

Page numbers should be used.  
Photo captions could be used to  
number photos ("Photo 1" etc.) to  
make referring to them easier.

## Mardi Gras Photo Project

The first paragraph broadly  
introduces the topic.

Mardi Gras, (also known as Fat Tuesday), is an American holiday mostly celebrated in the southern region of the United States. Alabama, Mississippi, and the gulf cities of Florida all celebrate Mardi Gras, but Louisiana is the popular state to celebrate it in; especially in the city of New Orleans. In Louisiana, Mardi Gras is recognized as a holiday, and most businesses are closed and schools are closed for a couple of days. There are many parades throughout out the carnival season which all leads up to the last day in Mardi Gras season which is always the Tuesday before ash Wednesday. Many people come out and enjoy the festivities of Mardi Gras whether it be for the food, float designs, or just simply whatever they through off the floats. Mardi Gras brings in a lot of revenue to the city and surrounding areas. People all over the world come out and experience the magic of Mardi Gras. I like to think of it as a Cajun Disney land, without the rides.

The second paragraph begins narrowing the focus, suggesting what much of the paper will be about. Photos are used to evidence observations and interpetations.

Every year each parade has a different theme. Some themes are repeatedly but they generally do vary each year. Themes can range from social issues and politics to fun and novelty type. Shown in the picture on the right is a float from the Bacchus parade who had the New Orleans Saints football theme. Their parade idea was to commemorate the 50



years that the Saints has been a football team in the city. Each float alone celebrated a historic aspect of the New Orleans Saints football team. The first pictures show a person with a Saints jersey on and a paper bag over the head with the words *Aints* written at the top. As a Saints fan, this was a period in time when the team was



Before this second paragraph the author could have written a paragraph to outline the paper. This would briefly tell the reader what things will be discussed throughout the paper, before delving into specific observations.

no doing well in the season and all the fans wore paper bags in shame for their team. Another float, second picture, depicted a Saints player choking a falcon in his hand. Not meant to promote animal harm as non-fans might think, but to make it known that Saints team biggest rivalry is the Atlanta Falcons. Both floats not only made fans excited, but it depicts how serious and important these parades are to the city. Besides the exciting themes, the details of the floats are incredible. Each float is hand crafted and hand painted, and there are no machines putting it together. Like any project, the designs start off on paper and then is brought to life. It is as if you are constructing a building, but very small and more fancy. Once the base is up, add lights, colors, and decorations and you have a float. Now to get the float moving, they bring in tractors similar to what you see on farms. Now these tractors do not come from the farm, there is a place called Kern studios that provide tractors to all the parade events exclusively for New Orleans.

Beyond just float decorations comes the crew who throws out all the goodies and beads. Goodies consist of snack, toys, stuff animals, t-shirts, cups, and etc. And of course the desire to



catch a big bead, or decorative one. Not every parade requires crew members to wear masks, but the popular parades like Bacchus and Endymion tend to have their crew members in mask. These mask and costumes always reflect the theme of the parades along with their outfits.

Majority of the float crew members are part of the organization that host the parades. Think of it like a club a person joins, and pay monthly dues to continue membership. There not many restrictions to join these clubs, it usually depends on who you know, and how much you're willing to pay. And club membership is open to anyone but preferably someone in the area because the clubs are involved

Now the author begins writes about "the crew" , giving general details, details about variation within groups, and details about variation across groups.



in community work and other programs around the city. The remaining members of the crew are usually just family members or friends of the people who are already part of the organization. When asked one of the crew members what the process is like, he said it was very fun and exciting. According to him, there is not much work that needs to be done, just know what float you're on and what items you plan to throw, and show up on time or they will start without you. He also mentioned that it's interesting to see all the different people that come out to

the parades. Among the krewe members in parades like Bacchus and Endymion, there are royals; like kings, queens, and maids; that are a part of the parade. The picture to the right depicts one of the maids in the parade. A typical maid would wear an elaborate costume. This costume is usually a bedazzled gown with a feather mane. Each dress made is fitted and handmade to the maid liking. Each maid would



have her own color and design of her choice relating to the theme of the parade. Along with the elaborate dress, each maid gets to ride on a float by herself with an escort. This is so that everyone can see the dress on display, but also because the costume is so big it takes up lots of space. This year Endymion's theme was the zodiac, so the maid depicted in the picture has the Leo zodiac animal. The lion, on her mane of her costume. Besides from the royal court of the parade and krewe members there are the mascot and celebrities that ride the float as well. As for Endymion's parade, the mascot walks the streets due to the oversized mascot suit as you can see in

This might have been a good place to start a new paragraph since it deals with a new subject (mascots and celebrities)

the picture on your left. There are also two other people next to the mascot, this help guides the person in the suit so they don't go off course and for their safety. There is not really anything too special about the mascot except to represent the character. The mascots are usually at the very beginning of the parade. They symbolize the start of the parade and gets the crowd ready similar to a mascot in sports games. All mascots are typically the face of the club or the character that represents the club. So these mascots stay the same every year and is typically in the same costumes. And again the people behind the mascot suits are members of the club. As for the celebrities, they range from movie stars, to rappers, singers, and even local celebrities in the town. Most celebrities participate in parades in the New Orleans area due to the high tourist attraction. In the picture is the rapper Flo Rida from Florida. He is famous for his songs *Low*, which was featured on many movies, and *My house* back in 2015. Flo Rida was greeting and performing along with his friends he invited to join. Most singers/ music artist that participate in the parades perform while on the float as the parade in route. Other celebrities either greet the audience, or join in on the crew members throwing beads off the float. Sometimes you can often times you might even see celebrities amongst the crowd enjoying the festivities, but majority of them are in a parade.



