- ⇒ 2 burlap cloth pieces
- ⇒ 2 small hemp strings
- ⇒ 2 large hemp strings
- ⇒ 2 seashells
- ⇒ 2 pointed wooden sticks
- ⇒ 2 blunt wooden sticks

These items represent some of the items that Native Americans used to decorate their pottery vessels (cups, bowls, plates, etc.). You can also use your fingernails! Pushing your fingernails in the clay or simply sticking the clay with the wooden sticks is called punctate. Dragging the sticks through the clay to make lines is called incising. Use the items in your kit to decorate your pottery vessel! Can you decorate your piece of pottery like the one below or those on the next page?



Image courtesy of Kevin Duffy.

There are several examples of Louisiana pottery, all with different designs!



Images Courtesy of Kevin Duffy

Images Courtesy of R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates



Pottery Worksheet

What do you use pottery for today? What do you think people used pottery for 1,000 years ago? How about 100 years ago?

What could you use instead if you didn't have pottery? What do you think people could have used 1,000 years ago or 100 years ago?

What do you use to make pottery?

How is it made?

What kinds of decorations do you have on your pottery at home? At school? When you eat out?

Why do you have decorations on your pottery?

Do you think Native Americans used the same tool and/or method you used?

If so, why? If not, what do you think they used instead?

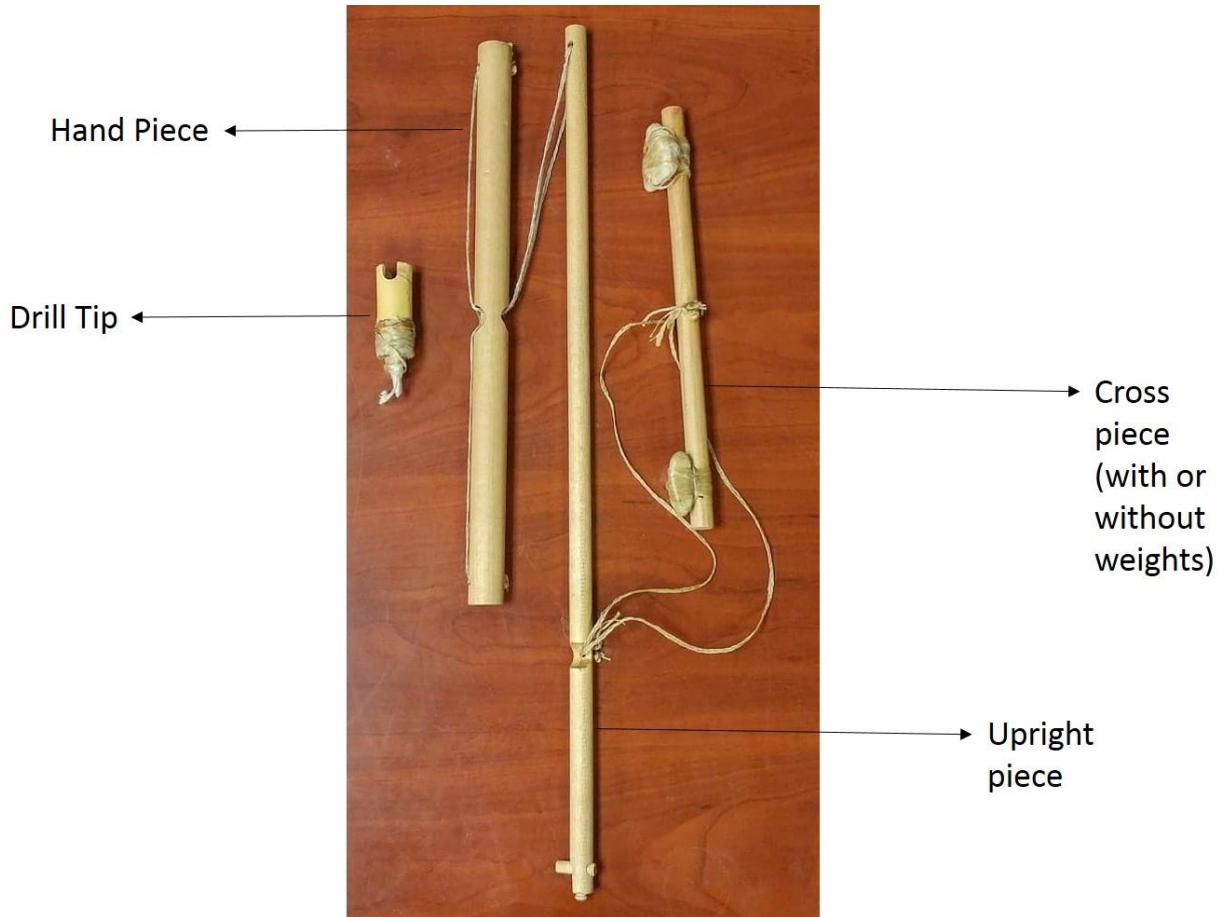
Draw a picture of the pottery vessel you created:

