

# THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...

## THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY

A PBS Michiana - WNIT Special Documentary

### TEACHER'S GUIDE



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## CREDITS

### **THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY**

A Special Documentary from PBS Michiana - WNIT

Senior Producers, Pat Wisniewski and Tom Desch

Executive Producer, Paul Wasowski

### **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

Written by Alan Backler, Ph.D.

Instructional Design

Joseph Stoltman, Ph.D.

Department of Geography

Western Michigan University

### **DESIGNED BY**

Ginger Santiago

### **ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT IS A WATERSHED?**

Reading "The St. Joseph River Watershed by the Numbers"

Friends of the St. Joe River Association, South Bend, IN

### **ACTIVITY THREE: THE FRENCH FUR TRADE**

Reading "French Fur Trade: 1634-1783"

Randall Schaetzl

Department of Geography, Environment, and Spatial Sciences

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

### **ACTIVITY FOUR: THE POTAWATOMI**

Marcus Winchester video interview

PBS Michiana - WNIT

### **ACTIVITY FIVE: EXPLORING FORT ST. JOSEPH**

Visuals of artifacts

Niles History Center

501 E. Main Street

Niles, MI

Reading "Fort History"

Institute for Intercultural and Anthropological Studies

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

## CREDITS (CONTINUED)

### ACTIVITY SEVEN: INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

Reading "Pokagon Band of Potawatomi"  
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi  
58620 Sink Rd.  
Dowagiac, MI

### DIANE HUNTER VIDEO INTERVIEW

PBS Michiana - WNIT

### ACTIVITY EIGHT: TRAVELING ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Reading "History of Slavery and The Underground Railroad"  
Reading #1 "The Underground Railroad"  
The Underground Railroad Society of Cass County  
Vandalia, MI

### ACTIVITY NINE: KEEPING THE RIVER HEALTHY

Speakers  
Friends of the St. Joe River Association  
South Bend, IN

### ACTIVITY TEN: A STORY WORTH TELLING

Matt Meersman video segment  
PBS Michiana - WNIT

### HERB HULL'S STORY

Susie and Jim Hull  
Farragut, TN

### DOWN BY THE OLD ST. JOE MUSIC SHEETS

Music written in 1897  
by Mabel Grimes (Williams)  
Mishawaka, IN

# THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...

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## THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY

A PBS - Michiana Special Documentary

### TEACHER'S GUIDE

#### INTRODUCTION

The instructional kit for ***Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*** is designed primarily for elementary school students in Indiana and Michigan engaged in the study of their state. The kit includes a one-hour video about the people, history, and life along this storied river from Hillsdale, Michigan through South Bend, Indiana and northward into Lake Michigan.

The video shows how the river has shaped the region and continues to be an integral part of communities in both Michigan and Indiana. The documentary is intended, in part, to accelerate a renewed appreciation of the St. Joseph River and to encourage people to cherish the river and preserve it as a resource for future generations. This teacher's guide is designed to be used in association with the video.



Woman fishing on St. Joe River,  
dated 1898. Niles History Center.



## CURRICULUM CONNECTION

The video and teacher’s guide materials tie closely to the Indiana Department of Education Social Studies Standards for Grade 4, which focus on the state, and to the Michigan Department of Education Social Studies Standards for Grade 3, which focus on the state, but also to some Standards for Grade 4, focusing on the United States. Social Studies standards for Indiana and Michigan related to this project are listed below.

### INDIANA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS: GRADE 4: INDIANA IN THE NATION AND THE WORLD

**4.1.2** Identify and describe historic Native American Indian groups that lived in Indiana at the time of early European exploration, including ways these groups adapted to and interacted with the physical environment.

**4.1.5** Identify and explain the causes of the removal of Native American Indian groups in the state and their resettlement during the 1830s.

**4.1.9** Give examples of Indiana’s increasing agricultural, industrial, political, and business development in the nineteenth century.

**4.1.12** Describe the transformation of Indiana through immigration and through developments in agriculture, industry, and transportation.

**4.1.15** Create and interpret timelines that show relationships among people, events, and movements in the history of Indiana.

**4.1.17** Construct a brief narrative about an event in Indiana history using primary and secondary sources.

**4.3.6** Describe Indiana’s landforms (lithosphere), water features (hydrosphere), and plants and animals (biosphere).



**4.3.9** Explain the importance of major transportation routes in the exploration, settlement, and growth of Indiana and in the state's location as a crossroad of America.

**4.3.10** Identify immigration patterns into and out of the state, and describe the impact diverse ethnic/native/cultural groups have had and have on Indiana.

**4.3.14** Read and interpret texts (written texts, graphs, maps, timelines, data, audio, video) to answer geographical questions about Indiana in the past and present.

## MICHIGAN SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT EXPECTATIONS: GRADES THREE AND FOUR

**3-H3.0.4** Draw upon traditional stories and/or teachings of Indigenous Peoples who lived and continue to live in Michigan, in order to better understand their beliefs and histories.

**3-H3.0.5** Use informational text and visual data to compare how Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Peoples in the early history of Michigan interacted with, adapted to, and/or modified their environments.

**3-H3.0.6** Use a variety of sources to describe interactions that occurred between Indigenous People and the first European explorers and settlers in Michigan.

**3-H3.0.7** Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to construct a historical narrative about daily life in the early settlements of Michigan (pre-statehood).

**3-H3.0.10** Create a timeline to sequence and describe major eras and events in early Michigan.

**3-G4.0.2** Describe diverse groups that have migrated into a region in Michigan and reasons why they came (push/pull factors).

**3-G5.0.1** Describe how people are a part of, adapt to, use, and modify the physical environment of Michigan.

**3-E1.0.3** Analyze how Michigan's location and natural resources influenced its economic development.

**4-H3.0.3** Use case studies or stories to describe the ideas and actions of individuals involved in the Underground Railroad in Michigan and in the Great Lakes region.

**4-H3.0.4** Describe how the relationship between the location of natural resources and the location of industries (after 1837) affected and continues to affect the location and growth of Michigan's cities.



# THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...

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## THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY

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### TEACHER'S GUIDE

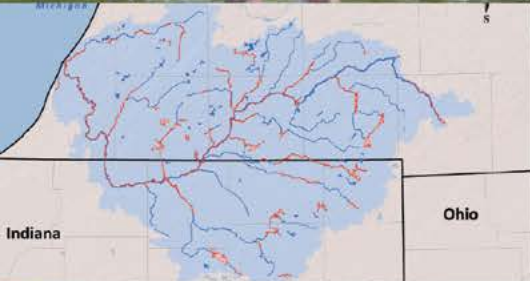
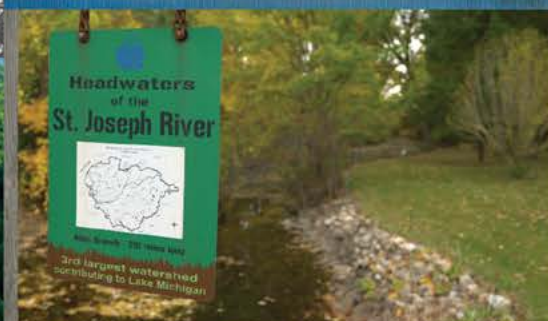
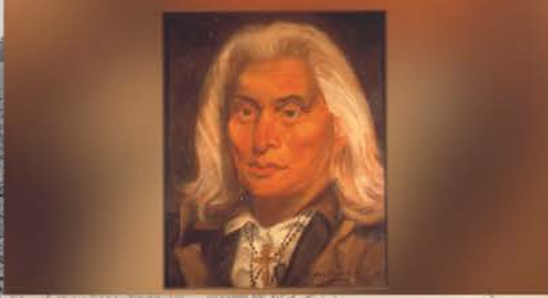


## OBJECTIVES

After viewing the video and participating in the accompanying activities, students will be able to:

- Describe the history of Southwestern Michigan and Northwestern Indiana as it relates to the St. Joseph River.
- Explain the role played by the St. Joseph River in the development of the cities and towns located in the St. Joseph River watershed (region).
- Identify strategies that can be used to support a healthy future for the river.





# THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY

## VIDEO PROGRAM SUMMARY

### OVERVIEW (BEGINNING OF VIDEO)

The program opens with an introduction to the themes to be developed in the video. Attention is given to the significance of the river in the development of the region. Consideration is also given to the declining conditions of the river and to a healthier future. Special attention is given to the role that residents of the region can play in the restoration and preservation of the river. (NOTE: The Overview is followed by a short segment on sponsors who paid for the development of the video.)

### ORIGINS: THE FIRST PEOPLE (5:01 MARK)

This segment of the video introduces the St. Joseph River watershed. Attention is given to the formation of the watershed during the late Ice Age and to the emergence of the portage between the St. Joseph and the Kankakee Rivers.

Marcus Winchester, past Director of Language and Culture with the Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi, describes how his tribe came to the St. Joseph Valley. They were drawn by “food that grew on the water”—specifically, wild rice—called “Mnomen.”

### THE FRENCH ARRIVE (7:19 MARK)

This segment focuses on the French and their impact on the St. Joseph River region. They were interested in the fur trade, especially beaver pelts. These pelts were used primarily to make beaver hats, which were in high demand in Europe. The French moved into the region to try to establish trade networks with the Indigenous tribes living there. The French were also interested in converting the Indigenous people to Christianity.

The strategic importance of the St. Joseph River, for control of the region and much of the continental interior all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, led the French to build Fort St. Joseph on the river near modern day Niles, Michigan. Since the fort was the access key to all of central North America and the riches that existed therein, control of the fort was constantly under dispute. The fort was controlled first by the French, then by the English, then by the Spanish, and eventually by the Americans. The Potawatomi and the Miami also controlled the fort for some time.

### THE GROWTH OF CITIES AND TOWNS (12:33 MARK)

This segment explores the establishment of saw and grist mills along the river and the impact that these mills had on the growth of cities and towns. Much of the lumber and grain produced at these mills was shipped by raft on the St. Joseph River to the towns of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, located where the river emptied into Lake Michigan. By 1842, these towns became the most important ports in Michigan outside of Detroit. Flat bottomed wooden rafts were constructed upstream and were used to transport goods downstream to Lake Michigan. When they reached their destination, the rafts were sold for timber. The rocks, used as ballast for the rafts, were used to construct walls for buildings along the river.

River towns and cities grew along the river. They used the river to power their economies. Dams were built and races were dug to channel the river water. In these races, turbo wheels were placed to produce water-power, and they became the wheels of industry and further city growth.

### THE TREATMENT OF NATIVE AMERICANS (20:20 MARK)

In 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected president of the United States. He believed that the continent’s Indigenous people could not live alongside European American settlers. In 1830 the Indian Removal Act became law. It eventually led to the forced relocation of nearly all Indigenous people east of the Mississippi River to land west of the river.

In the St. Joseph River region, some Potawatomi managed to remain in place because of the efforts of Chief Pokagon. Other Indigenous people were able to remain along the river, while others returned to the river area they called home after moving west.

All Indigenous people who remained in the region felt the impact of these trying times. Their language stopped being used. Many of their cultural practices and traditions were stripped away.

### **IMMIGRATION: A DIVERSE POPULATION (27:19 MARK)**

This segment focuses on immigrants from Europe who came to the region looking for jobs in the factories that grew along the St. Joseph River. African Americans from the South also migrated to the region, joining black communities already well established in the area, especially near South Bend and along the St. Joseph's tributaries in Cass County, Michigan. Cass County was a major destination for the Underground Railroad before the Civil War.

