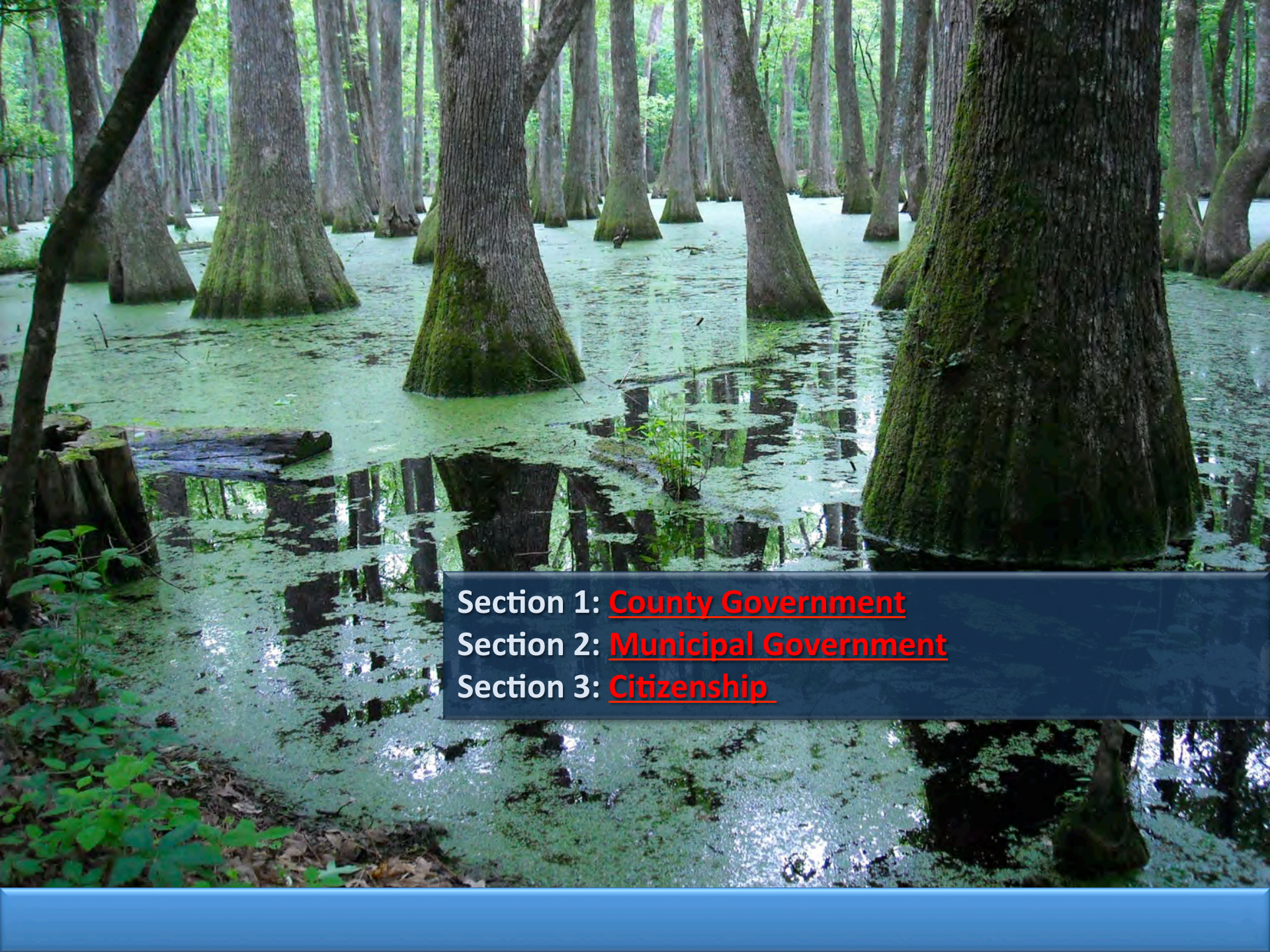


The image shows the Mississippi State Capitol building, a grand neoclassical structure with a large central dome topped by a golden eagle. The building features a prominent portico with tall columns and a pediment. The scene is set against a clear blue sky, with green trees framing the building. A large, stylized title is overlaid on the image.

