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## Celebrate Reading! Celebrate Detroit!

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# Celebrate Reading! Celebrate Detroit!

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**I**f you seek a pleasant peninsula, look about you. What a wonderful motto that truly summarizes the beauty that is Michigan. From the cities of Flint, Saginaw, and Detroit to the scenic beauty protected by the numerous state parks to the fun-filled lakes and rivers to the natural wonders found in the Upper Peninsula, Michigan is rich in history and adventure for all to behold.

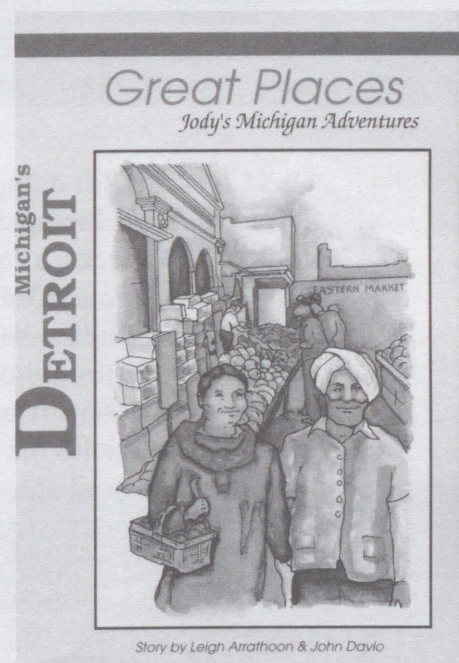
This is a special year for the city of Detroit as it celebrates the 300th anniversary of its founding. From its beginnings as a frontier outpost in 1701 to the boom of the auto industry to its present renaissance in 2001, Detroit has played an essential role in the history and growth of Michigan. Teachers throughout Michigan may want to take advantage of the teaching opportunities provided by Detroit's tricentennial. Whether you are planning a special celebration and activities to recognize Detroit's 300th birthday or if you just want to introduce your students to the rich tradition of Detroit, there are several books that teachers should consider including in the classroom to introduce students to the prominence of Detroit in Michigan history.

***Great Places: Michigan's Detroit***, Rochester, MI: Paint Creek Press, 1998, pp. 43.

Written by Leigh Arrathoon and John Davio, this book is one in a series of adventure stories about Jody, a toy mouse, and

Gilbert, a toy frog, who experience life in Michigan. In this adventure, Katie Murphy and her family decide to visit Detroit. During their visit, the Murphy's enjoy Greektown, the Eastern Market, Hamtramck, the Zoo, Belle Island and the Renaissance Center. Provided with a backdrop to learn about important areas in Detroit, this story has Jody and Gilbert engaging in memorable adventures, like the time Gilbert was hung by his suspenders in the ape exhibit at the Detroit Zoo or when Jody was rocking to the Motown sounds.

The brief adventure is culturally rich including highlights of Detroit's contributions to Americana such as the music of Motown and the automobile industry. The book is a wonderful tool for introducing children to the rich cultural heritage of Detroit. The book includes vocabulary words that are highlighted and defined to en-





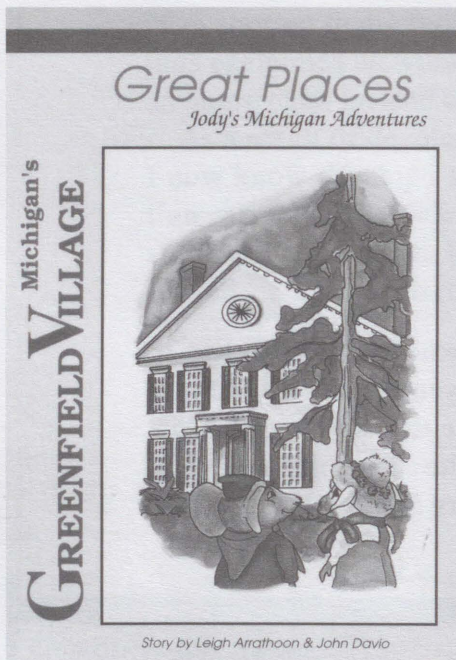
hance comprehension. If children enjoy learning with Jody and Gilbert, they can accompany them to Greenfield Village, Holland, Frankenmuth, Mackinac Island, and the Upper Peninsula, where Jody and Gilbert continue their adventures in Michigan.

**Great Places: Michigan's Greenfield Village**, Rochester, MI: Paint Creek Press, 1998 pps 45.

A second volume in Jody's Michigan Adventure series, the book highlights one of Detroit's most recognizable museums. The Murphys invite their 9-year-old cousin, Elliot, to stay with them for the summer. Elliot loves science and hopes to be a scientist one day. Elliot decides that he would like to build a car like Ford's Quadricycle and decides to visit the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village to get a copy of the Quadricycle plans.

