



MISSISSIPPI

# EXEMPLAR

Units & Lessons

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade 4

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## Lesson 5: Introduction to the Dialect of *Mississippi Bridge*

**Focus Standard(s):** L.4.1f, L.4.3b, L.4.3c

**Estimated Time:** 1 day

**Text(s):** Class set of *Mississippi Bridge* by Mildred Taylor

**Resources and Materials:**

- Word Wall with all previously taught vocabulary words that pertains to this unit
- Poster paper
- Markers
- Handout 5.1: KWL
- Handout 5.2: The Mighty Mississippi

**Lesson Target(s):**

- Students will explore the book they will be reading for the remainder of the unit.

**Guiding Question(s):**

- How do you think the Great Depression and Jim Crow Laws will fit into the story?
- What do you think this story will be about?
- Why is the bridge significant in this story?


### Vocabulary

**Academic Vocabulary:**

- Character
- Event
- Explicit
- Inferences
- Setting

**Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary:**

- Introduce words with student-friendly definition and pictures
- Model how to use the words in writing/discussion
- Read and discuss the meaning of word in multiple contexts
- Create pictures/symbols to represent words
- Write/discuss using the words
- Act out the words or attach movements to the words

| Symbol   | Type of Text and Interpretation of Symbol   |
|--|---|
|   | Instructional support and/or extension suggestions for students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level and/or for students who and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level. |
| ✓  | Assessment (Pre-assessment, Formative, Self, or Summative)  |
| Instructional Plan   |   |
| <p><b>Understanding Lesson Purpose and Student Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Students review the following “I Can Statements” for this lesson, be sure to underline the parts of the statements that seem easy and circle the parts that seem difficult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can orally present my predictions about the content of the novel</li> <li>• I can understand how formal English Language vs. informal English Language is used</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Anticipatory Set/Introduction to the Lesson:</b></p> <p>Hand out the books to the students, but make sure they do not open them. Have students look at the cover and read the blurb on the back.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ On a strip of paper, students write down what they think the story will be about. Then students discuss with their elbow partner what they wrote down.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade-level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with a sentence starter.</li> </ul> <p><b>Extensions and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students connect their predictions to another text or a personal experience.</li> </ul> </div> <p><b>Activity 1: Predictions</b></p> <p>Distribute <b>Handout 5.1: KWL</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Preview and predict the story- hand out the KWL chart for <i>Mississippi Bridge</i>. Do a picture walk and have conversations about the predictions. Remind students about the previous lessons. They will Think-Pair-Share their ideas about how the previous lessons will impact this story.</li> </ul> |   |

- ✓ Students fill in the “Know” and “Want to learn” part of the KWL chart with a partner or table group. Once groups are finished, groups share out what they “Know” and “Want to learn” from their KWL charts with the class.

### Activity 2: Vocabulary

Introduce Academic Vocabulary by having students complete a chart like the one below. As the students complete the chart, walk around and monitor progress. Compile the words students do not know and complete a Frayer model with the few words left.

| Vocabulary Words | Words I can define | Words I have seen/heard | Words I don't know |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
|                  |                    |                         |                    |
|                  |                    |                         |                    |

**Note:** Optional discussion on racially sensitive word (\*See teacher notes at the bottom of today's plan).

You may be able to pull resources from the school counselor or have them come and speak to your class if you feel that may be beneficial.

### Activity 3: Language

Conduct a mini-lesson on sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Tell students that they will learn how to identify sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Explain that sentence fragments are not complete sentences; for example, The weather. “The weather” is not a complete thought; therefore, it is not complete sentence. Continue to describe a run-on sentence with this example: “The weather is nice I like to go swimming.” This is a run-on sentence because it has two complete thoughts. A sentence like this can be fixed by adding a few words to join the thought; for example, “When the weather is nice, I like to go swimming.”

**Distribute Handout 5.2 The Mighty Mississippi By Kate Paixão** and address the fact that these errors represent common errors that students make and how the corrected versions are common ways to correct these errors.

- ✓ Students read the passage independently and look for the errors in the sentences. Next, students reread the passage with their elbow partner or in a small group. Together, students pick out the sentence fragments/run on sentences and correct them to complete sentences. Students share out sentences that were corrected.

### Activity 4:

Direct students to look through the novel, paying attention to dialogue, and discuss the writing style of the novel. Many sentences are not written in formal English, but rather informal.

- ✓ Students discuss how the writing style reflects informal, conversational English. Discuss how sometimes authors write in an informal style in order to remain authentic to a specific setting (time AND place/region).
- ✓ Guide discussions about when it is appropriate to use informal English and when it is appropriate to use formal English. Be sure to emphasize that the context determines the appropriateness and correctness of the grammar and that not every context calls for formal English; however, there are specific contexts in which it is necessary to use formal English.

