



MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST Student Exploration Days

Day One – Exploring History and Making Your Own

Begin your morning at the **Biloxi Lighthouse**. Climb the tower and marvel at the resilience of this structure through the many hurricanes that have come ashore on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

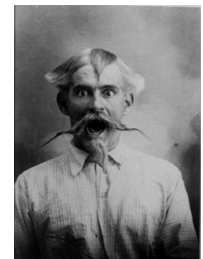
Enjoy an excursion on the **Biloxi Shrimping Trip** - the Sailfish, and SEA for yourself how, why, and what is actually caught on a real Shrimping expedition. Did you know that Biloxi was once the Seafood Capitol of the World? Listen to tales of shrimping, fishing and Biloxi history. Explore with the **Biloxi Historical Tours**, the old town, cemeteries and monuments of our past.

Be a part of the rebirth of **Beauvoir**, The Jefferson Davis Home (reopened June 2008), circa 1852. This property was the stunning retirement home of the only President of the Confederacy and the place where he penned his memoirs. Explore the new **Presidential Library**, scheduled to open winter of 2011. Learn about the history of Jefferson Davis and his impact as a statesman, a politician and a president.

Are you looking for fun and excitement while visiting the historic city of Biloxi? Plan on rockin' with the stars when you visit the **Hard Rock Cafe** Biloxi for lunch. And who wouldn't want to have their picture taken at the base of the largest guitar in the world?

Spend some time at the **Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art** to experience the creations of George Ohr, our very own Mad Potter. You can try your hand at some of your own pottery creations or watch an artist at work at the potter's wheel.

Discover your inner talents at the **Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Arts Center**. Culinary, painting, sculpture, pottery, paper making, yoga, and other hands-on activities can be arranged for your group.



A dinner spot is not hard to find. Contact the CVB for assistance in finding a restaurant that fits the tastes of your group and your budget.

Not tired yet? How about a few rounds of mini-golf, go-carting, spin zone bumper cars or water wars at **Big Play Family Fun Center** in Biloxi.

For younger children, visit The **Lynn Meadows Discovery Center one of the United States Top 50 Children's Museums. Lynn Meadows is a hands-on Children's Museum. From the Mississippi City Historic hotel meander over to the To Market, To Market exhibit which is our own Mississippi grocery store where you get your grocery cart and shop for baked bread, seafood by the pound, flowers and garden veggies. Broadcast your environmental news from our news desk where you are the anchor person. Operate a crane, drag the gulf for shrimp and load those delicious bananas on our 18 wheeler at The Port exhibit. From there...It's A Matter of Science. - Touch a tornado, create a magnet sculpture, and understand a pulley fully at this exhibit. Take the challenge and walk in another child's shoes in, What It's Like To Be Me, an exhibit about understanding differences and disabilities. No "child" will want to miss our Tree House Village created not only for imagination, but also for habitation. (Geared toward children up to the age of 12)

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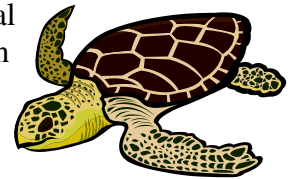
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Day Two – The Far Reaches of Space to the Depths of the Sea



Blast off to **StenniSphere** and discover why America came to NASA's Stennis Space Center before going into space. Before you begin your journey into space, you will be taken to the Launch Pad to prepare for your mission then on to a narrated tour through the nation's largest rocket test complex where space shuttles' main engines were tested. At StenniSphere, you will see exciting displays, exhibits, and unique presentations designed to educate and entertain. In 2012, experience the new interactive science center, **Infinity** at Stennis. Educational programs based on student curriculum will be offered as well as "just for fun" discovery.

Under the sea – **The Institute for Marine Mammal Studies (IMMS)** has rehabilitated dolphins, sea turtles, manatees and other marine animals as well as offering educational programs for students. Visitors of all ages will be engaged in a fun, hands-on learning experience that will help them understand and appreciate the species that make our Gulf Coast waters unique. Guests will explore the interactive museum, experience an underwater adventure in the theater, and encounter sea creatures such as horseshoe crabs, fish, blue crabs, sea stars, and sea urchins in the Discovery Room. Dolphin Interaction programs are now available. (Reservations required).