# A Place Called Mississippi

Chapter 14: Local Government and Citizenship  
STUDY PRESENTATION



Section 1: [County Government](#)

Section 2: [Municipal Government](#)

Section 3: [Citizenship](#)

# Section 1: County Government

- Essential Question: How is county government organized to help local citizens?



# Section 1: County Government

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- county seat
- beat
- beat system
- county unit system
- felony



# Board of Supervisors

- Mississippi has 82 counties. Each has a county seat, or town where the courthouse is located.
- County officials keep their offices here.
- Ten counties in Mississippi have two county seats and two courthouses.
- The legislative branch of county government is the Board of Supervisors.
- Supervisors are elected to four-year terms. They can levy taxes, issue bonds, and operate the roads, bridges, libraries and jails.
- The “beat system” divided each county into five beats, each with its own supervisor elected to run the beat.
- Most counties have the “county unit system” in which the supervisors choose staff to run the entire county more centrally.



# Chancery Clerk & Circuit Clerk

- The chancery clerk is a four-year term elected position. Their duty is to keep records for the Board of Supervisors.
- The circuit clerk is a four-year elected position. The clerk is chief of the Circuit Court and handles matters such as elections and records of the Circuit Court.



# Election Commissioners & Tax Assessor and/or Collector

- The elections commissioners keep the voting rolls and make sure elections are carried out properly. These are elected officials.
- The tax assessor and/or collector is an elected official who maintains the tax records for the county and keeps records of the payments.



# Coroner

- Coroners are elected for four-year terms.
- They are the chief medical officers of the county and are responsible for issuing death certificates.
- Coroners perform autopsies and publish results, when needed.





# County Attorney & County Surveyor

- The county attorney represents the state in cases brought before County Court and Justice Court, and criminal cases appealed to the Circuit Court. This is a four-year term elected position.
- The county surveyor is elected to a four-year term. The surveyor completes all land surveys required by the county, local courts, and landowners.



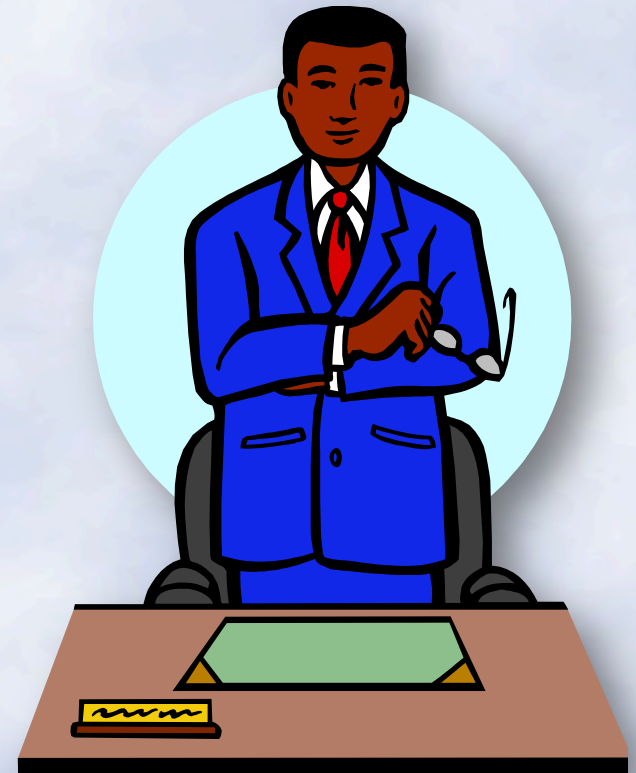
# Sheriff & Constable

- The sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer in the county and is elected to a four-year term.
- Sheriffs are enforcement officers for the Chancery and Circuit Courts and may employ deputies, as needed.
- The constable is elected to a four-year term and is a law enforcement official who enforces orders and judgments of the Justice Court.



# County Superintendent of Education

- The superintendent of education are either elected for four-year terms or appointed by the county Board of Education. Board of Education members serve six-year terms.
- Superintendents of Education are charged with running all aspects of their school system.