4c. Pump Drill Activity

Archaeologists think that Native Americans may have used the pump drill to start fires as well as drill into wood and stone using microliths, or small stone tools. The friction from the spinning drill tip could ignite kindling. The spinning microlith would drill a hole into beads, pendants, plummets (fishing weights) and banner stones. To learn more about the pump drill, see page 81 in *Poverty Point Expeditions*.

Assembling the pump drill

⇒ Pieces of the pump drill



⇒ Attaching the cross piece

- Pull the strings through the hole until the cross piece is snug with the upright piece.



- ⇒ Pull the string apart. Beginning behind the upright piece, cross the in front of the cross piece until they form an “X.”
- ⇒ Repeat this process in the back.



- ⇒ Pull the string apart. Beginning behind the upright piece, cross the in front of the cross piece until they form an “X.”
- ⇒ Repeat this process in the back.



- ⇒ Repeat this process until the strings will no longer cross the front of the cross piece.
Tie the strings in a bow or knot on the back side of the cross piece.



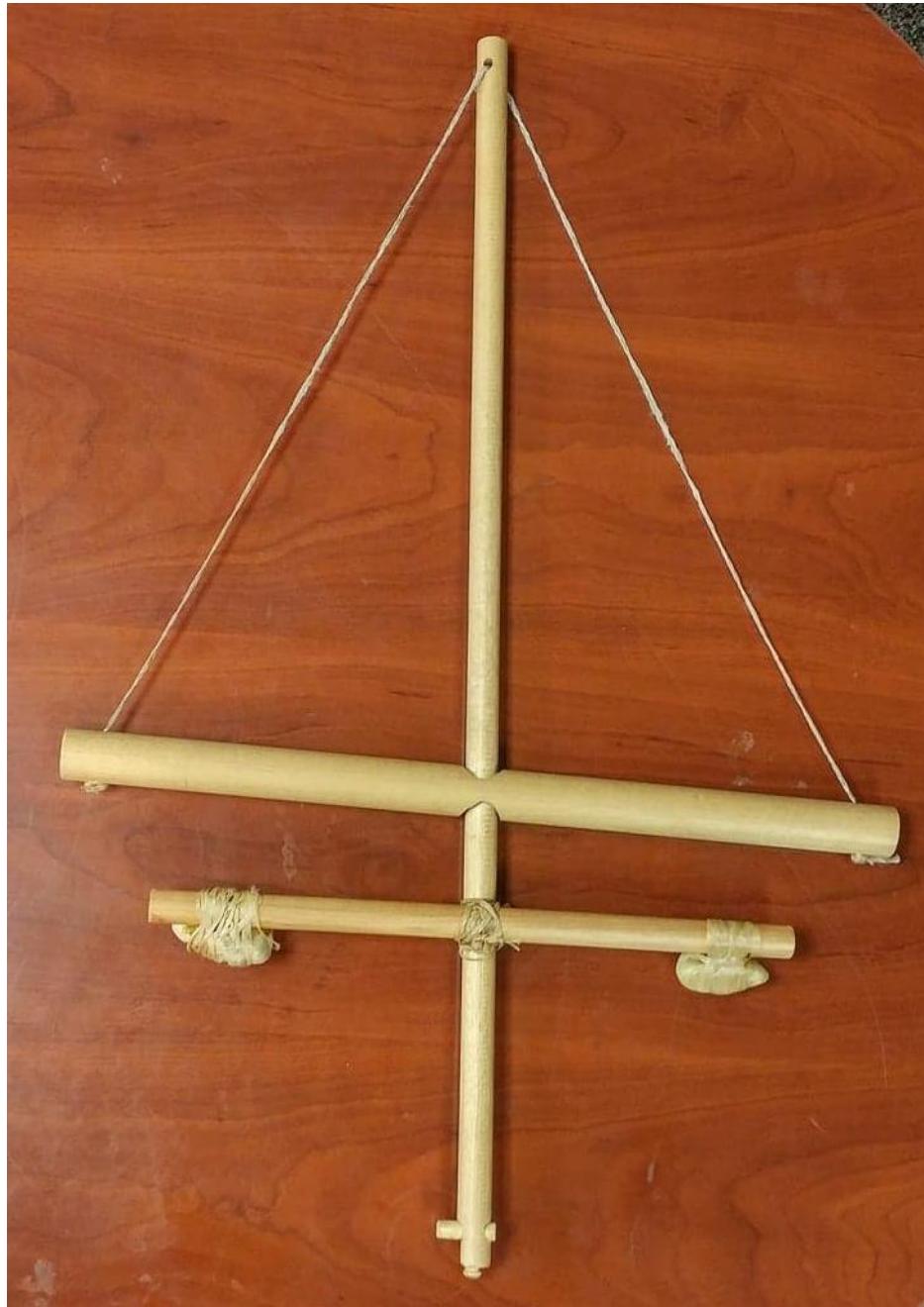
- ⇒ Repeat this process until the strings will no longer cross the front of the cross piece.
Tie the strings in a bow or knot on the back side of the cross piece.



