

Title of Lesson: *Birmingham: The Magic City*

(Suggested grade level: 4)

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Author Information: Kris White (Cohort 2: 2010-2011)

Bear Exploration Center Elementary School

Montgomery County School System

Montgomery, AL

Background Information:

Background information for teacher:

- Birmingham, Alabama (bûr'mĩng-hãm')
 - It was first settled in 1813 as the town of Elyton.
 - Blast furnaces began operating in late 1800s because of the rich iron ore and other mineral deposits.
 - The city was laid out at the intersection of two railroads.
 - It was incorporated in 1871 and grew rapidly as an industrial center, earning it the nickname "Magic City."
 - The location of the county courthouse was moved from Elyton to Birmingham.
 - The "iron boom" in Alabama began in 1880, which is the year Alice furnaces started operating.
 - Birmingham was once called the "Pittsburgh of the South."
- Birmingham, England (bûr'mĩng-əm)
 - This was a major industrial center and was a center of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century.
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
 - This was once an industrial center.

Suggested reading:

Davis, Christopher. "The Role of the Elyton Land Company in Birmingham During the Depression of 1873 to 1879." Samford University, Copyright 2001.

See also, the Encyclopedia of Alabama article on [Birmingham](#).

Overview of lesson: Students will use primary source documents and images to gain an understanding of what led to the founding and growth of Birmingham in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Content Standards

Alabama Course of Study: Social Studies (Bulletin 2004, No. 18)

Fourth Grade: Standard 10, p.32

Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts (Bulletin 1999, No. 17)

Fourth Grade: Standard 3, p.26

Fourth Grade: Standard 8, p.27

Fourth Grade: Standard 9, p.27

National Standards for History, 1996

Standards of Historical Thinking for Grades K-4 (p. 15)

Standard 1 – The student thinks chronologically.

1A – Distinguish between past, present, and future time

Standard 4 – The student conducts historical research.

4B – Obtain historical data

Standard 5 – The student engages in historical issues-analysis and decision-making.

5A – Identify problems and dilemmas in the past

5B – Analyze the interests and values of the various people involved

Standards in History for Grades K-4 (p. 29)

Topic 2, Standard 3 – The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state

3E – The student understands the ideas that were significant in the development of the state and that helped to forge its unique identity.

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, (Bulletin 111, 2010)

Chapter 4 Learning Expectations: Early Grades

Standard 2 – Time, Continuity, and Change, p. 70

Primary Learning Objective(s):

The student will:

- Analyze the significance that location plays in the founding and growth of towns, specifically Birmingham.
- Examine how the availability of transportation and resources leads to the growth of towns and cities.
- Explore perspectives of the relationships, culture, and events of the founding of Birmingham that can be gained through images.
- Empathize with people from the past.
- Describe and illustrate reasons leading to the fast growth of Birmingham.

Time allotted: 30 minutes

Materials and Equipment:

- History of Elyton Land Company and Birmingham, Alabama (Copy of document attached as Elyton Land Co. PDF.)
- Modes of Transportation Photos (attached)
- Four-Fold Graphic Organizer (attached)
- Document-based Essay Questions (attached)
- Image-based Questions (attached)
- Wall map of Alabama or the southeastern United States
- Wall map of the world or a globe
- One square piece of white copy paper – approximately 8.5” x 8.5” or larger - per student
- Colored pencils or crayons – enough for all students

Technological Resources:

- Computer with internet access
- Digital projector

Background/Preparation:

- The students should have an understanding of the economic condition of the South after the Civil War and the necessity of rebuilding the southern economy.

Procedures/Activities:

Engagement/Motivation Activity:

The teacher will start the lesson by asking these questions:

- Have you ever heard of Birmingham?
- What do you know about Birmingham?
- Do you know why it became a city?
- Do you think transportation played a role?
- Why did they decide to call it Birmingham? (Have a student do a quick internet search to find this answer if it is not known by any students or share the reason – found in background/preparation section. Tie this in with Step 1.)