Discuss how the author used punctuation for stylistic effect (L.4.3b), such as the apostrophe in the word ‘spect. Explain that there are several uses of the apostrophe in this manner throughout the text.

- ✓ Students explain what kind of effect was the author trying to achieve?

Explain that this context allows for punctuation to be used intentionally for stylistic effect.

- ✓ Students explain in what context using an apostrophe in this manner would not be appropriate.

Guide students through a discussion about how to use apostrophes appropriately in a more formal context.

Explain to students that every day they will pretend as if the characters were talking in a different setting that required more formal English so every day they will pick a few sentences from the book and change them to from a fragment or run-on to a complete sentence.

**Note:** Be sure to avoid calling the language and the punctuation in the novel incorrect because this could create a misconception about language and punctuation. The language and punctuation in the book is not incorrect for that context. Instead, focus on how this language could be adjusted to be appropriate in a different context. Research about code-switching for more information on this topic.

Follow the sequence below to model how the process is to be completed.

- Step one: Display the following sentence so all students can see it. The students will write the sentence in their writing journal and copy what the teacher does.  
“Well, I don’t ‘spect it matter none. Can’t buy it nowadays.” (page 10)  
Model how to edit the sentence and have students do the same in their notebook.

- Step two: Write the following sentence down so all students can see it. Students will write the sentence in their notebook. “Well, they most times are, aren’t they?” (pg. 11)  
With the students edit the sentence together.
- Step three: Students will pick their own sentence, write it in their journal, and edit it. Walk around and monitor work and guide students as needed.

**Note:** Repeat step two as needed until students are comfortable with the process

**For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade-level:**

- Give students something to draw from. Provide them with grammar/language rules that will be discussed during the lesson and allow them to review it before the lesson.

**Reflection and Closing:**

- ✓ On an exit ticket, students reflect on what they learned about formal and informal language and write a summary of what they learned. Collect exit tickets and check for understanding.

**Note:** If there are any gaps in what they learned, cover that information on the following day.

**For students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade-level:**

- Give them a written summary from the lesson that has key words replaced by a blank. Have students fill in the blanks.
- Some students would benefit from a word box for above activity.

## Homework

Provide the following directions to students:

After reading a book, sum up the book in one or two sentences. Decide what the entire story was about. Then give details that support the main idea of the story.

**Note:** For longer books, tell the main idea and key details in each chapter, rather than the entire book.

See page 6 of the [Family Guide for Student Success](#).

**Handout 5.1: KWL Chart**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>K</b><br><b>What I Know</b> | <b>W</b><br><b>What I Want to Know</b> | <b>L</b><br><b>What I Learned</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|                                |  |                                   |



## Handout 5.2 The Mighty Mississippi By Kate Paixão

### Adapted from Readworks

The following passage about the Mississippi River has several sentence fragments and run-ons.

The Mississippi River is one of the longest rivers in the world it flows from north to south through the United States.

The Mississippi begins in the northern U.S. state of Minnesota. The river then goes south for more than two thousand miles. All the way to the state of Louisiana. There, the mighty Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Native Americans depended on the Mississippi for thousands of years they were the first people in North America. Someone who is native was born in the same place they still live. Native Americans traveled the river by canon. Ate fish that lived in the water. They called the river *Misi-zibi*. Which means “big river.”

Today, boats bring important items up and down the river daily it is more than just a highway for boats. The Mississippi is home to all kinds of animals. More than 250 types of fish and at least 50 kinds of mammals. The Mississippi also supports millions of people. Many cities rely on the river for their daily water supply. At least fifty.

The big river is a very important river.

## Handout 5.2 The Mighty Mississippi By Kate Paixão

Adapted from Readworks

Corrected version

The Mississippi River is one of the longest rivers in the world. **It** flows from north to south through the United States.

The Mississippi begins in the northern U.S. state of Minnesota. The river then goes south for more than two thousand miles **all** the way to the state of Louisiana. There, the mighty Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Native Americans depended on the Mississippi for thousands of years. **They** were the first people in North America. Someone who is native was born in the same place they still live. Native Americans traveled the river by canoe **and ate** fish that lived in the water. They called the river *Mis-zibi*, **which** means “big river.”

Today, boats bring important items up and down the river daily. **It** is more than just a highway for boats. The Mississippi is home to all kinds of animals, **specifically more** than 250 types of fish and at least 50 kinds of mammals. The Mississippi also supports millions of people. **Many At least fifty** cities rely on the river for their daily water supply.

The big river is a very important river.

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