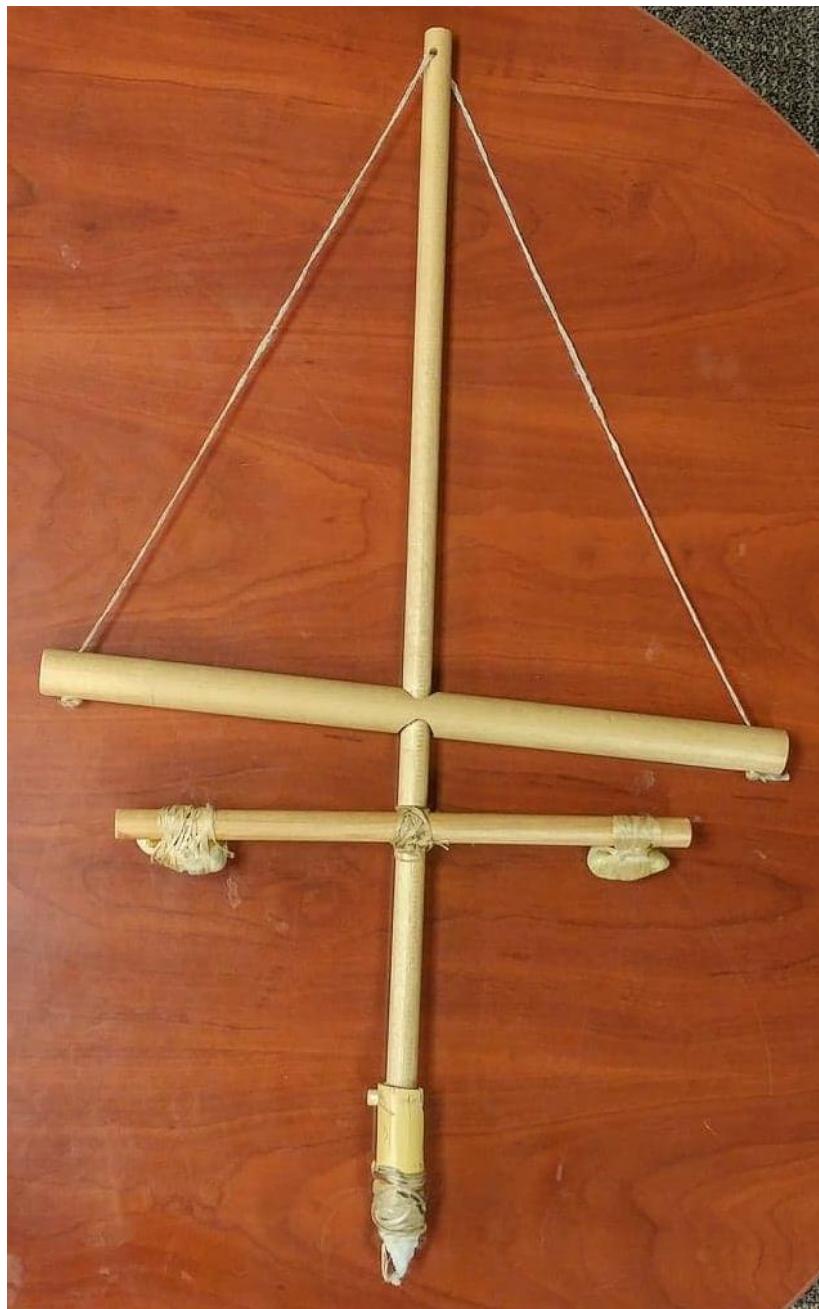
⇒ Your cross piece is now secure.



