

The development of this guide began simply as the creation of an activity guide to accompany the film *Down Jersey*. Upon the initial viewing of this exemplary film, the overwhelming task we faced was creating activities that covered a variety of topics and issues that are depicted and illustrated in the film. From the maritime history of the region, to the enormous array of natural features, as well as the cultural and historical aspects that make Down Jersey a unique place, the film captures the essence of the region. We wanted to show the continual connection of people to the area and the environmental ties that have existed and flourished within the region. Entire industries and occupations developed from the harvesting of oysters; people settled and began to farm the area because the conditions were right; trappers made a living here; people now flock to the region to view the shorebird phenomena. Always the connection to the natural resources, always a direct link between the people and the place.

Down Jersey: Celebrating Our Sense of Place began to evolve and take shape from concept to creation. Organizing the activities into a usable format was simplified by categorizing the activities by the four main theme areas as identified from the film: Natural History, Maritime History, Agriculture, and Cultural & Historical. A fifth theme was added — Understanding Sense of Place — in order to initiate an examination of how and why people become so connected to a place, and where the region called Down Jersey fits into the larger scheme of things. Many (most) of the activities actually fall into more than one category, but these labels were used nonetheless for organizational purposes. In fact, most of the activities link to the theme of Natural History due to the inherent connection of people to the natural world that is the primary focus of the film and the concept behind its creation.

Viewing the film is, of course, recommended before using any of the included activities, as it will enhance and expand upon the many topics presented. Included in this packet is a complete script of the film. There is so much information presented on an array of topics that we thought this might be helpful in viewing and discussing the film and its contents. In addition, since the activities that were developed — most of them specifically for this project — often focus on a topic that may require further viewing of particular segments of the film, we have also provided an annotated list of topic and theme to the film. This may prove most useful if the teacher wants to refer back to a specific section of the film and “re-view” it with the class before embarking on a particular activity.

An Overview of the Guide

The guidebook is organized by theme, and each theme has a separate Chapter devoted to the topics and issues inherent to it. There is an introduction to each chapter that provides insight and a description of the theme. Following is a series of lesson plans and activities related to that particular theme. Some chapters have four activities, others have ten. This variation is due to a number of factors, notably the significance of the theme to the region and the availability of resources and people willing and able to participate by writing and submitting activities for inclusion. This project represents a true collaborative effort on the part of numerous people — namely the members of our Advisory Committee who provided many of the original activities included here. We realize that each of the themes that has been identified and included could easily have more activities associated with it — indeed, entire books could be written for each one! We hope to provide an inspirational jump start for teachers to explore the many wonderful resources available that are specifically geared to the Delaware Bayshore of New Jersey. Each chapter also includes a list of additional activity ideas. Our intention was to create a teacher’s packet that would be useful and reasonable. Please feel free to use what you like, add to, adapt, or change things to suit your needs.

And, although the guide itself is not copyrighted — it belongs to the people of Down Jersey — we do ask that you acknowledge the packet and the specific author of each activity whenever it is copied and distributed or referenced. Use the activities included in this packet to engage your students in their studies and to help establish and sustain their *Sense of Place*. In fact, by simply introducing your students to the value of the region, we hope you can share with them its many wonders and have cause for a celebration!

Each of the activities/lesson plans included in this guidebook follows the same format. Included here is an outline of the format utilized, with each key component explained, although some are self-explanatory.

ACTIVITY TITLE

THEME

Natural History Maritime History
Agriculture Cultural & Historical

For simplicity, one predominant theme is indicated for each activity, although most of the topics span several of the themes.

AUTHOR(S) & AFFILIATION

The activities included in this packet were solicited from a variety of resource people from within the region. Every effort was made to include all people and initiatives currently underway within the special place called *Down Jersey*.

- **Objectives** — Expected learner outcomes.
- **Materials** — List of materials needed for the activity.
- **Making Connections** — Why this topic was chosen and how it relates to the film and to the Down Jersey region.
- **Background** — Specific background information for the teacher on the topic presented in the activity. Most activities reference particular pages in *Historic Themes and Resources within the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route – Southern New Jersey and the Delaware Bay: Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties*, which we have provided as part of this packet. Since this National Park Service publication basically provided the outline of topics for the film production, it was appropriate to include as a reference for most of the topics presented here. Please see the summary of this resource which is included in the introductory section of the guide.
- **Procedure** — Step-by-step instructions on conducting the activity including the following components:
Warm Up, The Activity, Wrap Up, Action
- **Assessment** — Evaluating and assessing the student’s understanding of the topic and meeting of the objectives.
- **Extensions** — Ideas to extend and expand the activity further. Ideas for altering and adapting the activity.
- **Resources** — Resources referenced in the activity and additional resources on the specific topic covered.