Step 1	Have students locate Birmingham, Alabama, and Birmingham, England, on a world map or globe. Make geographical comparisons.
Step 2	Discuss the importance of location, transportation, and availability of resources with regard to where cities are located.
Step 3	<p>The teacher or student will read indicated portions of Chapter 1 (listed below) of the History of Elyton Land Company and Birmingham, Alabama, a primary resource document. Students will discuss these excerpts as the teacher walks through the points of the article using document-based questions. (Copy of document attached as Elyton Land Co. PDF.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Page 3, first paragraph; contains: ...South and North Railroad ...in course of construction from Montgomery to Decatur... knowing that there were immense deposits of coal and iron ore in Jefferson County, and knowing also that the above mentioned railroad must cross the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad... around the intersection of the two roads and forming a corporation for the purpose of building a town thereon.• Page 7, second paragraph; contains: ...vast possibilities of BirminghamPage 10, first partial paragraph; contains: Birmingham grew and prospered...
Step 4	<p>After discussing the Elyton document, the teacher will ask these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What role did railroads play in the building of Birmingham?• What was the importance of the railroad? <p>(You may wish to explain that Elyton is now a community within Birmingham.)</p>
Step 5	<p>Then the teacher will show at least four of the seven images of transportation (attached) from this time period using a document camera or computer and projector and will use image-based questions to engage students with these primary resources. The following images are saved in the Word document: Modes of Transportation Photos and can be found individually on the internet as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Great Southern Railroad engine• L & N Railroad engine• Mule-drawn streetcar• Barges on the Warrior River• Railroad yard in Montgomery

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barge and train transporting coal • Image of streetcar track in downtown Birmingham <p>The students will compare modes of transportation of the time period and will discuss transportation by river, highway, and rail.</p>
Step 6	Students will complete the graphic organizer assessment and then share and display their products. (Simple directions for the teacher on how to fold the graphic organizer are attached as a Word document: Four-Fold Graphic Organizer.)

Assessment Strategies:

- Students will use a fold-it graphic organizer to show and tell four reasons that led to Birmingham becoming a city and earning the nickname “Magic City.” Students will label each flap with a reason and description or explanation, then draw a related illustration on the back of each flap. In the center square of the graphic organizer, students will illustrate a scene from Birmingham in the late 1800s or early 1900s. (Sample of Four-Fold Graphic Organizer attached.)

Extension:

- Students will create a three-column graphic organizer by folding a piece of paper into thirds and then unfolding it. (Make hamburger-like folds – or fold the paper to make short, wide columns – not hotdog ones, which would be long and narrow.) Students will then write one of these headings at the top of each column: liquid highway, concrete highway, and steel or rail. Beneath each of these headings, students will list as many methods or modes of transportation as they can. For example, boat would be listed under liquid highway.

Remediation:

- Provide one completed example – showing a reason and an illustration – of the fold-it graphic organizer assessment activity.

Accommodation:

- Do not count off for spelling.
- Require fewer answers, such as completing only three of the four flaps, in the assigned fold-it graphic organizer assessment activity.

Modification:

- Provide the student with a partially completed fold-it graphic organizer to use as an example while completing the project.
- Review Individualized Education Plans, 504 Plans, and Gifted or ELL Plans for instructional and assessment accommodations or modifications.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate comprehension and mastery of appropriate learning objectives.

Modes of Transportation in Alabama, Late 1800s-Early 1900s

Engine of the Alabama Great Southern Railroad in front of a building in Birmingham, Alabama.



Engine of the Alabama Great Southern Railroad in front of a building in Birmingham, Alabama. The engine number is 68.

File Name: Q10158

Author: Alabama Department of Archives and History

Collection or Series Title: Alabama Department of Archives and History photographs collection – places vertical file

Box Number: 8

Folder Title: Jefferson County, Birmingham, Miscellaneous (folder 2 of 2)

Part of the Sloss Furnace in 1881.