- ⇒ Slide the hand piece down the upright piece. It will need to make a triangle. You may need to untwist the strings.



- ⇒ Put the drill adapter tip on the bottom of the pump drill.
- ⇒ Place the pump drill on a soft surface, such as a telephone book or stack of papers. To use, twist the hand piece around the upright piece. Place your hands on the hand piece inside of the strings. Using a steady rhythm and little pressure, push the hand piece down and pull it up. Continue doing this until the drill tip has made a hole.



5. DVD

- ⇒ Questions and answers are provided for the DVD.
- *Poverty Point World Heritage Site* has a running time of about 21 minutes.

Poverty Point Earthworks: Evolutionary Milestone of the Americas is available through the Office of State Parks. For information about how to obtain a copy, telephone (225) 342-8166.

Poverty Point World Heritage Site
DVD Guide - Student Version

1. Poverty Point is located in the:
 - (a) northeast part of Louisiana
 - (b) southeast part of Louisiana
 - (c) northwest part of Louisiana

2. Poverty Point was named for:
 - (a) a city in Epps.
 - (b) a plantation constructed on site in the 1800s.
 - (c) a store that was located on the property in the 1900s.

3. The ridges at the center of the Poverty Point site form what shape?
 - (a) a complete circle
 - (b) a straight line
 - (c) a C-shape

4. There are 6 ridges and 6 mounds at the Poverty Point site.
True False

5. How did the Native Americans build the mounds?
 - (a) by transporting dirt with cars from one place to another
 - (b) by transporting dirt with horses from one place to another
 - (c) by transporting dirt with woven baskets and animal hides from one place to another

6. Mound ___ is the largest mound at the site and one of the largest mounds throughout North America.
 - (a) B
 - (b) A
 - (c) C

7. How did the people at Poverty Point get their food?
 - (a) Hunting, fishing, and foraging
 - (b) Hunting, foraging, and going to the farmer's market
 - (c) Fishing, hunting, and growing crops

Poverty Point World Heritage Site
DVD Guide - Teacher Version (with answers)

1. Poverty Point is located in the (a) NORTHEAST PART OF LOUISIANA
2. Poverty Point was named for: (b) A PLANTATION CONSTRUCTED ON SITE IN THE 1800s.
3. The ridges at the center of the Poverty Point site form what shape? (c) A C-SHAPE
4. There are 6 ridges and 6 mounds at the Poverty Point site. TRUE
5. How did the Native Americans build the mounds? (c) BY TRANSPORTING DIRT WITH WOVEN BASKETS AND ANIMAL HIDES FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER
6. Mound ___ is the largest mound at the site and one of the largest mounds throughout North America. (b) A
7. How did the people at Poverty Point get their food? (a) HUNTING, FISHING, AND FORAGING

6. Books

- ⇒ Three books are included in the classroom exhibit. Choose the book or books most appropriate for your grade level.
- *Mounds of Earth and Shell* can be used in elementary and some middle school classes.
 - *Archaeologists Dig for Clues* can be used in elementary and some middle school classes.
 - *Poverty Point: A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley* is most appropriate for use in high school classes. Questions are included for each section of this booklet. One or two sections of this booklet might be assigned as homework each night during the Poverty Point unit.