### **CONNECTIONS TO OTHER REGIONS (31:27 MARK)**

After the Civil War, the St. Joseph River region became a major grower and exporter of fruit for markets around the world. It is an ideal area for certain types of fruit farming because of the climate. Seasonal farm workers were attracted to the region. Today, the fruit of the St. Joseph Valley is transported to the rest of the nation by truck, but in its early days, the river was the main means of transportation.

The region was connected to other parts of the Great Lakes region by a second industry, tourism. Tourists would come to the St. Joseph Valley by boat from places like Chicago. They were attracted to the resorts that were built in the area because they offered a change from hot city summers.

### **POWER: HARNESSING THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER WATER (35:51 MARK)**

This segment focuses on the growth of industry along the St. Joseph River powered by hydroelectricity, beginning in the late nineteenth century. The development of hydroelectricity led to the building of railroad cars, the further production of flour, the making of sewing machines, footwear and washing machines, and the fabrication of musical instruments, among many other things along the river.

The dams built to create electricity also reshaped the river. Lakes were formed behind the dams all along the river.

### **RIVER HEALTH: DECLINE, POLLUTION, WELLNESS (40:36 MARK)**

This segment begins by considering the impact of the dams that were built along the St. Joseph River on fish life in the river. The dams interfered with the migration of fish. They could not get upstream because of the dams. Fish ladders did no good. The fish were cut off from their natural spawning grounds.

Pollution was also a problem along the river. There was a time when chemicals and sewage were dumped into the river, causing pollution. In 1930, the Indiana Board of Health found the river to be a danger to public health and fish life. Soon thereafter, sewage treatment plants began to be built along the river.

Another issue was flooding, which can release untreated sewage. Communities in the watershed are working on ways to reduce flooding and prevent the release of sewage into the river.

### **THE ST. JOSEPH: NOW AND IN THE FUTURE (48:40 MARK)**

This segment focuses on how the citizens of the region have become involved in the future of the river. An early example is the development of a white-water rafting course in the river. Another example is the River Rats, local citizens who are involved in cleaning up the river. The River Rats have programs that encourage children to care for the river.

People are developing new ways to enjoy the river. In Union City, a guided water trail educates paddlers as they travel through town. In other places, homes are being built along the river. River walks and parks are coming alive along the river. Businesses want to locate along the river. In South Bend, the University of Notre Dame uses the river for sporting events and as a source of clean power. If well cared for, the St. Joseph River will provide for the people of the region in the future.

NOTE: The final chapter is followed by credits for the program and aerial views of the region.

## VOCABULARY WORDS

### **GRIST MILL**

A mill used to grind grain.

### **INDENTURED SERVANT**

A person under contract to work for another person, for a definite period of time, usually without pay.

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

The earliest inhabitants of an area. In the case of the United States, this term refers to Native Americans.

### **PORTAGE**

Carrying boats or goods over land from one body of water to another.  
Portage also refers to the route followed in making such a transfer.

### **TRIBUTARY**

A river or stream flowing into a larger river or lake.

### **UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**

A secret network for helping slaves escape from the South to the North and to Canada in the years before the Civil War ended.

### **WATERSHED**

A body of land that drains water into a specific water body, such as a river, lake, or ocean.

## BEFORE SHOWING THE VIDEO

Use the following activity to stimulate students' curiosity about the video they are about to see.

1. Divide the class into groups of three or four.
2. Distribute a copy of the KWL chart to each group. A blackline master of the chart appears on page 42. (The KWL strategy helps students approach a complex topic in a systematic manner. The K column is used to show what students already know about a topic, the W column is used to show what students want to learn about the topic, and the L column shows what they learned from an investigation of the topic.) Explain to students that a KWL chart is used to help organize information that they gather from various sources, in this case the St. Joseph River video.
3. Indicate to students that they are going to see a video about the St. Joseph River. The river runs through Southwestern Michigan and Northwestern Indiana. The river has played a major role in the growth of the region for hundreds of years.
4. Show the first segment of the video "Overview" which runs 2:25 minutes. Viewing this segment will help students focus on the subject of the video.
5. After showing the segment, have the members of each group work together to establish what they already know about the St. Joseph River. Ask them to enter what they already know in the K (know) column of their KWL charts.
6. Finally, have the members of each group write at least three or four questions that they would like to ask about the history and development of the river. For example, they might ask such questions as: What role did the river play in the settlement of the area by the French? What plans are there for further development of the river? How does the river connect the region to other parts of the United States? Have them record their questions in the W (want to know) column of their KWL charts.

## SHOWING THE VIDEO

The entire video program is about 56 minutes long. It includes the overview and nine segments of content. It also contains segments on sponsors and credits, which will give students a sense of the individuals and organizations that paid for the development of the video and those who were involved in producing the video.

It is recommended that students view the main body of the video program segment by segment. After viewing each segment, you can conduct post-viewing activities associated with that segment, which involve answering the questions posed in the guide about that segment. Ask students to look for answers to the questions they posed in their KWL charts as they watch each segment and answer the questions posed in the guide.

(NOTE: If desired, you can show the entire program to give students a sense of the topics included.)

(NOTE: Possible answers to questions about the video appear in italics. Students should be encouraged to go beyond the questions posed and the possible answers.)





Nineteenth century Potawatomi women harvesting wild rice. Seth Eastman, 1853

## ORIGINS: THE FIRST PEOPLE (5:01 MARK - DURATION: 2:18)

After showing the first segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

### 1. When was the St. Joseph River Valley basin formed?

*It was formed thousands of years ago during the Ice Age.*

### 2. How big is the land area that drains water into the St. Joseph River?

*Water from about 5,000 square miles of land drains into the river.*

### 3. What caused the Kankakee River to become two rivers—the Kankakee and the St. Joseph?

*Erosion carved out a path that redirected the waters of what became the St. Joseph River to the north.*

### 4. How does Diane Hunter describe the origin of the Miami people in the St. Joseph River region?

*She tells the story about the Miami coming out of the water and that the water they came out of was the St. Joseph River.*

### 5. Why did Marcus Winchester call the Great Lakes region “North America’s Garden of Eden” in the video?

*He called it the Garden of Eden because it provided a wide range of resources for its early inhabitants.*

### 6. What plant growing in the St. Joseph River attracted the Potawatomi people to the area?

*The plant that attracted the Potawatomi people was wild rice, known to the Potawatomi as “mnomen.”*



### THE FRENCH ARRIVE (7:19 MARK - DURATION: 5:16)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

#### 1. What were the French looking for when they came to the St. Joseph River area more than three hundred years ago (1684)?

*The French wanted to make money from the fur trade and convert the Indigenous people to Christianity.*

#### 2. What were beaver pelts (fur) used for by the French?

*At that time, beaver pelts were used mostly to make fur hats for sale in Europe.*

#### 3. What is a portage? Where did a portage exist in the area shown in the video?

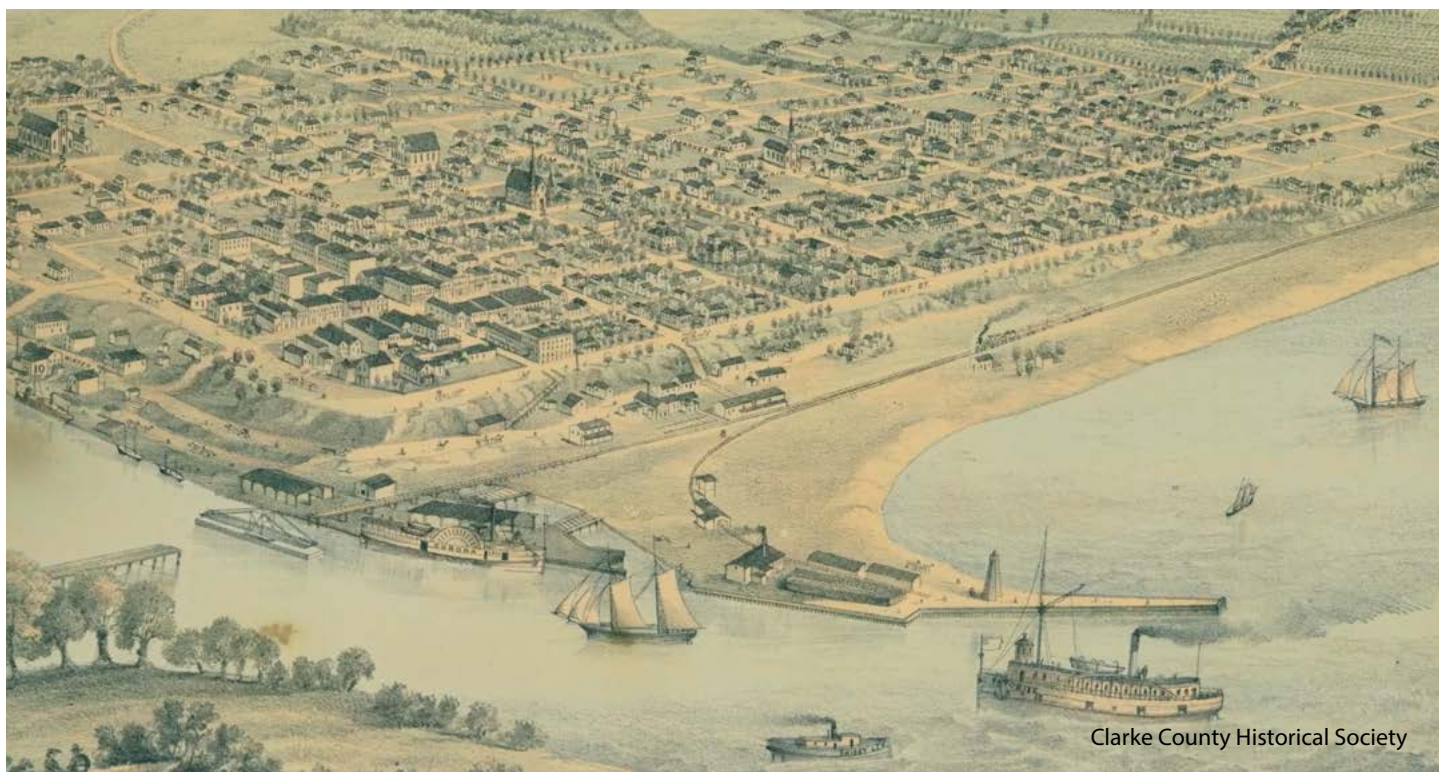
*A portage is dry land that joins separate rivers or lakes. In this area, a portage allowed people to walk from the St. Joseph River to the Kankakee River.*

#### 4. What did the portage between the two rivers allow traders to do?

*Traders could travel through the Great Lakes, get onto the St. Joseph River, walk to the Kankakee River, and then travel down the Kankakee to the Mississippi River and then to the Gulf of Mexico.*

#### 5. Where and why did the French build Fort St. Joseph?

*The fort was built near the present location of Niles, Michigan, on the St. Joseph River. It was a location important to protecting the region from possible enemies and competitors.*



## THE GROWTH OF CITIES AND TOWNS (12:33 MARK - DURATION: 6:36)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

### 1. Why were water-powered mills important to the growth of communities along the St. Joseph River beginning in the 1830s?