Colonel James Withers Sloss convinced the L & N Railroad to complete the South and North rail line through Jones Valley, the site of the new town of Birmingham.

"L & N Railroad ." *Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark*. Web. 25 Jun 2010.

<<http://www.slossfurnaces.com/education/story.html>>.

Mule-drawn streetcar in Selma, Alabama.



An African American man is driving the car, which is labeled, "Selma St. & Suburban Ry."

File Name: Q3638

Author: Trippe, Silas Orlando

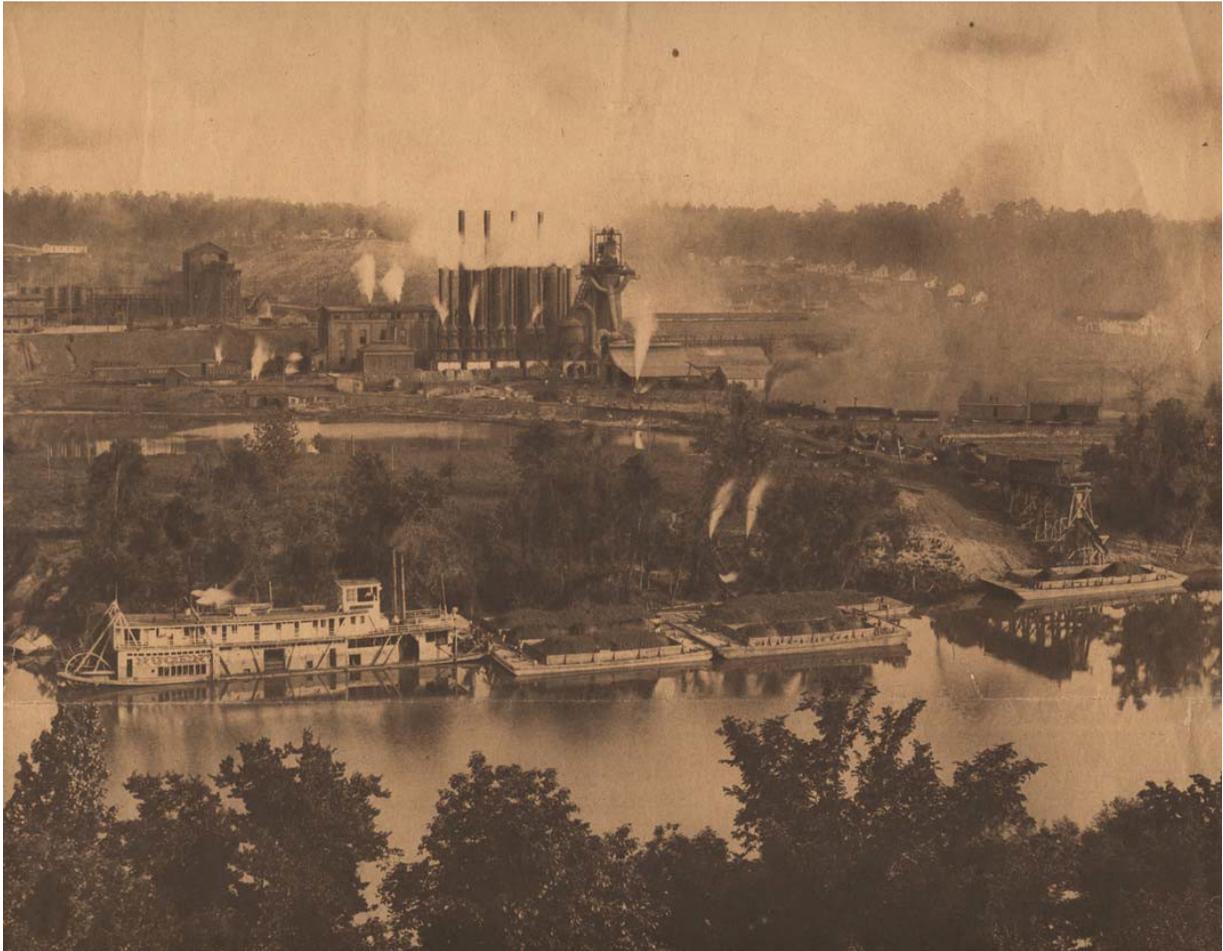
Collection or Series Title: Silas Orlando Trippe photograph collection

Box Number: SPP46

Folder number: 2

Folder Title: Selma, Dallas County, Alabama

"For Export: Utilizing the Great Warrior River Waterway to the Gulf."