# County Courts & Youth Courts

- County Court judges (in 20 counties) are elected to four-year terms. They oversee cases involving eminent domain, unlawful entry and detainer, and juvenile cases. They may also hear smaller cases, and noncapital felony cases.
- Youth Courts (in 20 counties) are in place where there is a county court.



# Drug Courts & Justice Courts

- Drug courts are special courts that deal in crimes related to drugs or alcohol.
- They were to rehabilitate drug offenders and offer incentives for staying drug-free.
- Justice Court judges are elected to a four-year term. Justice Courts hear civil cases less than \$3500 or criminal cases in which the punishment would be less than one year.
- The clerk of the Justice Court is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and keeps court records and collects fines.



# Section 2: Municipal Government

- Essential Question: How are towns and cities in Mississippi organized to meet the needs of citizens?



# Section 2: Municipal Government

- What terms do I need to know?
  - incorporate
  - ward
  - misdemeanor
  - ad valorem tax
  - homestead exemption



# Incorporation

- A group of citizens living in an area may seek to incorporate to make a city, town, or village.
- They must present a petition to Chancery Court, have a vote of support, and describe the boundaries of the incorporated area.
- Officials must be listed and basic laws must be created.





# Functions of Municipal Government & Forms of Municipal Government

- Municipal governments' function is to provide services to citizens.
- Services include streets and bridges, police and fire protection, libraries, recreational facilities, and health and sanitation services.
- These services can occur if citizens are willing to pay the taxes to have them.
- There are several forms of municipal government in Mississippi. Leaders are elected by citizens of the municipality.



# Forms of Municipal Government: Mayor-Council

- In the mayor-council form, citizens elect both a mayor and city council, or Board of Aldermen. Aldermen represent an area called a ward.
- These forms may have a weak mayor or a strong mayor, depending on how the government is organized.
- In both types, the mayor is involved with setting budgets, presiding over council meetings, and has veto power.



# Forms of Municipal Government: Commission

- In this form, voters choose a mayor and at least two commissioners. The mayor presides over meetings but cannot veto a vote.
- The mayor usually runs the police and fire departments while commissioners oversee other departments.
- The commissioners are elected from specific wards, but the entire municipality votes (at-large) for the mayor.



# Forms of Municipal Government: Council Manager

- In this form, voters choose a mayor and council who hires a city manager to operate the city on a day-to-day basis.
- The mayor presides over council meetings and represents the city.
- The manager handles daily operations, attends the council meetings, but has no vote there.



# Annexation

- Annexation is the process by which a city expands its territory.
- To do so, all that is required is that the city pass the law (ordinance) describing the new boundaries and the services to be provided there.
- Citizens in the annexed land do not get to vote on the ordinance plan, but can sue to stop it.
- Legal costs keep most people from filing such suits.



# Municipal Court & Financing Local Government

- Municipal Courts have jurisdiction over city ordinances, traffic violations and misdemeanors. Judges here are appointed by the city. In a small town, the mayor may serve as judge.
- Ad valorem tax is used to pay for most municipal services. This is a tax on land, buildings, and property such as cars. Additional tax money may come from hotel or motel customers.
- Federal tax money helps pay for services, too.
- A homestead exemption is a reduction in property tax on a family's primary home.



# Other Forms of Local Government

- Planning and Development Districts were created to help the economic development of cities and counties.
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts were added to prevent erosion, control floods and preserve wildlife in the state.
- Mississippi also has Levee Districts, Drainage Districts, and Port Commissions, among other types of government.



# Section 3: Citizenship

- Essential Question: What does it mean to be a good citizen in Mississippi?





# Section 3: Citizenship

## ➤ What terms do I need to know?

- naturalization
- slander
- libel
- probable cause
- search warrant
- writ of habeas corpus
- due process
- grand jury
- indictment
- peers
- bail
- self-incrimination
- acquittal
- voting precinct
- lobbyist
- delinquent act
- implied consent law



# Section 3: Citizenship

- Americans are citizens of the United States and the state in which they live.
- If you are born in the U.S. or if your parents were born here, you're a natural-born citizen.
- Naturalized citizens go through a process to renounce their native country and pledge allegiance to the United States. They must learn English, live in the U.S. for five years, and pass a citizenship test.