*Mills were important because they were used to cut logs into lumber to build new buildings and to grind grains into flour for people to use to make bread and other baked products.*

### 2. Where was much of the grain and lumber shipped?

*Much of it was sent downstream on the St. Joseph River to the ports that were located where the river emptied into Lake Michigan—the port cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor. By 1843, these two cities became the most important ports in Michigan outside of Detroit.*

### 3. How did the settlers transport lumber and grain downstream along the river?

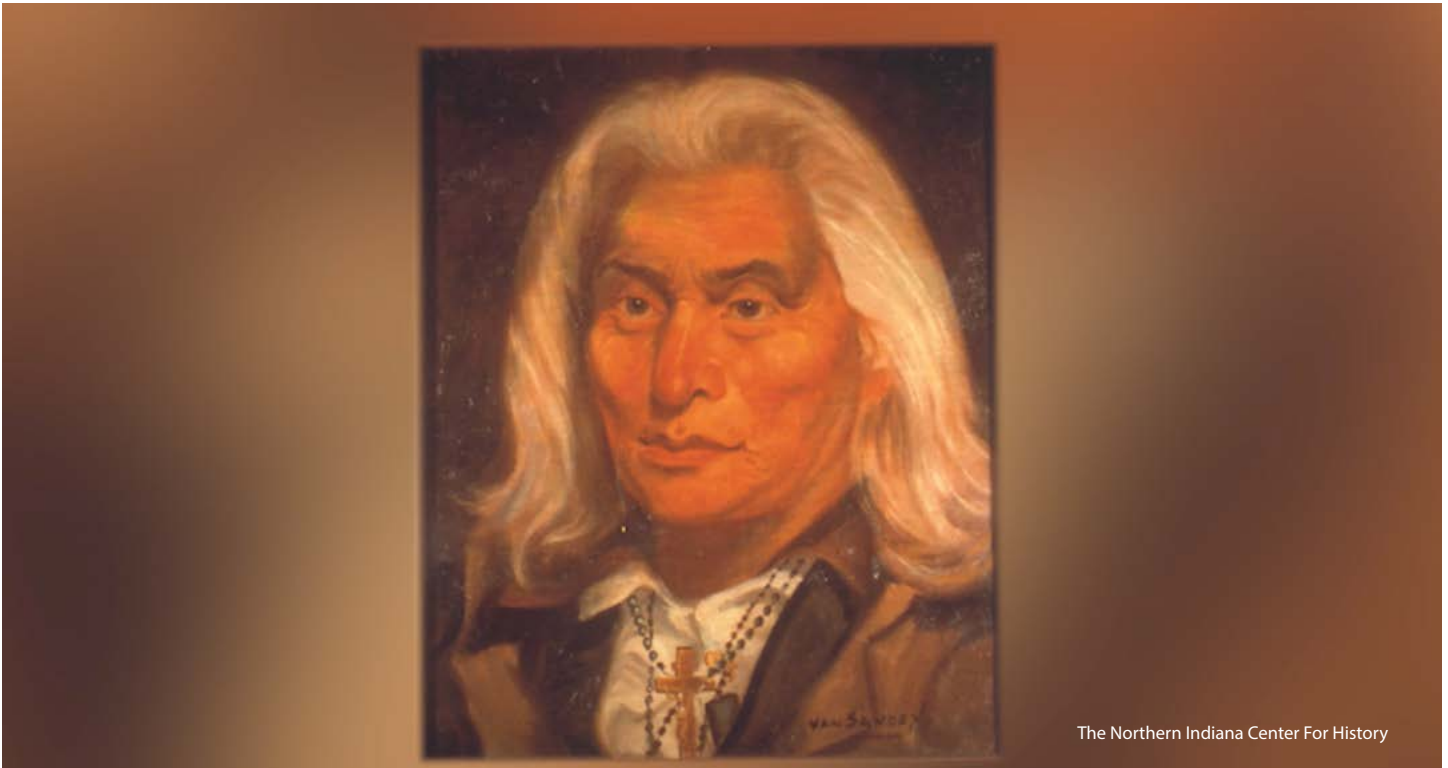
*They used flat bottomed rafts.*

### 4. What were the rafts used for once they reached their destinations?

*The rafts were sold for lumber. The rocks used for ballast (heavy material placed in the bottom of a boat to keep it from tipping over) were used to build the foundations of buildings.*

### 5. How did settlers power their businesses and factories along the river?

*The settlers dug large ditches, called races, around dams. In the races, they placed big wooden wheels with paddles. The water coming down the races pushed against the paddles and turned the wheel. The wheel turned a saw or grist stone that did the work of many people.*



The Northern Indiana Center For History

## THE TREATMENT OF NATIVE AMERICANS (20:20 MARK - DURATION: 6:01)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

### 1. Why was the Indian Removal Act of 1830 passed by the US Congress?

*The act passed because there were those who felt that European-Americans and Native Americans could not live alongside each other.*

### 2. What happened to many Native (Indigenous) Americans as a result of the Removal Act of 1830?

*The act led to the forced relocation of nearly all Indigenous people living east of the Mississippi River to new locations west of the river.*

### 3. How did some Potawatomi manage to remain in the St. Joseph River region, despite the Indian Removal Act?

*Their leader, Pokagon, purchased the land on which his people lived and showed how his village was peaceful and accepting of the newly arrived European settlers.*

### 4. How did the Indian Removal Act affect Indigenous Americans who were permitted to remain in the region?

*Over time, important elements of their culture were lost, including the language they spoke and many of their traditions.*



The History Museum

### IMMIGRATION FROM MANY DIFFERENT PLACES (27:19 MARK - DURATION: 6:15)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

#### 1. What brought workers from other countries to the St. Joseph Valley, before and after the Civil War?

*Factories were growing quickly in the region, but there were not enough people to work in these factories, so immigrant workers were needed.*

#### 2. Where did these immigrants come from?

*The people came from Sweden, Hungary, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Poland, and other countries in Europe. African Americans from the American South also migrated to the region.*

#### 3. Why did African Americans leave the South and settle in Michigan, both before and after the Civil War?

*Many left the South because they had been freed from slavery and didn't want to stay in the South. Also, Michigan was one of the few states where blacks could buy land.*

#### 4. What was the Underground Railroad? Where did it operate in the St. Joseph River region?

*The Underground Railroad was a number of trails from the slave states north into the free states and Canada. Along the way were safe houses for escaped slaves to stay as they moved north. The trail that people used to come to the St. Joseph River area was known as the Quaker Trail. The Quakers believed that all people are created equal. They helped black people get to this region and establish themselves in the St. Joseph River region.*



Library of Congress

### CONNECTIONS TO OTHER REGIONS (31:27 MARK - DURATION: 4:24)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

#### 1. The St. Joseph River Valley became known as a great area for fruit farming. Why was it considered a great area for fruit farming?

*Lake Michigan keeps the temperatures moderate during the growing season which is ideal for fruit farming. Also, farmers in the area were irrigating the soils using the water resources of the area one hundred years ago.*

#### 2. How is the fruit grown in the St. Joseph River Valley now transported to other parts of the United States? How was it transported in the early years?

*The fruit is now transported to other parts of the country by truck. In the early days, the river was used to connect the region to other parts of the country.*

#### 3. What was another industry that connected the St. Joseph River region to other parts of the country? Why were people attracted to the area?

*Tourism was another industry that grew in the area. In the late 1800s, when tourism began in the region, it was a time before air conditioning. The cities were hot in the summer, and they smelled. People wanted to get away from all of that. The St. Joseph River Valley was quite close to large cities like Chicago, where the tourists came from.*

#### 4. How were tourists transported into and out of the region in the early days?

*Many of the tourists were originally brought into the area by boats.*



**WATERPOWER: HARNESSING THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER (35:51 MARK - DURATION: 4:44)**

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

**1. What were some of the industries that grew in the region that took advantage of the water and hydroelectric power from the river?**

*Some examples are building railroad cars and flour milling, and making sewing machines, footwear, musical instruments, and washing machines.*

**2. In the late 19th century, dams were built along the St. Joseph River. What were these dams used for?**

*These dams were used to generate electricity, using the water from the rivers. This is called hydro(water)-electricity.*

**3. How did these dams reshape the region?**

*The dams reshaped the river region by creating large lakes behind them.*



## RIVER HEALTH: DECLINE, POLLUTION, WELLNESS (40:36 MARK - DURATION: 8:03)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

### 1. How was the movement of fish along the St. Joseph River affected by the building of dams? What is an example?

*Where there was a dam, the fish could not get upstream, where their spawning (egg laying) grounds existed. One example was the Lake Sturgeon, the largest native fish in the Great Lakes, that was no longer able to swim upstream along the St. Joseph River.*

### 2. What caused the St. Joseph River to become an “open sewer” by the early part of the 20th century?

*Sewage was being flushed into the river and so were chemicals.*

### 3. Why did the condition of the St. Joseph River begin to improve beginning in the 1930s?

At that time early sewage treatment plants began to be built along the St. Joseph River and its tributaries (rivers and streams that run into a larger river).

### 4. Why is it important to control flooding?

It is important to control flooding because flooding can lead to the release of untreated sewage into a river. Also flooding does damage to buildings, homes, and roads, and can threaten people’s lives.

### 5. What was one of the ways in which flooding was controlled along the St. Joseph River?

One way of controlling flooding is a wet weather detention facility, like the one in Goshen, Indiana. It holds the sewer water until the water level goes down and it can be handled by the sewage treatment plant.

### 6. What is one of the ways in which the health of the St. Joseph River is measured as seen in the video? Is the health of the river getting better?

*One way of measuring the health of the river is by counting the species of fish that live in the river. In the early 1900s the river had few fish. Then in the 1980s there were 40-50 species of fish in the river, and it is getting better. Now there are about 85 species of fish, which shows that the health of the river is greatly improved.*





## THE ST. JOSEPH: NOW AND IN THE FUTURE (48:40 MARK - DURATION: 5:46)

After showing this segment of the video, give students an opportunity to comment on what they have seen, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. Then continue, using activities and questions such as the following to structure the discussion. You can replay the segment for students, if necessary.

### 1. What is one of the ways that people are making use of the St. Joseph River today, as seen in the video?

*One way in which the river is being used is for white-water rafting.*

### 2. What do the River Rats see as their mission or purpose?

*They are dedicated to cleaning up the river and to encouraging others to keep the river clean.*

### 3. What are some changes taking place along the St. Joseph River now that suggest that people want to be closer to the river?

