

Occupational Folklife Survey

Make sure you have permission to be an observer at a work site. As you observe a work situation, use this sheet to jot notes on any of these topics that arise. When you conduct an interview, ask what these topics mean to the interviewee. What's the story behind the scene? Does this occupation relate to the community's sense of place? Do any responses relate specifically to the region or the state?

Date _____

Names of Observers/Interviewers _____

Occupation or work observed _____

Place (address, county) _____

Circumstances (time, season, location, weather, setting)

Names and contact information for any interviewees (may substitute Release Forms to record this information)

Yes, we have signed Release Forms from interviewees _____.

Look for and ask about the following:

Relationship of the workplace to the environment, waterways, roadways

Overall workspace arrangement and decoration

Individual workspace arrangement and decoration

Terms or special language

Equipment, gear, clothing

Gestures, body language

Special techniques, skills, practices

Formal training required

Tricks of the trade and training learned traditionally by observation and imitation and from colleagues on the job

Lines of authority

Roles of men, women, children, age groups

Spatial relations, movement patterns (sketch on back and refine later)

Sounds

Customs

Celebrations

Jokes, humor, pranks

Stories (for example, what were some funny, hard, good, or dangerous experiences)

Beliefs, good luck charms, omens

Initiation of newcomers

Aspects informant considers unique

Aspects that might be unique to your community or state

Other

Adapted with permission from www.louisianavoices.org