# Constitutional Rights: Freedom of Religion

- American citizens are guaranteed rights as explained in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.
- Rights are also explained in the Mississippi Constitution.
- Citizens have the right to worship with government interference – freedom of religion.
- The Mississippi Constitution states that a religious test cannot be required to run for public office.



# Constitutional Rights: Freedom of Speech and Press

- Americans are free to write and say things about issues without government interference.
- It is not legal to slander or libel another person.
- Speech and writing are restricted in the areas of obscenity, public safety, and national security.



# Constitutional Rights:

## Freedom of Assembly and Petition & The Right to Bear Arms

- Individuals can express opinions, march, demonstrate, or make requests of the government in writing.
- The Constitution allows people to keep and bear arms. There are some limits on the types of weapons people can have, where they can have them, and the age at which they can be carried.
- Additional rules restrict weapons on school grounds.



# Constitutional Rights: Property Rights

- Citizens have the right to be secure in their homes. The government can't search your house without probable cause.
- A search warrant may be needed for police to enter your home or property.
- There are times when a warrant is not needed (e.g. a police officer is in hot pursuit of a suspect).



# Constitutional Rights:

## Rights of the Accused & Equal Protection

- Federal and state constitutions guarantee the rights of persons accused of a crime.
- A writ of habeas corpus is a court order requiring a person to be brought to court to see if the person is being held lawfully.
- Due process refers to the rules established to protect the rights of the accused (right to an attorney, speed and public trial, etc.)
- Laws must be applied equally without regard to sex or race.



# Responsibilities of Citizenship: Voting

- U.S. citizens may vote at age 18. Registration is required at least 30 days before the election in the circuit clerk's office or by mail.
- A voting precinct is an area of a county or city with a polling place to cast ballots (vote).
- Voting is by secret ballot, and polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Primary elections are used by political parties to determine their candidates.
- General elections are the main elections.
- Special elections are sometimes called to replace an official who dies or resigns or to settle a special issue.





# Responsibilities of Citizenship:

## Obeying Laws & Serving on Juries

- Laws are rules. They may be local, state, or federal. Without them, there would be chaos!
- All citizens should obey the laws for the good of the community.
- A major responsibility of citizens is to serve on a jury, when required.
- Trial jury: determines the guilt or innocence of a defendant in a criminal or civil case.
- Grand jury: used to determine if enough evidence exists to issue an indictment.



# Responsibilities of Citizenship: Staying Informed & Lobbyists

- Citizens must be informed in order to vote well and make good decisions about candidates and issues.
- Watching the news, reading the newspaper (online or in print), and attending citizens meetings are ways to stay informed.
- Lobbyists are people paid to promote a particular person or cause to the leaders in government.



# Responsibilities of Citizenship: Getting Involved

- You can be involved by helping candidates run for office, running for office, participating in community service or the military.
- You can write elected officials and go to hearings on issues. You can protest peacefully on issues important to you.



# Mississippi Teenagers and the Law:

## Legal Status of Minors

- At age 18, you can sign contracts, such as a car. If married, you can sign a contract for a house!
- A married minor can be sued for divorce, child support, child custody, or alimony.
- Marriage licenses cannot be issued to males under 17 or females under 15 with approval of a Chancery Court judge. If under 21, parents or guardians must be notified.



# Mississippi Teenagers and the Law: Juvenile Justice System

- The Mississippi Youth Courts handle cases of children aged 10-18 who commit delinquent acts, or actions that would be criminal if the person were an adult.
- These courts also deal with cases of neglect and abuse.
- Youth Court cases are not open to the public and records are sealed until the youth reaches age 20 or the case is dismissed.
- A person under 18 can be tried as an adult in certain instances.