"Loading Coal Barges in Tuscaloosa County for Export at Mobile and New Orleans."

From the rotogravure section of the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, Sunday, October 17, 1915.

File Name: Q9658

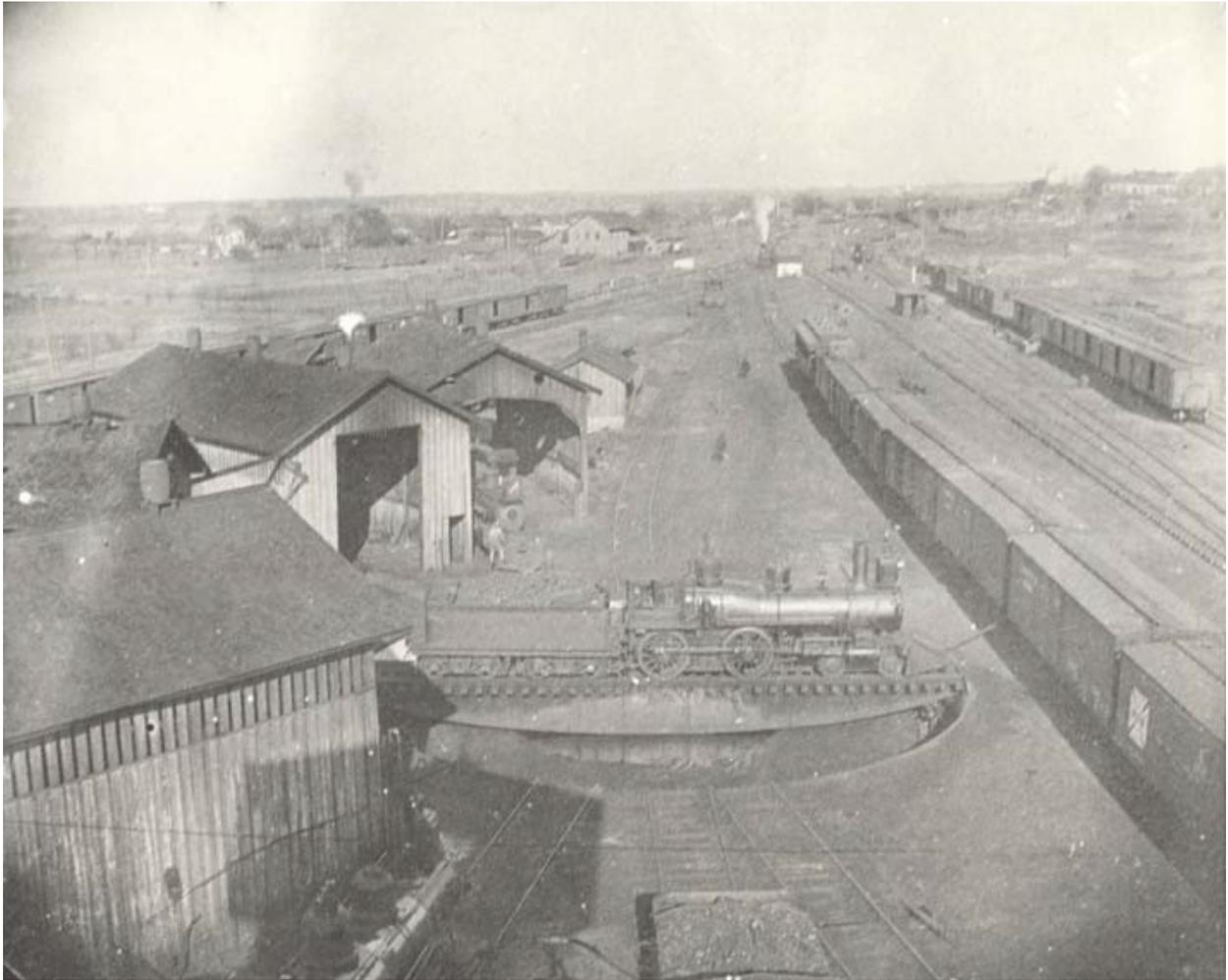
Author: Alabama Department of Archives and History