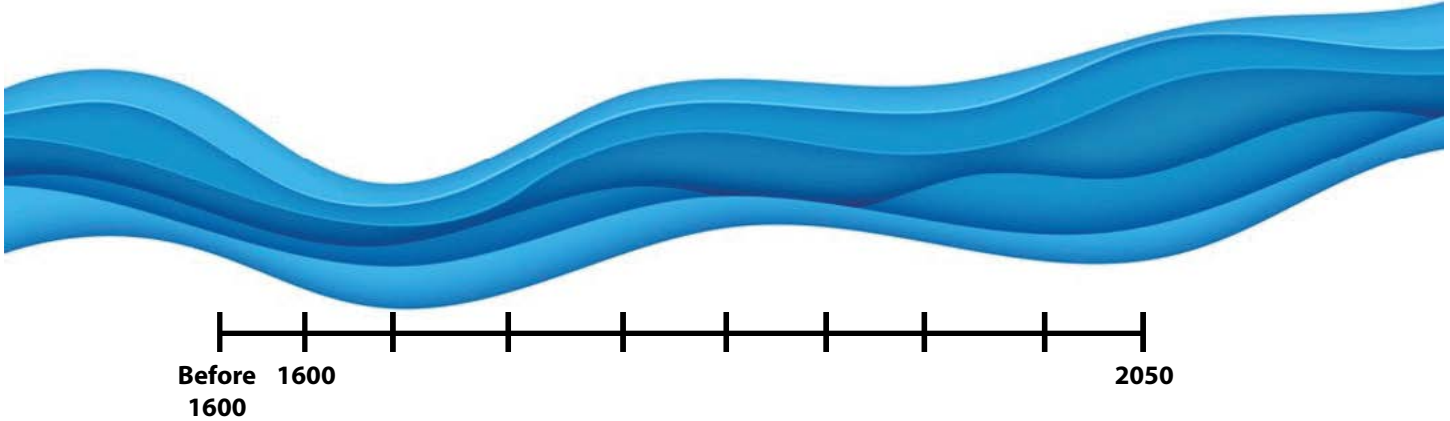
*Some examples are: Union City has a guided water trail to educate paddlers as they travel through town on the river; homes are being built along the river; there are river walks and parks along the river.*

## AFTER SHOWING THE VIDEO

Ask students to determine whether the questions they identified in their KWL charts were answered by the video. Have them take a few minutes to record their answers in the L column. Then ask what further questions were raised in their minds about the history and development of the St. Joseph River. Have them add these questions to the W column on their KWL charts. Indicate that they might be able to find answers to these questions in the follow-up activities.

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

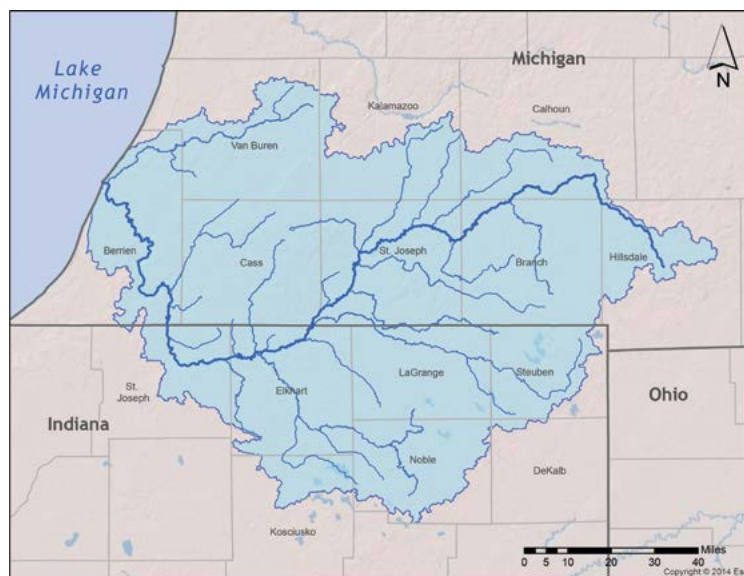
**Note to Teachers:** Each of the following activities related to themes developed in the video will probably take at least one class period to complete. Some involve out-of-class work. Preview the activities and decide which ones are appropriate for your students. Or have students select the activities that they would like to complete. Not all students would need to complete the same activities.



### ACTIVITY ONE: ST. JOSEPH RIVER TIMELINE

The purpose of this activity is to enable students to sequence events and to tie together the history and development of the St. Joseph River region.

1. Indicate to students that they are going to create a timeline of the major events about the St. Joseph River that were portrayed in the video program *Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*. A timeline is a graph used to arrange events in the order in which they happened. Show students examples of timelines from textbooks and other sources. Ask students to work individually or with a partner.
2. Have students draw a horizontal line or bar on a large piece of paper. Then have them divide the line into equal parts, each representing a fifty-year period of Indiana and Michigan history beginning in 1600 at the left end and 2050 at the right end of the timeline. Have them label the parts: 1600, 1650, 1700, 1750, 1800, 1850, 1900, and so on.
3. Have students select dates and events from their KWL charts for inclusion on their timelines.
4. Have students create a symbol using a computer, markers, or pictures cut out from magazines to represent each event that will be placed on their timelines (For example, a grist mill wheel could be used for when the first mills were introduced along the river).
5. Ask students to arrange each date, event, and associated symbol in the appropriate time-period on their timelines.
6. To extend the activity, ask students to identify events in Indiana/Michigan and American history that happened in the same time-period and that may have had an impact on events occurring in the St. Joseph River region. Have them create symbols for these events and add them to their timelines. Have students explain how each of the added events affected the events in the St. Joseph River region.
7. Have students display their timelines around the room. Give students an opportunity to discuss and explain their timelines.



## ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

**Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story** begins by introducing the St. Joseph River Basin, referring to it as a watershed. This activity focuses on the term watershed and what that term means.

1. Begin the activity by reminding students that the video began by introducing the St. Joseph River Basin, which was also referred to as a watershed. Ask students to suggest what the word “watershed” means. Accept all responses. Record responses on the chalkboard, if desired.
2. Indicate to students that they are about to see a short video entitled “What is a watershed?” It focuses on another part of the United States, but applies to their region of Michigan and Indiana as well. (Go to YouTube. Type in “What is a Watershed?” and select the videos produced by North Texas Municipal Water District. (Other possibilities are also available as well.)
3. Show the video, which is a little more than one minute in length. Have students focus on the meaning of the term “watershed” as they watch the video.
4. After showing the video, indicate to students that they are going to work in groups of three to unpack the meaning of the term “watershed.”
5. Instruct the groups to think of all the words and phrases they can which describe the word “watershed” based on what they saw in the video and their own experience. Encourage students to write down their first ideas before you call on anyone to share. Give the groups at least five minutes to generate descriptive words.
6. Record the word “watershed” in the central circle of a projected bubble map. A blackline master bubble map graphic organizer appears on page 43. Then, ask students to share words and phrases that describe watersheds. Place their responses on the other bubbles on the bubble map for the class to see. Distribute the chances to respond among the many groups.
7. Have each student then develop a description of what the term “watershed” means, based on what is on the bubble map. Give volunteers a chance to share their work with the class.
8. To end this activity, have students Google “Friends of the St. Joe River Association” on their computers, and click on “Our Watershed.” This will lead them to “The St. Joseph River Watershed by the Numbers” and a map of the watershed.
9. Point out that this is the watershed where they live. Give students a few minutes to locate approximately where they live in the watershed.
10. Finally, give the students a few minutes to examine the numbers about the watershed listed on the handout. Then give them a chance to share the numbers they thought were most interesting/surprising with the class. Have them share why they focused on those numbers.



### ACTIVITY THREE: THE FRENCH FUR TRADE

1. Indicate to students that this activity focuses on the fur trade that took place in the St. Joseph River area and throughout the Great Lakes region in the 17th and 18th centuries.
2. Begin by reading "French Fur Trade: 1634-1763" to the class. Encourage students to ask questions about the reading, as needed. A blackline master of the reading appears on page 44.
3. Then, working with the art teacher at your school, divide the class into groups of two or three. Give each group a set of basic art supplies. Have each group spend some time imagining a set of pictures that they would create to illustrate aspects of the fur trade, as described in the story. Have each student in a group create one of the pictures in the set that the group imagined. They might focus on transporting fur skins, hunting, trading skins, or making hats, for example.
4. Have each group create a story of the fur trade, using the set of pictures that they created.
5. Have the groups share their stories/illustrations with the class. Allow other students to comment on what was shared. You might post their illustrations around the room.



## ACTIVITY FOUR: THE POTAWATOMI

**This activity includes a specifically-edited video on our website at: [wnit.org/river-teacher-guide](http://wnit.org/river-teacher-guide).**

Remind students that one of the major Indigenous groups who lived and continue to live in the St. Joseph River area is the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi. Marcus Winchester, past Director of Language and Culture for the Pokagon Band, appeared several times in the St. Joseph River video.

1. Indicate to students that they are going to be asked to write a story about the Potawatomi based on a video interview with Mr. Winchester. The video poses five questions about the Potawatomi which Mr. Winchester answers. Students can choose to write their stories based on answers to one or more of the questions answered in the interview. Provide each student with a copy of the questions posed in the interview. A blackline master of the interview questions appears on page 45.
2. Play the video "About the Potawatomi" for students. The video includes both the questions and Mr. Winchester's answers. You could stop the video after each answer given by Mr. Winchester to give students some time to create notes, based on what was said. You may also want to give individual students a chance to review some of the answers after the class has watched the entire video. This will give them a chance to confirm their understanding of individual answers and to gain more insight into particular answers.
3. Have each student decide on a theme for his or her story and write a draft.
4. You can review the drafts and suggest changes.
5. Have students make revisions in their stories.
6. Ask for volunteers to share their stories with the class.

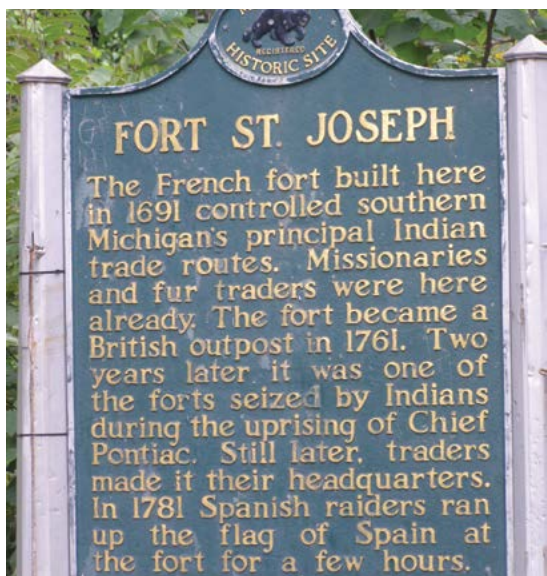


Photo by Chirs Light



## ACTIVITY FIVE: EXPLORING FORT ST. JOSEPH

In this activity students will learn about the location, origin and establishment of Fort St. Joseph which was located near Niles, Michigan. Students will work with pictures of archeological artifacts discovered at the fort to get a sense of what life was like at the fort before it was abandoned in the 1780s.