Poverty Point
A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley
Reading Guide – Student Version

Introduction (pages 1 – 2):

1. What is at the Poverty Point site?
2. Who built the earthworks at the Poverty Point site?
3. Name two things that were happening in other parts of the world when the earthworks were built.

Poverty Point Culture: A Definition (pages 2 – 4):

1. When did Poverty Point culture exist?
2. Where have archaeologists identified the Poverty Point way of life?
3. What do archaeologists use to identify Poverty Point culture?
4. What is the difference between the Poverty Point culture, the Poverty Point society, and the Poverty Point site?

Settlement (pages 4 – 12):

1. As shown on the map on page 5, what linked the scattered population clusters of Poverty Point sites?)
2. What dominates the center of the Poverty Point site?
3. How far apart are the northern and southern outermost ridges at the Poverty Point site?
4. What is located in the center of the ridged enclosure at the Poverty Point site?
5. Where did the majority of Poverty Point inhabitants live?

Foods (pages 12 – 15):

1. Were the Poverty Point people farmers or hunter-gatherers?
2. Name one type of fish Poverty Point people ate.
3. What large animal was an important meat for Poverty Point Indians?
4. Name three plants Poverty Point people ate.

Everyday Tools (pages 16 – 21):

1. Did Poverty Point Indians hunt with bows and arrows?
2. What is an atlatl?)
3. Were plummets heavy or light?
4. What are Poverty Point objects?

Trade (pages 22 – 26):

1. Name two kinds of material traded by Poverty Point people.
2. Why were rocks the major trade goods for Poverty Point people?
3. What was the most important trade center?

Symbolic Objects and Ceremonies (pages 26 – 30):

1. How many burials have been excavated at the Poverty Point site?
2. Beads were mostly made from what stone?
3. Ground stone pendants were made in the shape of what animals?
4. What animal does the "Long-Tail" engraving represent?

Socio-Political Organization (pages 31 – 32):

1. Name two things at the Poverty Point site that have led archaeologists to assume that it was a sophisticated place and that the society there was a complex one.
2. How long had mound building been around before the earthworks at Poverty Point were built?
3. Were the earthworks at the Poverty Point site haphazard piles of dirt or carefully laid-out features constructed according to a master design?

Poverty Point
A Terminal Archaic Culture of the Lower Mississippi Valley
Reading Guide – Teacher Version (with answers)

Introduction (pages 1 – 2):

1. What is at the Poverty Point site? (page 1)
ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: THE RUINS OF A LARGE PREHISTORIC INDIAN SETTLEMENT; ARTIFICIAL MOUNDS AND EMBANKMENTS; EARTHWORKS
2. Who built the earthworks at the Poverty Point site? (page1)
ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: INDIANS, NATIVE AMERICANS, MOUND BUILDERS, ANCESTORS OF THE CREEK, CHOCTAW, SHAWNEE, AND NATCHEZ
3. Name two things that were happening in other parts of the world when the earthworks were built. (page1)
TWO OF THE FOLLOWING: PHOENICIANS WERE TRADING, HITTITES WERE WARLORDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST, RAMSES II SAT ON THE THRONE OF EGYPT, MOSES HAD JUST LED THE ISRAELITES OUT OF EGYPT, AND DAVID AND SOLOMAN WERE KINGS OF ISRAEL

Poverty Point Culture: A Definition (pages 2 – 4):

1. When did Poverty Point culture exist?) (page 2)
BETWEEN 1730 AND 1350 BC
2. Where have archaeologists identified the Poverty Point way of life? (page 2)
OVER A LARGE AREA OF THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY; PARTS OF LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, AND ARKANSAS
3. What do archaeologists use to identify Poverty Point culture? (page 2)
THE CHARACTERISTIC ARTIFACTS AND THE NON-LOCAL ROCKS USED TO MAKE THEM
4. What is the difference between the Poverty Point culture, the Poverty Point society, and the Poverty Point site? (page 4)
POVERTY POINT CULTURE IS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONCEPT USED TO DESCRIBE A WIDE AREA OF GENERAL ARTIFACT SIMILARITIES WITHIN THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY; POVERTY POINT SOCIETY WAS THE ONCE-THRIVING COMMUNITY NEAR THE POVERTY POINT SITE; POVERTY POINT SITE IS THE AREA WHERE POVERTY POINT SOCIETY CONDUCTED ITS DAILY ACTIVITIES.