Collection or Series Title: Alabama Department of Archives and History photographs collection – places vertical file

Box Number: 1

Folder Title: Baldwin County, Fort Mims

Tracks and turntable at the railroad yard in Montgomery, Alabama.



File Name: Q4354

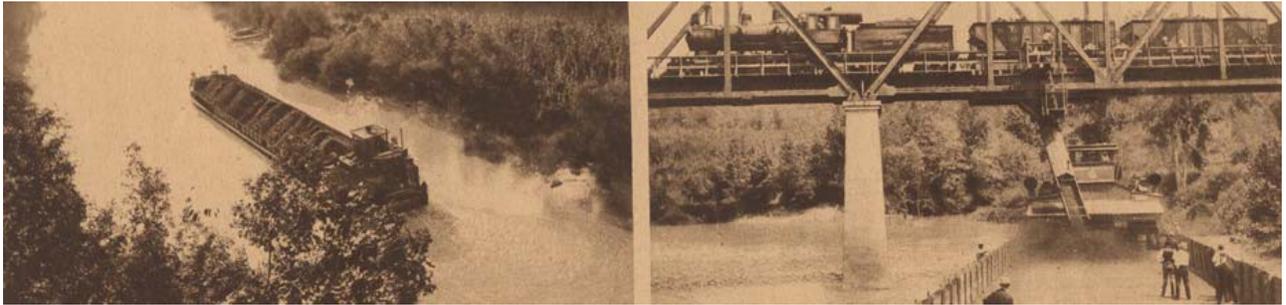
Author: Alabama Department of Archives and History

Collection or Series Title: Alabama Department of Archives and History photographs collection – places vertical file

Box Number: 19

Folder Title: Montgomery County, Montgomery, Railroads

"The First Edgewater Coal Sent Down the Warrior River to New Orleans."



"Photograph on the Right Shows Unloading First Car of Tennessee Company Coal from Southern Railway Bridge Over Warrior River. Photograph on Left Shows the First Load of Edgewater Coal Off for New Orleans by Self Propelling Barge. Contains 782 Tons." From the rotogravure section of the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, Sunday, November 28, 1915.

File Name: Q9619

Repository: Alabama Department of Archives and History

Looking south down 26th Street in Birmingham, Alabama.