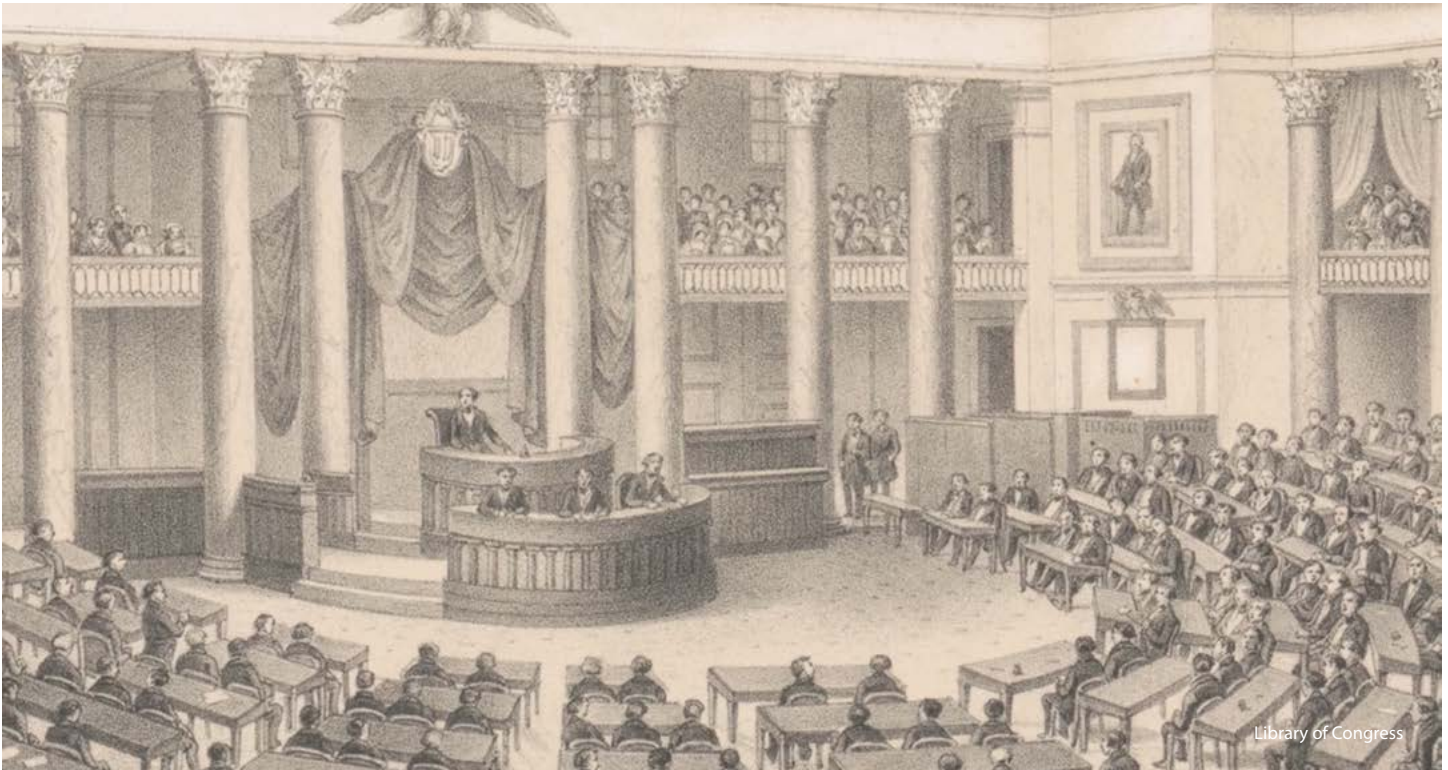
1. Remind students that when the French entered the St. Joseph River region, they were interested in the fur trade and in converting the Indigenous population to Christianity. So, the French built Fort St. Joseph on the river near present day Niles, Michigan. This activity focuses on Fort St. Joseph.
2. Begin by distributing copies of "Fort St. Joseph" to each student. The article appears on page 46. Have each student read the article.
3. Then, working in groups of three, have them answer the questions about "Dissecting History." A blackline master of this document appears on page 47. Distribute a copy of the handout to each group.
4. Ask volunteers to present their answers to these questions to the class. Allow other students to comment on what was shared.
5. Indicate to students that after the fort was abandoned, residents of the area had been finding artifacts (objects that were made and used by people who lived at the site when the fort was operating). Then in 1998, the site was dug up by archeologists from Western Michigan University. They discovered artifacts that provided information on what daily life was like at the fort back in the late 18th century. In the rest of this activity, students will have a chance to explore some artifacts found at the fort.
6. Distribute copies of the "Fort Joseph Artifacts" to each student. Have students work in groups of three or four to examine each of the artifacts and brainstorm about what the artifacts suggest about what activities people were involved in at Fort St. Joseph in the late 18th century. Blackline masters of the Fort St. Joseph Artifacts pictures appear on page 48.
7. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas with the class. Allow other students to comment on what was shared.



## ACTIVITY SIX: HOW DO MILLS WORK?

In this activity, students get an opportunity to do some research on water driven grain mills or sawmills, specifically how they work. They then use what they learned to create a diorama showing how a water-powered grain mill or sawmill works.

1. Remind students that water-powered grain mills and sawmills along the St. Joseph River and its tributaries played a significant role in the growth of the region featured in the video. Show students the segments of the video that focus on mills again.
2. Indicate to students that in this activity they are going to work in teams of two to do research on those mills, with the goal of figuring out how they worked—how the flowing water of the river was used to transform wheat into grain or trees into lumber for building homes, stores, and factories.
3. Divide the class into teams. Provide each team with access to a computer connected to the Internet. Have each team decide whether it will focus on a flour mill or a sawmill. Then assign each team with the task of collecting information on how their chosen mill works. Encourage them to go beyond the computer, to use sources such as museums, books, and articles, even people in their community who might have insights into the workings of mills. There are working mills in the St. Joseph region that might be good for field trips. Three such mills are listed in Further Resources on page 39.
4. Remind them that the purpose of collecting the information is ultimately to create a diorama that shows how a sawmill or a grain mill works. You might want to show students examples of dioramas created for other projects.
5. When they have gathered enough information, have the teams begin the construction of their dioramas.
6. When the dioramas are complete, encourage students to share what they have created with other members of their class, other classes, even parents.



## ACTIVITY SEVEN: INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

This activity includes a specifically-edited video on our website at: [wnit.org/river-teacher-guide](http://wnit.org/river-teacher-guide).

In this activity, students will learn about the Indian Removal Act and its impact on the Potawatomi and the Miami Tribes. Both tribes have members currently living in the St. Joseph River area. Students will examine a reading about the Potawatomi which was written by the members of the Pokagon Band. Students will also view a video interview with Diane Hunter, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, to learn more about the consequences of the Indian Removal Act for these tribes.

1. Remind students that two of the major Indigenous groups who lived in the St. Joseph River area are the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and the Miami.
2. Indicate to students that in this lesson, they will learn about how some members of these two tribes managed to remain in the St. Joseph River area despite efforts on the part of the U.S government to have the tribes move west of the Mississippi River beginning in 1830.
3. Begin by having students read the article "Pokagon Band of Potawatomi." The reading appears at [pokagonband-nsn.gov/our-culture/history](http://pokagonband-nsn.gov/our-culture/history). You can make a copy of the article for each student, or have them read the article on their computers. After students have read the article, indicate to them that the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830. But the Act only passed Congress by a very slight majority. This means that almost half of the country was against removal.
4. Next, have students watch the interview of Diane Hunter, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, who also appears in the St. Joseph River video. Indicate that the interview focuses on the experience of the Miami Tribe with the Indian Removal Act.
5. To conclude the activity, have students, as a class, suggest ways in which the experience of the two tribes was similar and different, with respect to removal from the St. Joseph River region. Use a projection of a Venn Diagram as a graphic organizer for the activity. A blackline master of a Venn Diagram appears on page 49. Similarities should be placed in the overlapping segment of the Venn Diagram. Differences are grouped by tribe in the outer segments.



## ACTIVITY EIGHT: TRAVELING ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

In this activity students will examine two articles about the underground railroad, especially as it relates to the St. Joseph River area. Then they will be asked to write a story about a runaway slave (freedom seeker) who traveled the underground railroad to freedom.

The articles were created by The Underground Railroad Society of Cass County (URSCC) in Vandalia, Michigan.

Make copies of “History of Slavery and The Underground Railroad” for your students. The article appears on Blackline Master Page 50.

Make copies of “#1 The Underground Railroad” for your students. The article appears on Blackline Master Page 51.

1. Begin by having students read the article “History of Slavery and The Underground Railroad.” As an alternative, you might read the article to them as they follow along.
2. Have students, as a class, share what they learned about the underground railroad from what they read or heard.
3. Next, have them read “#1 The Underground Railroad.” As an alternative, you might want to read the article to them. Indicate to students that this article focuses on the St. Joseph River area.
4. Have each student write down five things they learned about the underground railway in the St. Joseph area, from reading the article. Have volunteers share what they learned. You can record what students report on the chalkboard. Encourage students to refer to the list generated when they move on to the next phase of this activity.
5. Have the students work alone or with a partner to write a story about traveling the underground railroad as a freedom seeker (runaway slave). The stories should be based on the material contained in the two articles and their imaginations.
6. Encourage students to use the questions that appears as a blackline master “Traveling on the Underground Railroad” for this activity, on page 52, as a guide for their writing. (You may want to add or subtract questions from the list.)
7. You can provide students with simple outline maps of the Midwest. Students can use these maps to trace their routes.
8. Review the drafts and suggest changes.
9. Have students make revisions in their stories.
10. Ask for volunteers to share their stories with the class. Allow other students to comment on what is shared.



## ACTIVITY NINE: KEEPING THE RIVER HEALTHY

This activity will focus on the last two segments of the video: **River Health: Decline, Pollution, Wellness** and **The St. Joseph River: Now and in the Future**. The activity will utilize a guest speaker in your classroom. Including other voices in the classroom invites different perspectives and shows that learning is a collaborative effort.

The speakers will focus on the health of the river and the future of the river, with emphasis on the Clean Water Act. The speakers could help students identify how they can help maintain the health of the watershed and the river. Students would also be encouraged to ask questions related to these topics, based on what they had learned from the video.

The guest speakers available to you (see below) are all associated with the Friends of the St. Joe River Association (FofSJR). This is an organization located in South Bend that helps conservation districts and other partners in Indiana and Michigan with watershed education, as well as planning and implementation projects within the St. Joseph River Basin. The mission of FofSJR is to unite a diverse group of stakeholders throughout the watershed in a collaborative effort to protect, restore and foster stewardship of the St. Joseph River Watershed as a critical component of the Great Lakes Basin.

You can choose from among the following individuals for your guest speaker on the St. Joseph River. (You may also invite a guest speaker to class of your own choosing). The first four individuals on the list have volunteered to speak at schools. The last two work at the St. Joseph River Basin Commission and would be quite willing to come to your school.

**Carolyn Grace** ([carolyn.grace@macd.org](mailto:carolyn.grace@macd.org)) - Administrator of the St. Joseph County (Michigan) Conservation District. Possibly resides in the Three Rivers, MI area.

**Dan Robinson** ([danrobinsonwi@gmail.com](mailto:danrobinsonwi@gmail.com)) - Correspondent with WMUK and blogger (<https://www.glspirit.com/>) about spirituality of the Great Lakes Basin who lives in the Three Rivers, MI area.

**Carol Higgins** ([Covecarol34@gmail.com](mailto:Covecarol34@gmail.com)) - Board member of the St. Joseph County (Michigan) Conservation District and former teacher who lives on Portage Lake north of Three Rivers, MI.

**Daragh Deegan** ([daragh.deegan@coei.org](mailto:daragh.deegan@coei.org)) - Aquatic Biologist for the City of Elkhart who does fish sampling throughout the Indiana portion of the river. He lives in Goshen, IN.

**Matt Meersman** ([paddleheadz@gmail.com](mailto:paddleheadz@gmail.com)) - President of the Indiana Water Monitoring Council.

**Dr. Kate Barrett** ([kbarrett@macag.com](mailto:kbarrett@macag.com)) - Aquatic Biologist who manages the Basin Commission water monitoring program. She lives in South Bend, IN.

