

## Social Studies

### Genre

**Magazine Articles** give facts and information about interesting topics.



### Text Feature

**Maps** are drawings of all or part of an area.

### Content Vocabulary

**bayous**

**swamp**

**guide**

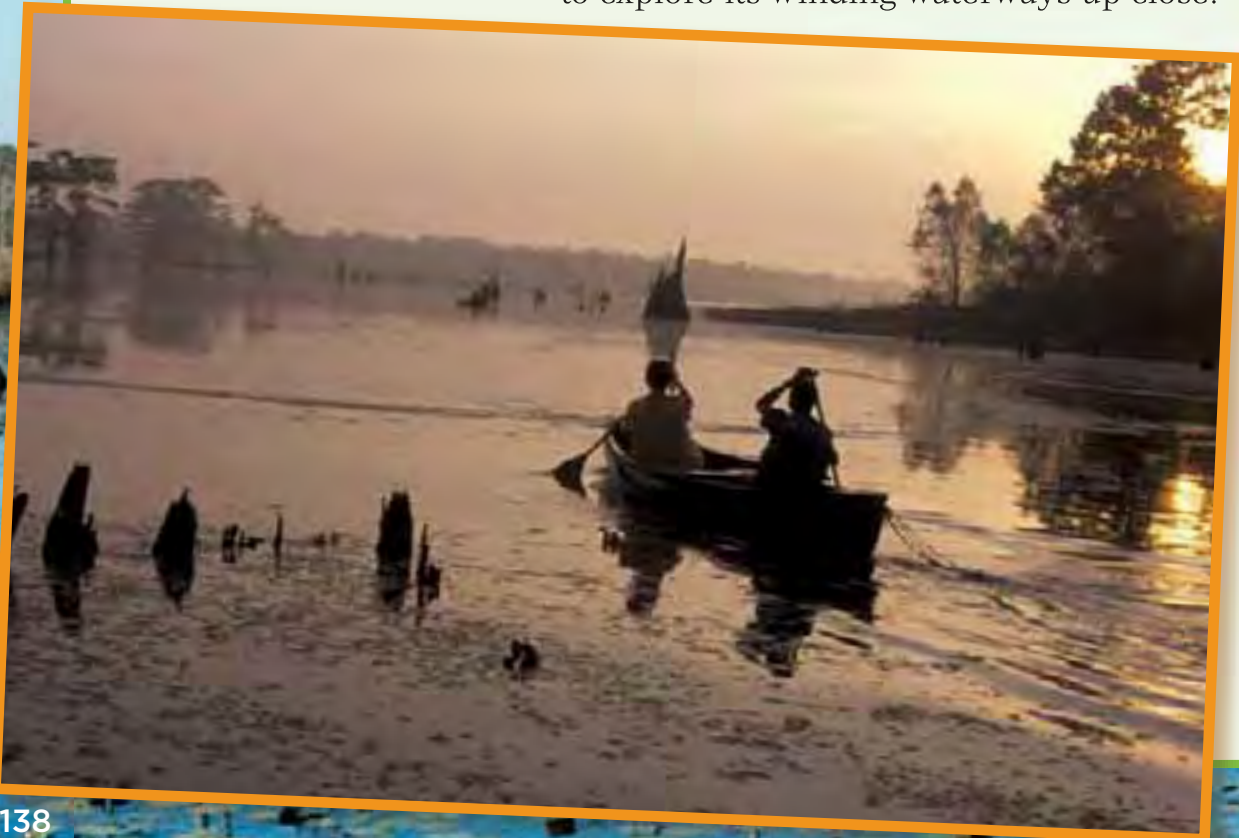
**ancient**

# Into the Swamp

*by Elizabeth Schleichert*

*Photos by C.C. Lockwood*

How would you like to float through twisting canals, **bayous** (streams), and lakes? Some kids from the city of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, did just that! They went canoeing in the huge Atchafalaya (uh-CHAFF-uh-LIE-uh) **Swamp**. Baton Rouge is only 20 miles (32 km) from the swamp, but most of the kids had never been there before. Now they were able to explore its winding waterways up close!



The kids met up at the boat dock before sunrise. They couldn't wait to push off and start their adventure! They were especially excited about camping out that night. Before getting in their canoes, they crowded around a map of the Atchafalaya.

"Here's where we are now," said Anthony, pointing to the map. He, Adam, and Edward were trying to figure out where they would be heading. But in fact, they didn't really have to worry about a thing. Their **guide** for the trip, photographer C.C. Lockwood, knew every bend and bayou in the Atchafalaya. There was no way he was going to get them lost! C.C. gave the group some canoeing pointers, and then they paddled into the morning mist.