Settlement (pages 4 – 12):

1. As shown on the map on page 5, what linked the scattered population clusters of Poverty Point sites? (pages 5-6)
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND STREAMS THAT CONNECTED TO IT
2. What dominates the center of the Poverty Point site? (page 8)
A C-SHAPED FIGURE FORMED BY SIX CONCENTRIC ARTIFICIAL EARTH EMBANKMENTS
3. How far apart are the northern and southern outermost ridges at the Poverty Point site? (page 8)
FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER WAS 3,950 FEET, OR NEARLY THREE-QUARTERS OF A MILE
4. What is located in the center of the ridged enclosure at the Poverty Point site? (page 11)
THE PLAZA
5. Where did the majority of Poverty Point inhabitants live? (page 12)
ON THE RIDGES

Foods (pages 12 – 15):

1. Were the Poverty Point people farmers or hunter-gatherers? (page 13)
HUNTER-GATHERERS
2. Name one type of fish Poverty Point people ate. (page 13)
ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: GAR, CATFISH, BUFFALO FISH, OR SUNFISH
3. What large animal was an important meat for Poverty Point Indians? (page 13)
DEER
4. Name three plants Poverty Point people ate. (page 14)
THREE OF THE FOLLOWING: HICKORY NUTS, PECANS, ACORNS, WALNUTS, PERSIMMONS, WILD GRAPES, WILD BEANS, HACKBERRIES, HONEY LOCUST SEEDS, GOOSEFOOT SEEDS, KNOTWEED SEEDS, AND DOVEWEED SEEDS

Everyday Tools (pages 16 – 21):

1. Did Poverty Point Indians hunt with bows and arrows? (page 16)
NO
2. What is an atlatl? (page 16)
A SPEAR THROWER
3. Were plummets heavy or light? (page 16)
HEAVY
4. What are Poverty Point objects? (page 18)
"CLAY BALLS" THAT WERE ACTUALLY MADE OF SILT AND USED IN EARTH OVENS

Trade (pages 22 – 26):

1. Name two kinds of material traded by Poverty Point people. (page 22)
TWO OF THE FOLLOWING: FLINT, GALENA, CHERT, NOVACULITE, HEMATITE, QUARTZ, CITRONELLE GRAVEL, SANDSTONE, SOAPSTONE, QUARTZITE
2. Why were rocks the major trade goods for Poverty Point people? (page 22)
ROCKS WERE THE RAW MATERIAL FOR FASHIONING MANY TOOLS
3. What was the most important trade center? (page 26)
THE POVERTY POINT SITE

Symbolic Objects and Ceremonies (pages 26 – 30)

1. How many burials have been excavated at the Poverty Point site? (page 26)
NONE
2. Beads were mostly made from what stone? (page 27)
RED JASPER
3. Ground stone pendants were made in the shape of what animals? (page 27)
ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: BIRDS, TURTLES, CLAMS, LOCUSTS, OWLS, PEOPLE
4. What animal does the "Long-Tail" engraving represent? (page 29)
OPOSSUM

Socio-Political Organization (pages 31 – 32):

1. Name two things at the Poverty Point site that have led archaeologists to assume that it was a sophisticated place and that the society there was a complex one. (page 31)

THE LARGE EARTHWORKS AND HUGE QUANTITIES OF TRADE MATERIALS

2. How long had mound building been around before the earthworks at Poverty Point were built? (page 31-32)

TWO OR THREE THOUSAND YEARS

3. Were the earthworks at the Poverty Point site haphazard piles of dirt or carefully laid-out features constructed according to a master design? (page 32)