**Brandon Bowman** ([bbowman1@hcc-nd.edu](mailto:bbowman1@hcc-nd.edu)) who works with Dr. Barrett on the Basin Commission's water monitoring project. He lives in South Bend, IN.

1. Before you decide to host a guest speaker, contact the intended speaker to establish a date and time. Inform the guest of any technology that might be available for their use and ask the speaker of other needs they may have for their presentation.
2. When booking the guest, inform him or her of the total number of students, as some guests like to bring handouts or other items for students. Make sure to allow time for a Q and A session at the end of the presentation.
3. It is important to prep your students before the guest speaker's presentation. Prepare the students about the topic the guest speaker will be presenting—in this case the St. Joseph River health and the future of the river.
4. Ask students to prepare a set of questions they would like to ask the speaker during the Q and A session. The questions could be based on those posed in the teacher's guide for the two video segments considered in this activity.
5. Once the guest speaker leaves, conduct a debriefing session with the students either immediately or the next day.
6. Finally, follow up on the guest speaker's presentation with a thank you note, card, or small gift. The gift could be made by students ahead of time.



## ACTIVITY TEN: A STORY WORTH TELLING

This activity includes a specifically-edited video on our website at: [wnit.org/river-teacher-guide](http://wnit.org/river-teacher-guide).

This activity guides students in the creation of stories related to their own or a family member's interaction with the St. Joseph River and its tributaries.

1. Indicate to students that in this activity they are going to see a short video segment taken from *Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*. In the segment, Matt Meersman, who is associated with Friends of the St. Joe River Association, tells about his relationship with the St. Joseph River when he was a child. He also tells about some discoveries he made about the river as he got older.
2. Play the video segment for the students.
3. Next read Herb Hull's Story to the students. This tells a true story of the river, remembered by Herb Hull. He lived in South Bend in the 1920s and 30s. His story appears on page 53.
4. After showing the video segment and reading the story, give students an opportunity to comment on what they saw and heard, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw and heard.
5. Then have students write their own stories about the St. Joseph River and its tributaries, based on their own experiences or those of family members. Give students several days to create their stories. Indicate that their stories can be of any length, as long as they tell the story of someone's interaction with the river.
6. Encourage students to share their stories with the class. Have everyone share his or her story with you. You might consider displaying the stories of the river around the classroom.
7. To conclude the activity, have your students, working with the music teacher at your school, sing the song "Down by the Old St. Joe" by Mabel Williams (married name—Grimes) of Mishawaka, Indiana. She wrote the words and composed the music in 1897. It tells her story about the St. Joseph River. The music is on pages 54-57.



## ST. JOSEPH RIVER DAY

As a way of concluding this unit on the St. Joseph River, consider having students prepare a presentation of what they have learned from watching the video and from the follow-up activities that they completed. The presentation—a display, special exhibit, or live event, for example—could be offered to other classes in your school, teachers, parents, and families.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

*There are several museums in the area that do a great job covering the history of the region:*

### **NILES HISTORY CENTER/FORT ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM**

505 E. Main St., Niles, MI 49120  
269-845-4054

### **NORTH BERRIEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

300 Coloma Ave., Coloma, MI, 49038  
(269) 468-3330

### **BERRIEN COUNTY HISTORY CENTER AT COURTHOUSE SQUARE**

313 N. Cass St., Berrien Springs, MI 49103  
(269) 471-1202

### **THE HISTORY MUSEUM, SOUTH BEND**

808 W. Washington St., South Bend, IN 46601  
574-235-9664

### **THE ELKHART COUNTY MUSEUM**

304 W. Vistula St., Bristol, IN 46507  
574-848-4322

### **DOWAGIAC AREA HISTORY MUSEUM**

201 E. Division Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047  
268-783-2551

### **THE HERITAGE MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER**

601 Main St., St. Joseph, MI 49085  
269-983-1191

### **UNDERGROUND RAILROAD SOCIETY OF CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

PO Box 124, Vandalia, MI 49095  
[info@urscc.org](mailto:info@urscc.org)

### **MISHAWAKA HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

121 S. Main St., Mishawaka, IN 46544  
(574) 255-2708

## FURTHER RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

### RUTHMERE MANSION

302 E. Beardsley Ave., Elkhart, IN 46514

(574) 264-0330

### SUE SILLIMAN HOUSE MUSEUM

116 South Main St., Three Rivers, MI 49093

(269) 435-4795

### JOHN S. BARRY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

300 N. Washington St., Constantine, MI 49042

(269) 506-1575

### BRANCH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY / WING HOUSE MUSEUM

27 S. Jefferson St, Coldwater, MI 49036

(517) 278-2871

### UNION CITY SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION / HAMMOND HOUSE MUSEUM

210 Charlotte St., Union City, MI 49094

(269) 251-0534

### GROSVENOR HOUSE MUSEUM

211 Maumee St, Jonesville, MI 49250

(517) 849-9596

### REGIONAL MILLS FOR FIELD TRIPS

Rawson King Mill, Leonidas, MI

Bonneyville Mill, Elkhart County, IN

Pears Mill, Buchanan, MI

### THE INSTITUTE FOR INTERCULTURAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

has published four well-illustrated booklets on the history of the area:

*Sheltering New France*

*People of the Post*

*Women of New France*

*The Fur Trade*





## **BLACKLINE MASTERS**

KWL graphic organizer

Bubble map graphic organizer

French Fur Trade, 1634-1763

Questions for Interview with Marcus Winchester

Fort St. Joseph

Dissecting History

Fort St. Joseph Artifacts

Venn Diagram

The History of Slavery on the Underground Railroad

Reading #1 The Underground Railroad

Traveling on the Underground Railroad

Herb Hull's Story

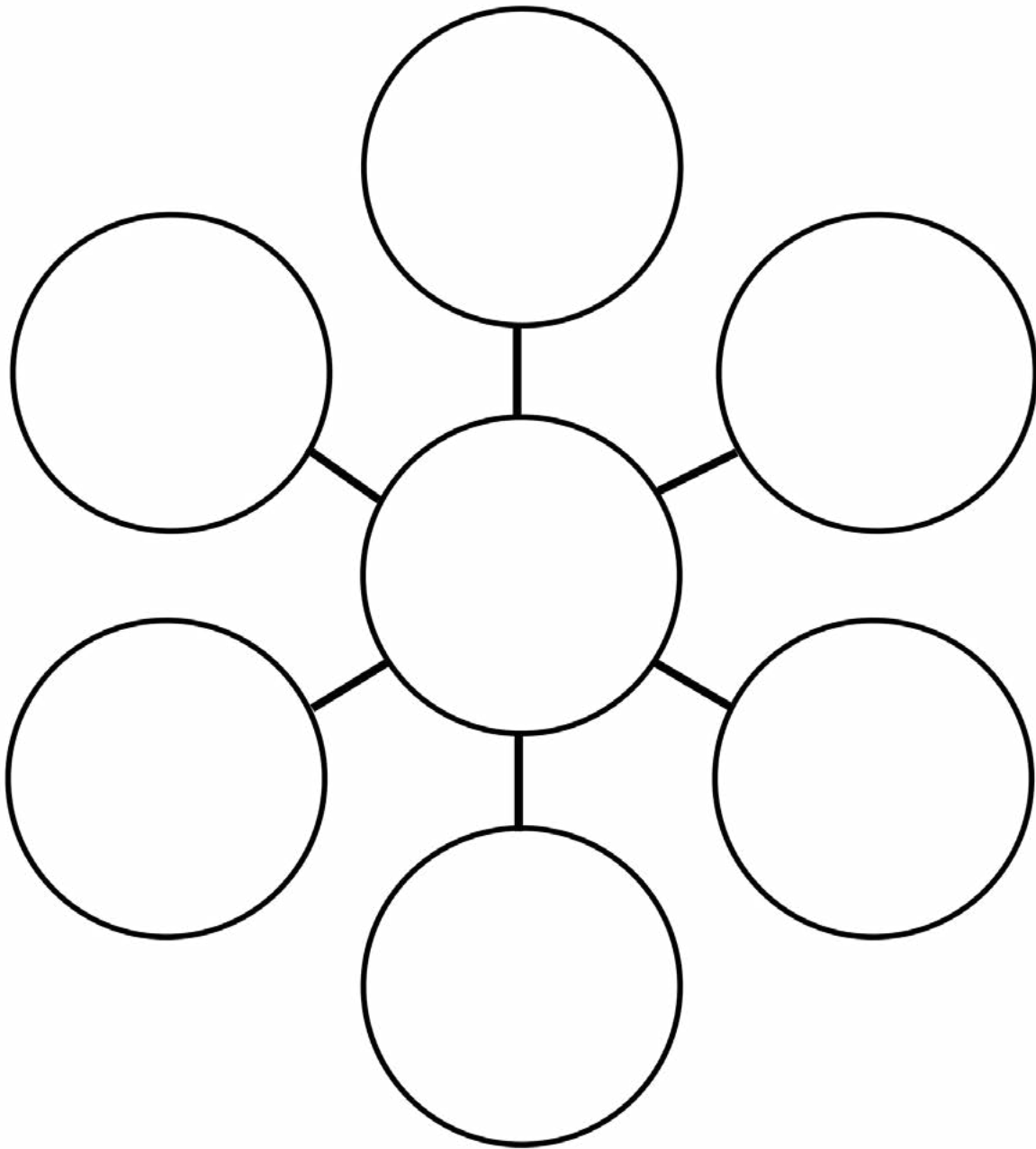
Down by the Old St. Joe

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class/Period \_\_\_\_\_

<p>K What do you already know?</p>	<p>W What do you want to learn?</p>	<p>L What did you learn?</p>
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*Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*  
KWL

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



*Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*

Bubble Map Organizer

## FRENCH FUR TRADE, 1634-1763

*Adapted from "The French Fur Trade" by Randall Schaezli, Michigan State University. Used with permission from the author.*

For a century and a half Michigan's life centered in the fur trade. Its French pioneers worked at trading posts, mission chapels, and forts at Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinac, and Detroit, but also in the St. Joseph and Grand River Valleys.

To expand the fur trade into the western Great Lakes, the French made alliances with Native American nations, whose members had the skills to hunt and trap at a commercial level. In Europe, the highly prized fur was the beaver's; its thick, lustrous coat was used for garments, and its hair was felted into hats. Native hunters also collected the pelts and skins of deer, martens, raccoons, foxes, otters, and muskrats. They exchanged the furs for metal hatchets, knives, kettles, traps, needles, fish hooks, cloth and blankets, jewelry and decorative items, and later, for firearms and alcohol.

The impact on the indigenous people as a result of the fur trade came about in various ways. First, as skilled hunters and suppliers of pelts, the Native Americans were sought after as trading partners and were exposed to white culture. In exchange for their goods, the Native Americans received European products, both practical, such as iron tools and utensils, and decorative, such as bright-colored cloth and beads. The Native Americans also received firearms and liquor, both of which had an enormous impact on Native American lifeways. These French goods at first improved the tribes' economic development and military strength, but eventually made many of them dependent on European manufacturing.

Before Europeans came to the Great Lakes region and Canada, there were over ten million beavers living in the wild. First Nations people originally hunted the beaver using pointed sticks, stone hatchets, and spears with arrowheads. These were poor weapons against this little animal, as beavers can hide in their thick protective lodges and underground burrows.