## From Baton Rouge to Atchafalaya



### Reading a Map

This map has a compass rose that shows directions. The key helps you measure the distance from one place to the other.



This map shows the location of the Atchafalaya Swamp.



# Shhh . . . Swamp Creatures!

## Yikes!

As the canoes followed C.C.'s, someone yelled "Alligator!" The kids paddled over to check it out. The 'gator swam around the canoes. One of the kids said, "It was so close, we could almost touch it!"

Nearby, the kids spied a super-sized female golden silk spider. It was waiting to snag a buggy meal in its golden web.



## Checkin' It Out

Edward and Stephen poked around near an **ancient** bald cypress stump. Long ago, loggers had chopped down lots of trees here, leaving behind eerie-looking stumps like this one.

## I'm Reelin'

"Wanna go fishing?" Ryan asked Stephen during lunch. "Sure," came the reply. Soon Ryan was excitedly catching one bass after another and grinning from ear to ear. Stephen steadied the canoe and laughed as Ryan reeled in a big one.

# Nighttime Adventures

## Whoo's There?

No telling who—or what—might be watching you on a dark swampy night! A barred owl was perched quietly in a tree not far from the group's tents. It was waiting to swoop down on any meal that might walk, wriggle, or swim by.



## Noisy Frogs

Anthony giggled when C.C. put a green tree frog on his nose. “It kind of tickled,” he said. The boys couldn’t believe how noisy these frogs were, filling the nighttime swamp with their loud “quonks.” Frog calls were just some of the sounds that kept the kids awake that night. Scary campfire ghost stories didn’t help them go to sleep either.



## So Long, Swamp!

Before leaving the swamp, the kids hung out at the water’s edge. They’d had to put up with some heavy rain and tons of mosquitoes, but Anthony said, “I’ll never forget the fun I had on this camping trip.” And the other kids nodded, *You got that right!*

## Connect and Compare



1. Look at the map on page 139. In what direction would you travel to get from Baton Rouge to the Atchafalaya Swamp?

### Reading a Map

2. How important is it to have a guide when exploring the Atchafalaya Swamp? Why do you think so? **Evaluate**

3. Think about this article and *The Raft*. How is Grandma’s river like the Atchafalaya Swamp? How is it different?

### Reading/Writing Across Texts



## Social Studies Activity

Research another body of water. Draw a map to show its location. Then write about the wildlife you might find there.



Find out more wildlife facts at [www.macmillanmh.com](http://www.macmillanmh.com)

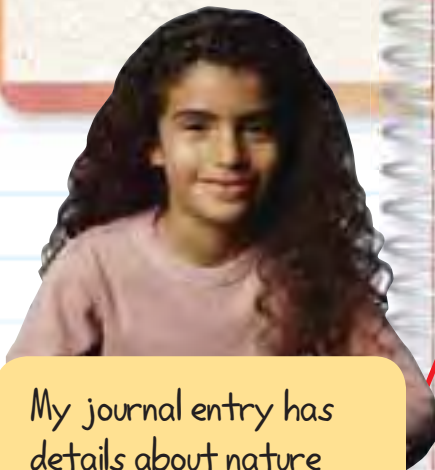


# Write a Journal Entry

## Writer's Craft

### Details

Adding **important details** helps to make your writing more informative. Delete **unimportant details** that do not support the topic.



My journal entry has details about nature and wildlife.

I included fun details that support my topic.

October 25

Today Dad and I went on a fantastic hike in the foothills. After about ten minutes I saw some hoof prints in the soft dirt of the trail. Then I looked up, and I saw a doe and her tiny spotted fawn. Dad and I stood there very quietly. Then they turned and walked into some thick brush.

Wow! I had never been so close to a wild animal. Dad patted me on the shoulder and told me there's a first time for everything.



## Your Turn

Spend some time being a nature watcher. Safely observe birds, insects, or other animals that live in your area. Write a journal entry about your experience. Choose details that express your feelings about the experience. Use the Writer's Checklist to check your writing.



## Writer's Checklist

- Ideas and Content:** Did I include **important details** and delete **unimportant details** about my experience?
- Organization:** Did I tell the events in the order that they happened?
- Voice:** Does my writing show how I feel?
- Word Choice:** Did I use strong, colorful words to tell what happened?
- Sentence Fluency:** Did I vary the length of my sentences?
- Conventions:** Did I fix any run-on sentences by dividing them into separate sentences? Did I fix any sentence fragments by making them into complete sentences? Did I check my spelling?