CAREFULLY LAID-OUT FEATURES CONSTRUCTED ACCORDING TO A
MASTER DESIGN

7. Related Discussion Topics

Food

- ⇒ Animal sources:
 - Have students list animals that provide the meat we eat today.
 - Which of these were available to Poverty Point Indians? (There were no domesticated animals like cows, pigs, sheep, or chickens.)
 - What animals were available to Poverty Point Indians?
 - Would it be hard to eat only wild animals today?
- ⇒ Plant sources:
 - Ask students to list the plants that provide food for us today.
 - Which of these were available to Poverty Point Indians? (There were no domesticated grains like corn, wheat, or rice, no domesticated green vegetables, and no domesticated fruits like peaches, apples, or oranges.)
 - Ask the students if they can think of any other edible wild plants.
 - How would their lives be different if they had to gather their own plants?
- ⇒ Technology:
 - Ask students how different it would be to cook our foods the way Poverty Point people did. Would it be harder without a microwave, a toaster, an indoor oven?
 - How did Poverty Point people hunt and gather their foods? Did their tools make it more difficult to hunt and gather than it would be with our modern tools?
- ⇒ Nutrition:
 - Introduce the food pyramid.
 - Assign the foods eaten during Poverty Point times to their appropriate level as a comparative exercise between then and now.
- ⇒ Many books describing edible wild plants are available in libraries and bookstores. One excellent reference is:

Peterson, Lee Allen and Roger Tory Peterson
1999 *A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants: Eastern and Central North America*
(Peterson Field Guides). Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston.

Artifacts

- ⇒ Have students discuss which modern artifacts have similar functions to the artifacts in the Poverty Point exhibit. Overhead Transparency 11 can be used to show tool similarities.
- ⇒ Students can list ways that the modern ones differ from the prehistoric ones by considering raw materials, place of manufacture, manufacturing process, time required to make, and the relationship of maker to user.

Ceremonies

- ⇒ Lead a discussion about American rituals and ceremonies.
- ⇒ Ask students to list religious, political, family, and school ceremonies. Then have students imagine Poverty Point ceremonial and ritual life. Would these Indians have had ceremonies for any of the same occasions that we have them today? What special rituals might they have had that we don't have?
- ⇒ Have students describe an imaginary Poverty Point ceremony including:
 - (1) the purpose
 - (2) the location
 - (3) the time of day
 - (4) who attended it
 - (5) what the people were wearing
 - (6) what happened.

Long Distance Trade

- ⇒ Ask students to describe ways that goods from other cities are packaged and shipped to your city today.
- ⇒ Then ask them to think of ways that Poverty Point Indians could have packaged and shipped goods from another state. How was their trade controlled? Did a person from Poverty Point go all the way to Illinois to get a certain rock? How did people living far apart communicate? What could Poverty Point people have given in exchange for the rocks and minerals they needed?

Culture Change

- ⇒ Encourage students to think of factors that affect the prosperity of modern countries and groups of people. What causes governments to fail? Then compare the factors with ones that might have affected Poverty Point culture.
- ⇒ How long did Poverty Point culture flourish before it declined? How long has the United States flourished?

8. Overhead Transparencies

⇒ Overview of Poverty Point Overhead Transparencies

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhead Transparency 1• Overhead Transparency 2• Overhead Transparency 3• Overhead Transparency 4• Overhead 4 – Overlay | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Location of Poverty Point on Map of LouisianaAerial View of Poverty Point SiteSource Areas of Poverty Point Trade MaterialsPoverty Point ArtifactsArtifact Names |
|--|--|

⇒ *Poverty Point Expeditions* Activities Overhead Transparencies

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhead Transparency 5• Overhead Transparency 6• Overhead Transparency 7• Overhead Transparency 8• Overhead Transparency 9• Overhead Transparency 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Map of Poverty PointMound A Topographic MapAtlatl Antics SimulationPoverty Point Cooking BallsPerplexing Poverty Point FigurinesBird Gods? Fox Man? Long Tail? Images from Poverty Point Artifacts |
|--|---|

⇒ Artifact Activities Overhead Transparency

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhead Transparency 11• Overhead Transparency 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Comparing ToolsStudent Fact Sheet |
|---|--|

Poverty Point

Traveling Classroom Exhibit



(225) 342-8166

www.crt.state.la.us (click archaeology)
archaeology@crt.state.la.us

PO Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

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