For lunch, choose from BBQ, burgers, pizza, seafood, pasta or more. On the beach, at the Mall, along Beach Boulevard, a bite to eat is easy to find.

In the afternoon, set sail aboard the **Biloxi Schooners**, replicas of the oyster schooners used from the late 1800's to the early 1900's. Groups can participate in team building and friendly competition as they learn to hoist the sails and master the helm. Understand about the Coast's 300 year history on this museum without walls.

Do you have an interest in military history? The **GI Museum** in Ocean Springs is a treasure trove of artifacts, uniforms, letters home, even candy bars from WWII. Henry, a Vietnam Vet tells the stories of the past with such passion, time will fly by.

During the summer months, get wet at **Gulf Islands Water Park**. 18 acres of fun featuring the Master Blaster, a roller coaster water ride, signature lighthouse with speed slides, a lazy river, wave pool and kids multi-play area also offer interactive, splash experiences for old and young.

If you gotta shopping and don't want to spend a fortune, **Souvenir City** is the place to go to find all sorts of "treasures". You won't want to miss standing inside the sharks' mouth.

How about a **bon fire on the beach**? It's as simple as submitting a permit to the Sand Beach Commission along with a small fee. Designated sites and regulations apply.



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Day Three - *Take a walk on the wild side* (pick one or two)

Venture out to the Gulf of Mexico with **Ship Island Excursions** (full day) aboard the *Pan American Clipper*. Docked at the Gulfport Harbor, watch for dolphins while you cruise to Ship Island, home of **Ft. Massachusetts**, exploring Civil War history and some of our most beautiful beaches. Enjoy a Dolphin Tour along the coast.

Wolf River Canoe and Kayaks (Half or full day) - Famous for its white sand beaches and winding waterways, the Wolf River is the perfect playground for the amateur or experienced paddlers alike. Just minutes from the gulf beaches, the cool waters of the Wolf River flow over adventurous clay formations, twist around pristine white sand beaches, and meander through peaceful woodlands. Whether you want to swim, tube, picnic, camp, fish, or just relax and enjoy nature, a trip with Wolf River Canoes is for you! This company can accommodate over 100 people at one time.

Gulf Coast Gator Ranch & Airboat Swamp Tour (2.5 hours) – Come to the Gulf Coast and visit some of the oldest and largest alligators in captivity - and when we say "alligators" - we mean it! Stroll along protected walkways and hand feed gators up close and personal.

Gator Ranch is the oldest gator farm in the State of Mississippi. See some of the most pristine swamplands and get up close to bird life in abundance on 105 acres bordering the Grand Bay Estuary in Moss Point/Pascagoula.



McCoy's River & Marsh Tours (3 hours) takes you on the Pascagoula River, one of the most pristine river swamps in America and the last waterway of its size in the United States which is unimpeded by any artificial structure. Over 74,000 acres of it is a permanently protected wildlife area. Our boat is a 24-foot custom built pontoon tour boat, holds up to 24 passengers and offers nature tours of this unique river and marsh system, so our guests can experience the harder to reach small bayous and sloughs of the swamp and marsh. This natural treasure, with its moss-draped trees, and abundant wildlife will be an unforgettable part of your trip to the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast. Next door – enjoy a visit to the **Pascagoula River Audubon Center** (1



hour) a gateway to the Pascagoula River. For travelers and tourists, the Center provides a demonstration site for environmentally-friendly concepts and a portal to nature based programs. The center's facility is not built yet but they are in a temporary building and visitors are welcome now. Call for directions and hours.

Gulf Islands National Seashore, **William Colmer Visitors Center** - Ocean Springs (1 hour), a place of wonder and discovery. View the nature film and explore the new hands-on exhibits focusing on the flora and fauna of the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi Sound.

Walk the bridge from Bay St. Louis to Pass Christian or the Biloxi Bay to Ocean Springs Bridge (each 2.2 miles long). Marvel at the art plaques displayed every tenth mile and watch for pelicans and butterflies as you cross over the Bay. Then, stroll the beach in search of hermit crabs and seashells.