The authors Leigh Arrathoon and John Davio take the reader through the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village as they follow Elliot, Katie, Jihan, Kevin, and Jody, the toy mouse, through the various exhibits that highlight one of Detroit's frequently visited museums. This is a wonderful story for any child interested in learning more about one of Michigan's richest historic sites.

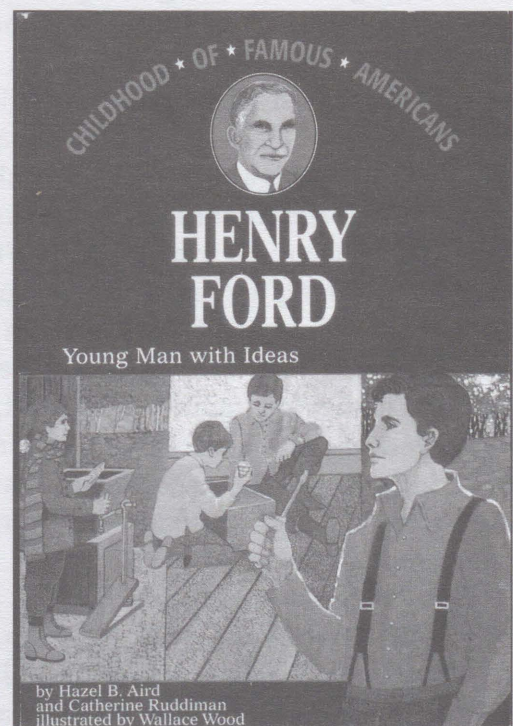
Packed with colorful cartoon sketches, this book includes highlighted vocabulary words to enhance reading comprehension. Elementary children will enjoy this book as an excellent introductory lesson prior to a field trip to the museum or just for entertainment.



**Henry Ford: Young Man with Ideas**, New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1960, pps. 192.

*Henry Ford: Young Man with Ideas*, by Hazel B. Aird and Catherine Ruddiman, is a timeless classic for pre-teen readers. This volume is one of many biographies included in a series of books about men and women. This book chronicles the early life of the American automotive industrialist who founded the Ford Motor Company and emphasizes the spirit of adventure that characterized Henry Ford so young readers can identify with the inquisitiveness of Michigan's automobile pioneer. Attractively illustrated with drawings that depict the era of Henry Ford, this book introduces readers to the assembly line method leading to the mass production of the automobile.

Whether used as a solitary biography or included within a course on Michigan history and geography, *Henry Ford: Young Man with Ideas* provides many springboards for children desiring to learn more about the automobile industry and its impact on Michigan and the United States.





*A Historical Album of Michigan*, Millbrook Press, Inc. 1996, pps. 64.

Placing Detroit within the context of Michigan's history will further enhance one's understanding of Detroit's prominence. Charles A. Wills succinctly chronicles the history of Michigan from the Glacier period until the dawn of the new Millennium in this book. One in a series of fifty historical albums corresponding to each state, this book provides the reader with pictures, summaries of important eras in Michigan history, and resource guides that include quick facts on Michigan's geography, places, and personalities.

An excellent resource for teachers looking to provide a brief overview of Michigan's history, geography, and key facts, this book would be an excellent text for use during a unit on Michigan. The reader experiences life in early Michigan as a frontier settlement once possessed by Britain, France, Spain, and eventually the United States. From settlement to statehood, readers encounter Michigan's mining, logging, and automobile industries.

*M is for Mitten: A Michigan Alphabet*, Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 1999

Written by Annie Appleford, this picture book introduces readers to the wonders of Michigan from apples to the zoo in Detroit. Using the letters of the alphabet, readers hear about the animals, legends, and special places of Michigan. With a "mitten full of facts," colorful pictures and an alphabet poem, *M is for Mitten* is a must for Michigan teachers.

*The Michigan Counting Book*; Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 2000.

In this book, a numerical follow-up to *M is for Mitten*, Kathy Jo Wargin, uses Michigan wildlife and landmarks to teach readers to count. From a warbler and butterflies to the Soo Locks and roadside parks, Wargin has readers counting animals, picnic tables, boats, and more as they learn about Michigan's outdoor world. Teachers and readers looking for Michigan's urban life will be disappointed. Young readers will still enjoy practicing their counting skills as they enjoy the magnificent artwork.

Additional features of the book that will be attractive to primary age readers are the abundant facts about Michigan's outdoor world. Wargin provides in-depth facts about the 1929 Oldsmobile, the Soo Locks, the maple syrup industry, and the abundant wildlife discussed in the book. Readers will find the facts succinct and entertaining, making this book a versatile addition for elementary teachers at any level.