# Mississippi Teenagers and the Law: Restrictions on Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

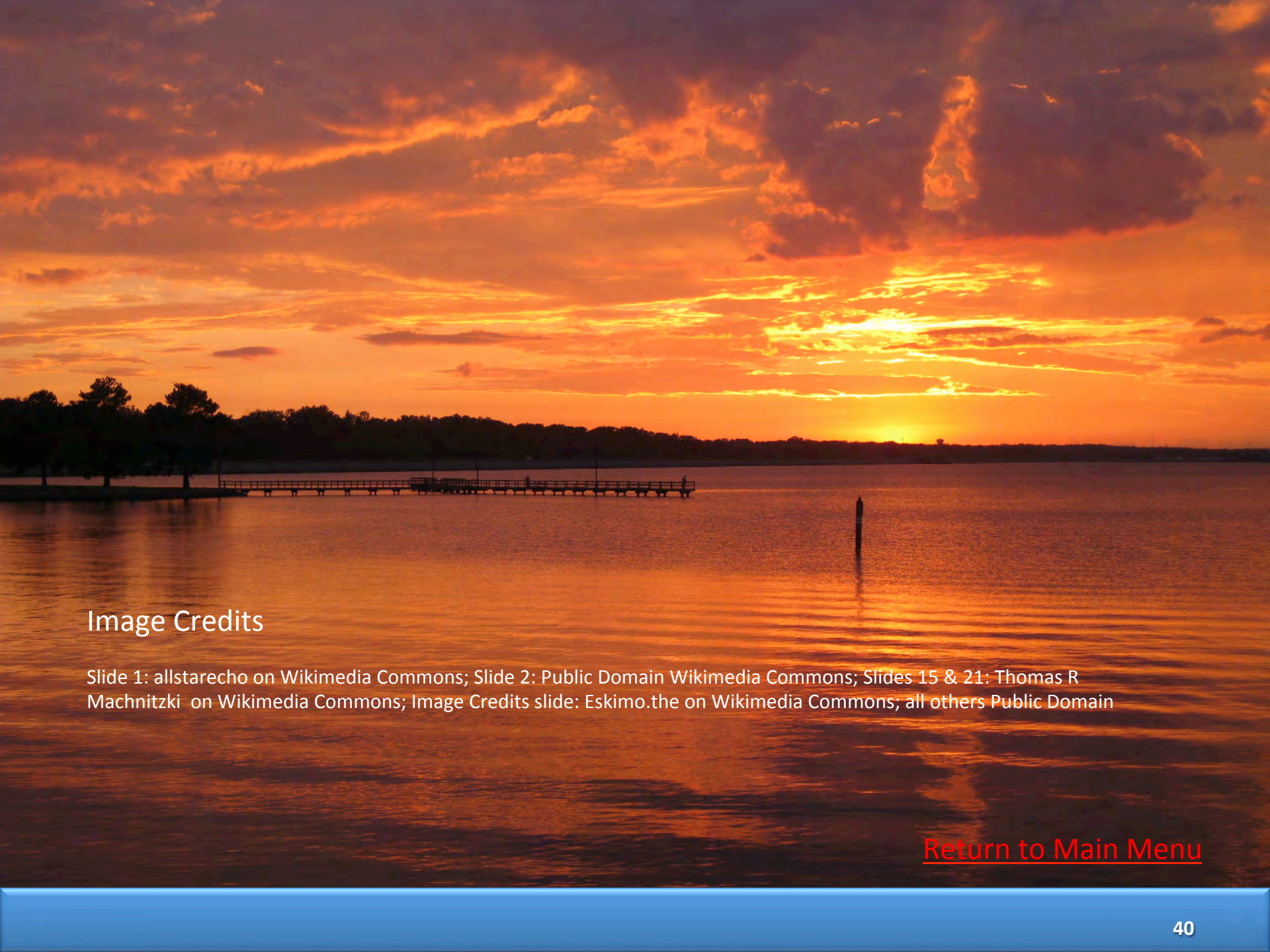
- Alcohol is the most common drug used by teens.
- Persons under 21 cannot possess or purchase alcoholic beverages.
- It is legal to get a driver's license at age 16. Laws are very strict about any level of alcohol for drivers under age 21.
- Penalties for drug possession and use depend on the drug.
- Persons under 18 cannot buy or be given tobacco products without written parental permission.



# Mississippi Teenagers and the Law: Rights and Responsibilities in School

- Students age 6-21 have the right to a free, public education. School is compulsory until age 17.
- Students have their rights under the constitution, but there are restrictions at school.
- Students have the right to have their records kept private and to be free from unreasonable searches.





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