Time Period: 1880-1899

File Name: VF000699

Author: Alabama Department of Archives and History

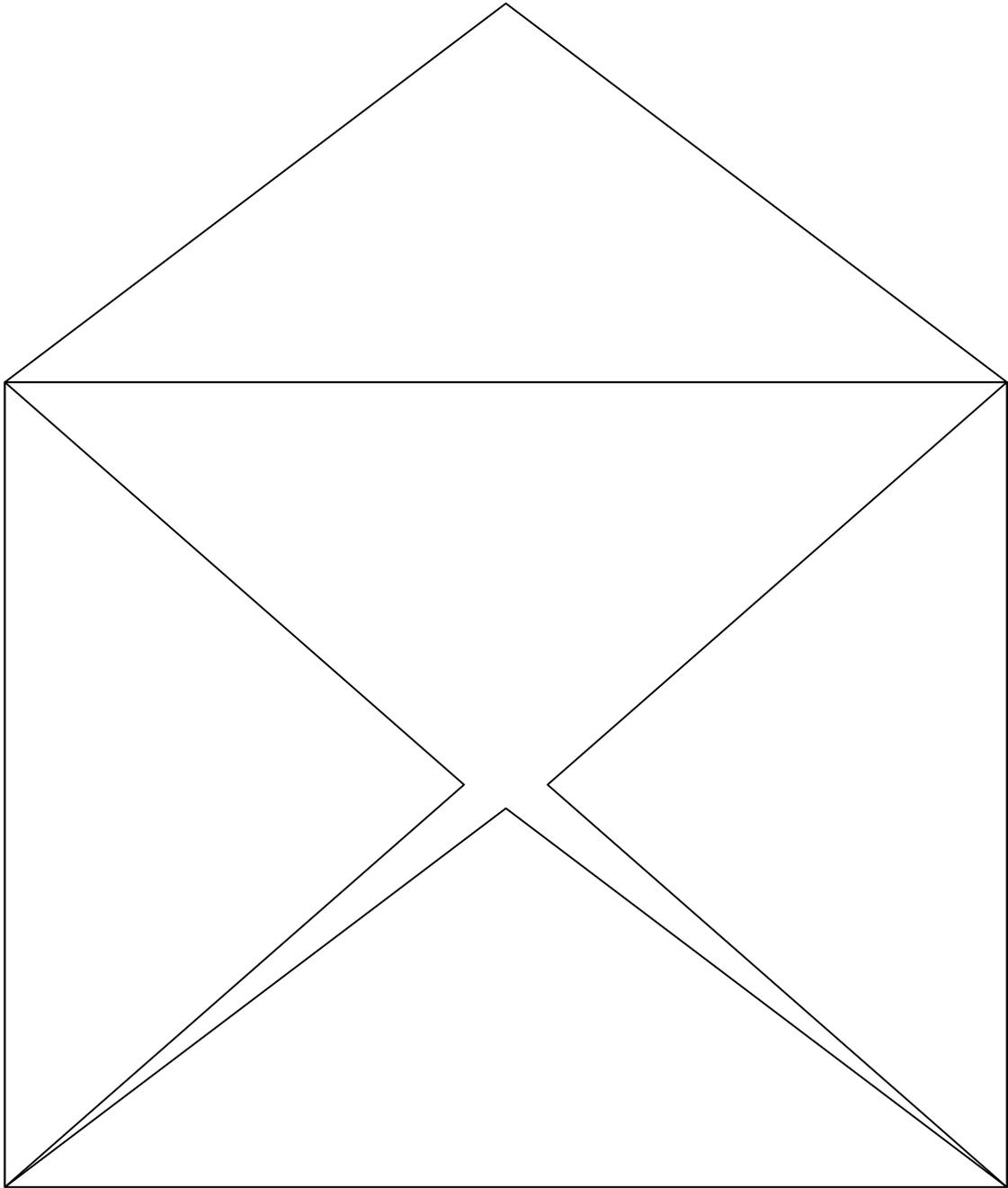
Collection or Series Title: Alabama Department of Archives and History photographs collection – places vertical file

Box Number: 8

Folder Title: Jefferson County, Birmingham, Street Scenes

Four-Fold Graphic Organizer: Visual Guide

Use a square piece of paper approximately 8.5" x 8.5"



Primary Source Image-based Questions

1. Looking down into the picture, what do you see?
2. Jumping into the picture, what does it feel like?
3. Can you identify any figures in the picture?
4. If those figures could speak, what would they be saying?
5. Moving around in the picture, what is the temperature like?
6. Do you feel comfortable in your surroundings?
7. If you could taste the scene, what would it taste like?
8. Looking around the background, do you notice anything you previously missed?
9. If you could touch particular parts of the scene, what would they feel like?
10. Does the picture remind you of a place where you have been or a different place you have read about?
11. What is your emotional response to this picture?