However, as trade increased with Europe for the valuable beaver pelts, the natives became equipped with weapons of steel and the gun. The beaver was now an easy target, and a lively fur trade emerged.

In the beginning, the fur trade centered around Canadian settlements near the St. Lawrence River, and the primary trading partners were the Huron tribes. As Europe cried out for more furs, a new breed of men emerged. These were called "voyageurs"--men who would venture into the wild, untamed land for beaver pelts from the natives. Voyageurs would load up the birch bark canoe with trading goods and supplies. They would take a native guide and maybe four other men. These fearless paddlers would then head out on the rivers to the north country of the Great Lakes.

Being away for up to two years was not uncommon for these independent explorers. It was reported that one voyageur returned from a two-year trip with over 100 canoes loaded with furs.

With more than one hundred thousand pelts being shipped to Europe each year, the early 19th century saw the beaver headed for extinction. Thankfully, fashion trends were changing in Europe. The silk hat was becoming more fashionable and the demand for beaver pelts almost disappeared.

Why were beaver pelts in such demand? People in Europe did not think of "a beaver" as an animal, but as a hat. The beaver hat was "in fashion" from 1625 to the early 1800's in most of Europe. People in the 1600's also thought beaver hats held supernatural powers. It was believed that if you rubbed beaver oil onto your hair, it would help your memory. For people suffering from hearing loss, wearing a beaver hat was rumored to improve hearing. Whatever the fancy dressers thought in Europe, the demand for beaver hats was the driving force behind the creation of the colony of New France in Canada. The beaver pelt was the most popular material with which to make these hats. The beaver's fur had two kinds of hair: a short, thick, soft, woolly layer and a longer coarse layer. The coarser long hairs were removed leaving only the shorter woolly layer. The shorter hairs have little barbs on the end, that you can only see under a microscope. When pressed hard, the barbs interlock with each other, making a solid fabric. This process was called "felted". Once felted, the pelt was no longer furry, and was ready to be made into beaver hats.

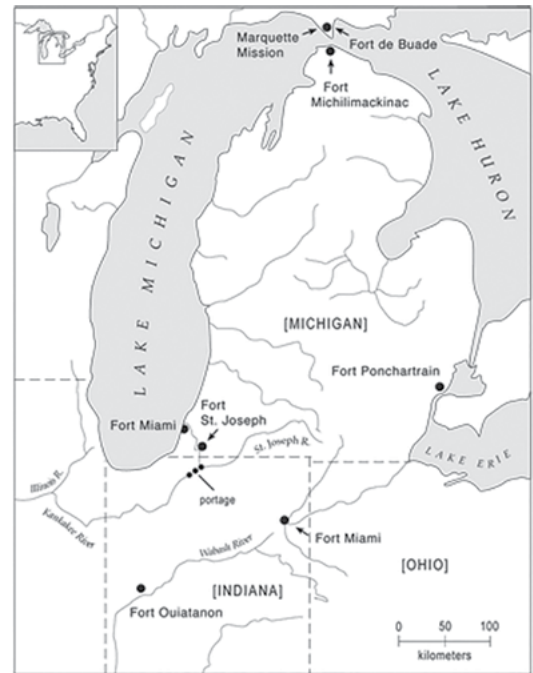
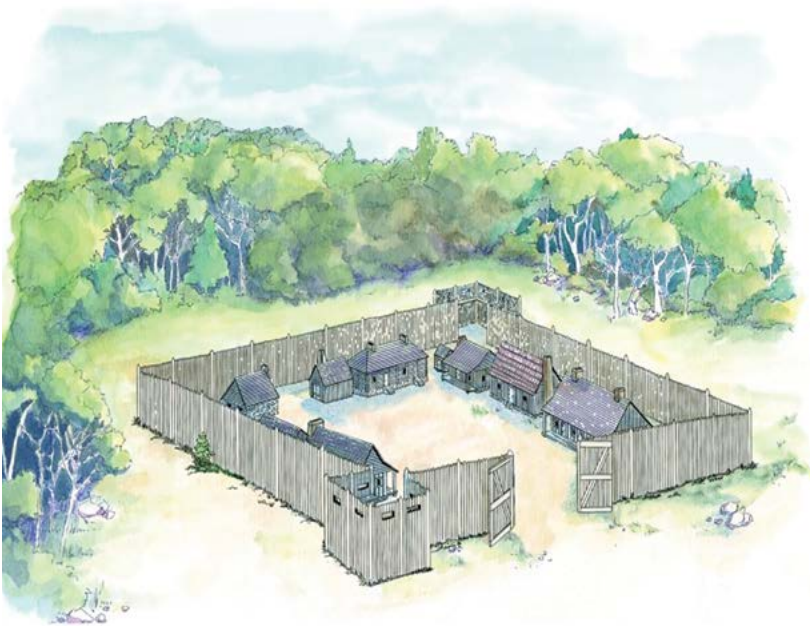
The most popular furs for making the hats were from the very young beavers. The young beaver kits had the softest and thickest fur for pelting. Beavers do not hibernate, so their fur gets very thick in the winter to keep them warm. Most of the trapping for the beaver was done in the wintertime. Another favorite of traders were beaver pelts that had been worn by the Indians. These furs were worn for approximately a year, until most of the long hairs on the beaver pelt had been worn off. This fur was called "coat beaver" and demanded a very high price on the fur market.

Today furs are, for the most part, out of fashion. Nonetheless, trade in furs and pelts still goes on.

## QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW WITH MARCUS WINCHESTER

1. What does water mean to the Potawatomi?
2. How did the Potawatomi find their way here into the St. Joseph River Valley?
3. What was life like for the Potawatomi when they first came here?
4. How did life change when the French came?
5. The Potawatomi think about the future in terms of seven generations. What does the idea of seven generations mean to the Potawatomi?

## FORT ST. JOSEPH



Fort St. Joseph, first established as a mission in the 1680s by French Jesuits, was one of the earliest European settlements in the western Great Lakes region. During the first half of the eighteenth century it also became a military post and a trading post. The fort eventually was home for a military commander, eight to ten soldiers, a blacksmith, a priest, an interpreter, and up to 15 more households. The fort was surrounded by high walls with two entrances. The walls enclosed a small home for the commander, a building for the soldiers, a storehouse, and some buildings to store trade goods and furs.

The Fort became an important link in the chain of similar frontier settlements that existed in the area and aided in the trade between the French and Native people in furs. For almost 80 years, French priests, soldiers, and traders lived in Fort St. Joseph in close contact with Native groups also living in the area—the Potawatomi and the Miami.

In 1761, during the French and Indian War, the fort came under British control. However, French traders remained in the area until 1780. In 1781, the fort was largely abandoned, though trade likely still continued in the general area into the 19th century, after the area had become part of America's Northwest Territory.

Based on the article "Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project" Institute for Intercultural and Archaeological Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, 2021. [wmich.edu/fortstjoseph/about/fort-history](http://wmich.edu/fortstjoseph/about/fort-history)

## DISSECTING HISTORY

List three things that are included in the Story of Fort St. Joseph that you think are important to understanding the historical period in which Fort St. Joseph originally existed.

List three things this story tells you about life during the time period it was describing.

Does the information in the story support information you have learned about the time-period or subject? Explain.

## FORT ST. JOSEPH ARTIFACTS



Bowl



Axe Head



Tamahawk Dagger



Priest Cross



Kettle



Gun Parts



Knives



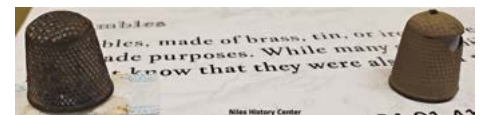
Nails



Scissors



Fish Hooks



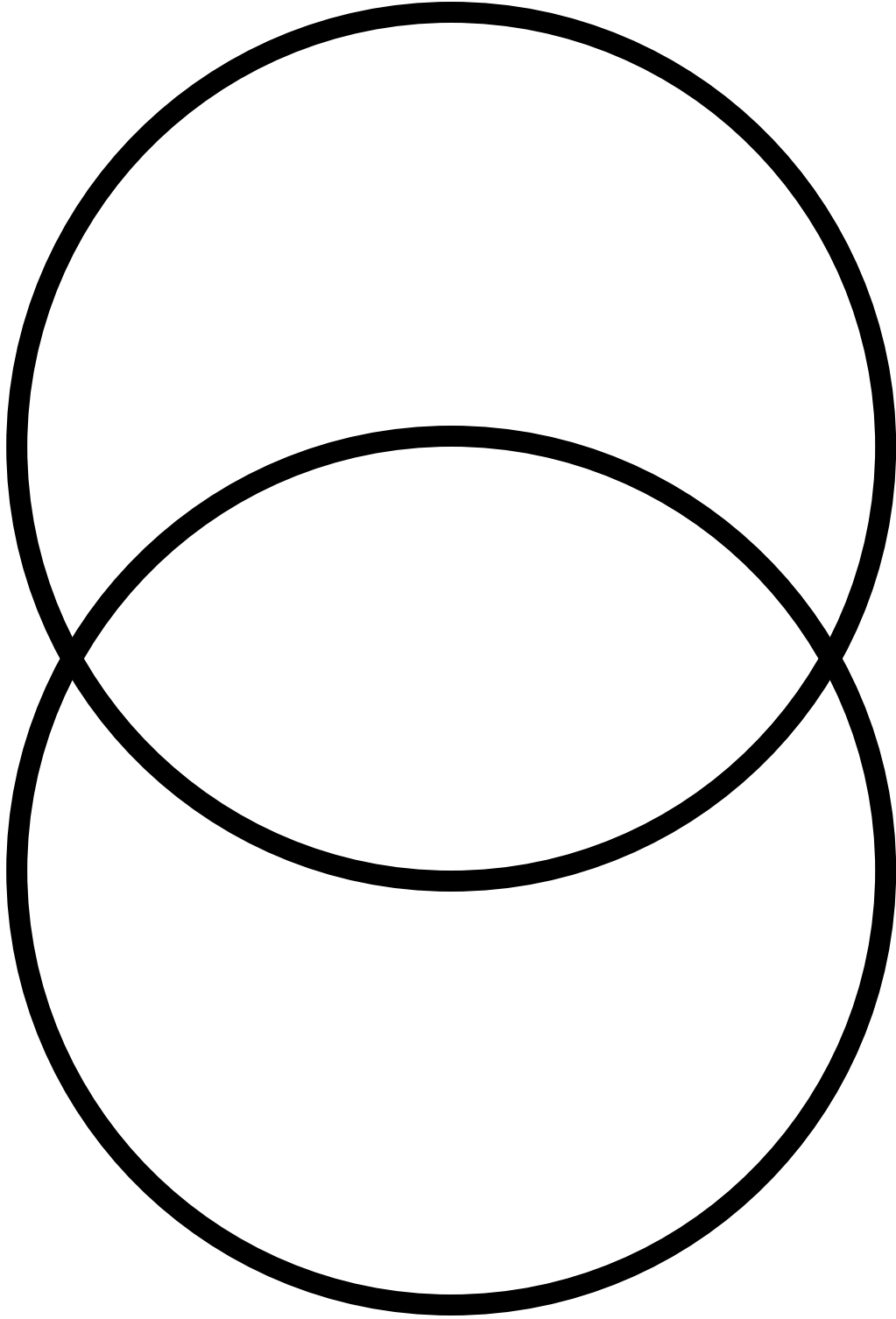
Thimbles



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

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

Class/Period \_\_\_\_\_



*Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story*  
Venn Diagram



The Underground Railroad by Charles T. Webber (1891)

## HISTORY OF SLAVERY AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Within the heart of every slave was the irrepressible urge to be free. Many did try to escape the system they knew to be unjust only to be returned and severely punished. The runaway slaves (now called freedom seekers) were also aware of the potential for placing their relatives who stayed behind at great risk or reprisal. However, by 1850 it is estimated that as many as 50,000 freedom seekers had escaped to the north, only to again fear that their families could be returned to the South due to the enforcement of the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law.

The Underground Railroad greatly increased the chances for escape. It was a network of 'stations' (homes, carriage houses and barns) owned by Quaker abolitionists, as well as free black men and women and other sympathizers. Freedom seekers traveled at night to avoid being seen and were given refuge at these safe locations during daylight hours. The journey to Canada was long and difficult. They traveled on foot and were often hidden in wagons beneath bags of grain or hidden under the fake floorboards to keep from being detected.

## READING #1 THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad (UGRR) existed from 1830-1861, the start of the Civil War, and was neither underground nor a railroad. Rather it was a series of houses, barns, cellars and other hiding places that were stops for fugitive slaves on their journey north to freedom in Canada.

Rail transportation was becoming popular in the early 1800's and the UGRR adopted the terms. The routes that freedom seekers followed north were called lines. The places where they hid were called stations. Those who provided food and shelter at the station were called stationmasters, and those who carried freedom seekers to the next station were called conductors. Canada outlawed slavery in 1833 and became a beacon for freedom seekers everywhere. Escape from the deep south slave states was almost impossible. Most freedom seekers journeyed north on hundreds of lines from the border slave states of Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee through the free states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Michigan, crossing into Canada at various sites. It is said that between 50,000 and 100,000 freedom seekers escaped bondage by 1861, many on the UGRR.

Anti-slavery abolitionists of all races and religions participated in the Underground Railroad. Quakers were the first to declare slavery a 'sin against man and God' freeing their slaves in the late 1700's. Many moved to free states to escape slavery and freedom seekers followed them.

There was a large settlement of Quakers in Wayne County, Indiana, many of whom moved into Cass County, Michigan around 1830, settling in Penn, Porter and Calvin Townships, known then as Young's Prairie. Some of them became part of the Quaker Line of the UGRR. Freedom Seekers crossed the Ohio River at Cincinnati, were taken by conductors to stations along a route to Wayne County, IN up to Bristol, IN to Vandalia, MI. Another route was called the Illinois Line. Freedom Seekers crossed the Ohio or Missouri Rivers and traveled north through Illinois to Chicago to Niles, Michigan and into Vandalia. Well known UGRR stations and stationmasters in the area were the homes of Stephen Bogue, William Jones, Ishmael Lee and the Carriage House of James E. Bonine. Conductors Zachariah Shugart and African American Henry Shepard took freedom seekers to the next station, the home of Dr. Nathan Thomas in Schoolcraft. From there they continued their journey to Battle Creek, then stops about 20 miles apart until they reached Detroit, where they crossed the Detroit River into Canada.

Many free black families began arriving in Cass County in the mid-1800's, purchasing land and creating thriving farms. They founded Chain Lake Baptist Church and Mt. Zion AME, formed anti-slavery societies and played an important role in the UGRR. It is said that over 1500 freedom seekers came through Vandalia on the Underground Railroad. Slave catchers weren't far behind.

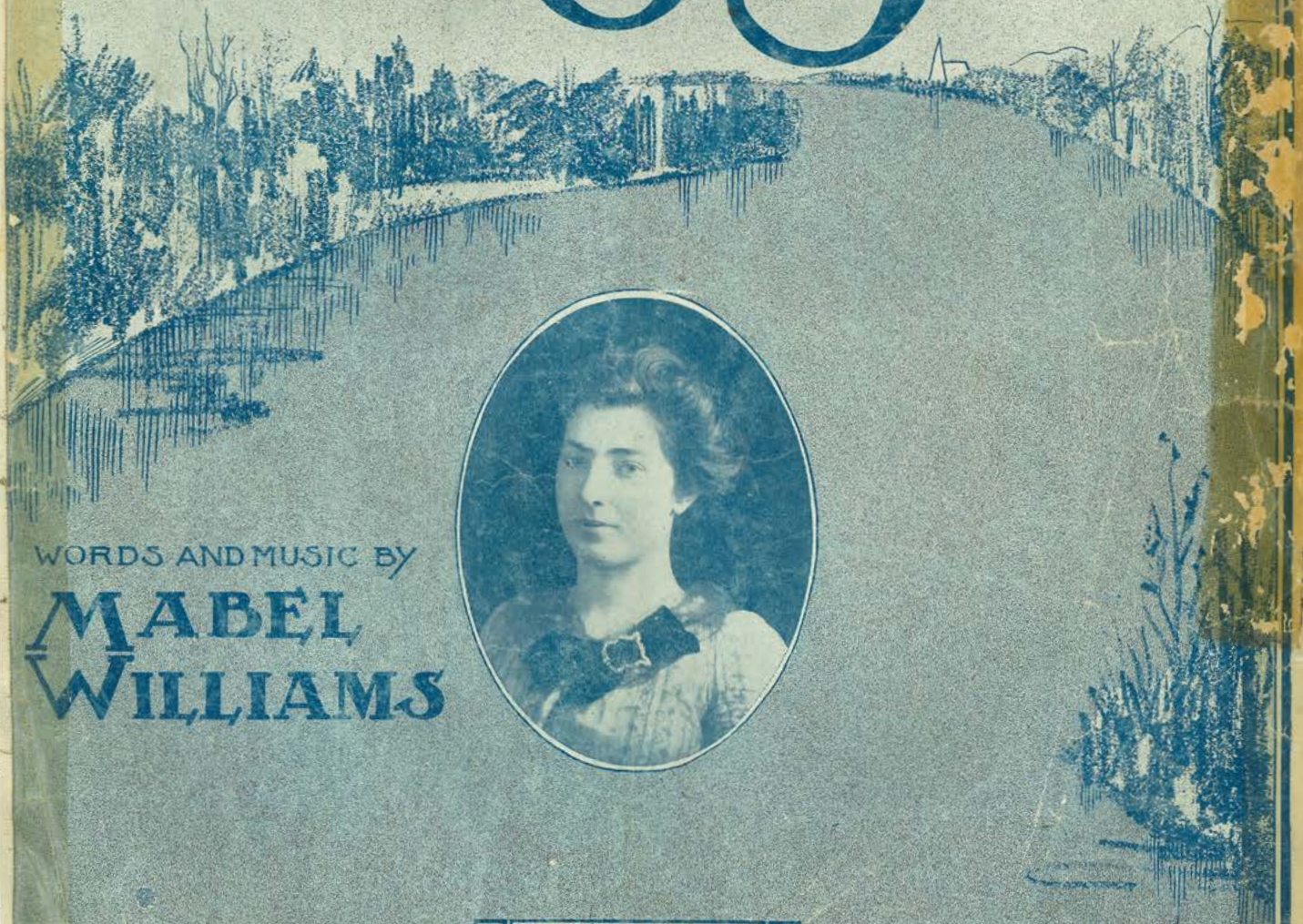
## TRAVELING ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

1. In what state did you start your journey on the underground railroad?
2. Why did you decide to leave your home?
3. What route did you take to get to Canada?
4. How did you make use of the lines and stations along the way?
5. How did stationmasters and conductors help you?
6. Were there other people helpful to you along the way? Who were they and how did they help?
7. What were some ways in which runaway slaves could avoid being caught by slave catchers along the way?
8. Were you ever captured along the way? What happened?
9. How often did you stop along the way?
10. How did you feel when you reached Michigan and then Canada?

## HERB HULL'S STORY

In the spring and summer, the clam fishers would settle in to dredge the St. Joe for clams. They would throw a series of lines and wire, sort of like hooks, off their big flat-bottomed boats. Then when the hooks were pulled along the river bottom, clams would grab ahold and be pulled up into the boats. The fishers would gather a pile of clams maybe six feet high and 10-12 feet in diameter. While they were fishing, the clam fishers lived in a huge teepee pitched on the side of the river, by the dump. In the winter, they moved back to town where they worked the clam shells into mother-of-pearl buttons for sale in the dry goods stores.

# DOWN BY THE OD ST JOE



WORDS AND MUSIC BY  
**MABEL  
WILLIAMS**



PUBLISHED BY  
**SOL BLOOM**  
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37 & BROADWAY, NEW YORK

# DOWN BY THE OLD ST. JOE.

Words and Music by  
MABEL WILLIAMS.

Slowly.

The piano introduction consists of two staves of music. The right hand plays a series of chords and single notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment with eighth notes.

The vocal line begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is simple and follows the rhythm of the lyrics.

There's a spot dear to mem - 'ry I love to re - call When the  
Ma - ny fair lands and fa - ces I've seen since we played There as

The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern as the introduction, supporting the vocal line.

The vocal line continues with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is simple and follows the rhythm of the lyrics.

day and its wor - ry is ..... past, And I long there to be when life's  
chil - dren all day ..... on the shore, 'Neath the old spreading ma - ple and

The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern as the introduction, supporting the vocal line.

night shad - ows fall And they're com - ing they're com - ing too  
'swung in its shade Blink - ing back at the riv - er be -

fast \_\_\_\_\_ It is on \_\_\_\_\_ ly a stream hemm'd by  
fore \_\_\_\_\_ And the birds in the tree tops would

wav - ing feath - ry wil - lows, Vine clad banks and brilliant meadows stretching  
trill for us their glad - ness, Till the lengthing shadows told us "time to

low - \_\_\_\_\_ O, I long to be there o'er the  
go: " \_\_\_\_\_ O, a - mong all earth's treas - ures, it



wild heav - ing bil - lows Resting down by the old St. Joe. —  
fills me with sad - ness There is none like the old St. Joe. —

CHORUS.

Take me back take me back to my child - hood's home — Take me

back where I long to go — To the loved ones of old, near the

branch - es that beck-on to me Down by the old St. Joe.

# THEN, NOW AND ALWAYS...

## THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER STORY

A PBS - Michiana Special Documentary

PBS Michiana - WNIT tells the story of the St. Joseph River, including the people, history, and life along this storied river from Hillsdale to Lake Michigan. We celebrate how it has shaped the region and continues to be an integral part of our community. This program was awarded the 54th Public Media Award in the cultural feature category.

### TEACHER'S GUIDE

The instructional kit for *Then, Now and Always... The St. Joseph River Story* is designed primarily for elementary school students in Indiana and Michigan engaged in the study of their state. The kit includes a one-hour video about the people, history, and life along this storied river from Hillsdale, Michigan through South Bend, Indiana and northward into Lake Michigan. The video shows how the river has shaped the region and continues to be an integral part of communities in both Michigan and Indiana. The documentary is intended, in part, to accelerate a renewed appreciation of the St. Joseph River and to encourage people to cherish the river and preserve it as a resource for future generations. This teacher's guide is designed to be used in association with the video.

Three video segments needed for the guide are found on our website at: [wnit.org/river-teacher-guide](http://wnit.org/river-teacher-guide). You can also download this teacher's guide and other content from this link.

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