The author now begins writing about important traditions. Photos show these traditions, description is given, and context for them is given.

Now there's no Mardi Gras without traditions and tactics.

One Mardi Gras tradition is to throw the beads at the Gorilla float.

The picture on the right is one of the many gorilla floats throughout the Mardi Gras parades. The goal is to throw any beads you do not want at the gorilla, and try to aim it around the gorilla's neck. The floats vary by parades but it usually is just a giant gorilla, male or female, sitting on top of a cart. Sometimes you will see one gorilla in the parade, or both male and female. One parade I went to a



couple years back included a family of gorillas, the mother, father, and baby. Traditionally the gorilla is at the very end of the parade right before the fire truck. But in some instances you will see them near the beginning but never the first float. This tradition started out as a way to kept the streets clean of unwanted beads, and as a donation of beads to use next year. As the tradition developed throughout the years, people, especially children, started throwing them just to throw them. Not many people know the history or even why, but if they see someone else do it then why not join in.

Taking a shift to family traditions has a variety of different things. One tradition is maybe going to a certain spot to watch the parade like me and my family. In the picture to the right, you will notice the different families that are bunched up together. Among the crowd you will see lots of ladders. Most of them



had a crate on top used for seating. People do this to get an advantage of catching thing because you can go unseen in a crowd of people if you're not tall enough. It is really simple to make; all



you need is a ladder and some sturdy wood to be able to hold up weight. Some people paint them and decorate while others just put it together. During Mardi Gras you would typically see kids sitting on the ladder. Also some families dress up in matching outfits like the picture on the right. Not only does this help find your family in crowded areas, dressing up with

the holiday is pretty cool too. Also note that there are not any barricades enclosing people. This is typically because of the location of the parade route. Mainly off streets and family oriented places along the parade route do not have any barricades. But as you get closer to the inner city where the action is like downtown or uptown, then you will start to see the barricades enclosing people.

Another popular tradition of Mardi Gras is the marching bands. Every parade has some type of band, weather it is local, a school, or even a famous band. In the early years of Mardi Gras band were used as the music for the parade because at the time radio music was as frequent as we hear today. And It also gave bands the chance to march and preform in front of many people. As of today, the bands typically in the parades are school bands. These school bands range from elementary to college bands, and they are from all over the United States. Majority of the out of state bands do come from the southern region since Mardi Gras is celebrated mostly in the that part of the United States. The most popular band though are the local high school and colleges that participate every year. These bands not only preform for fun but nowadays they march as a fund raiser for school. The



company/club that host the parades now pay schools as a fund raiser event to march in their parade. This not only keep the band program afloat, but also give students and kids the opportunity to participate in one of the most popular holiday season, and get to experience Mardi Gras. And you would most likely see the bands participate in more than one parade, but usually not on the same day though. The band depicted in the picture is the Sothern University college band from Baton Rouge. All bands, like the one in the picture, wears a uniform along with hats. These uniforms are very detail, made with the school colors, and either the school symbol or mascot are stitch on the shoulder sleeve of the uniforms. They were certain kind of schools made for marching, and are typically white. Within the band marching you have the instruments, the drumline, the dancers, cheerleaders, and the flag girls. You will also see parents and volunteers walking with the band to help keep regulation, and fuel them along the route.

On Mardi Gras day, my family and I wake up early to see the Zulu parade. The Zulu parade is the second biggest and popular parade in New Orleans. The history of the Zulu parade was for African-Americans because in the past, African American were not allowed in others



parades due to segregation and discrimination. The picture on the left, you see a crowd of people who is also up early waiting for the parade. Though the Zulu parade started off as an African-American cultural parade, people of many races and ethnicities come to view the parade as well. And like many other parades, people come dressed up and bring their

family out to enjoy with them. And there are people of all ages, from toddlers to elders, Mardi Gras is open to any and every one. So when people come out, they bring grills, food, and chairs and have a big picnic. And since the weather was nice that day, a lot more people showed up to

Here the author begins a somewhat more personal account, which introduces another group.

catch the parade. Since there are no barricades, people are freely to stand in the street as the



parade goes by. Before every parade, the New Orleans Police department starts it off at the beginning of the route. So when you their big white truck, you know the parade is about to start and you should get ready. The Zulu also have elaborate floats that are had made and put together as mention previously. The one difference though about the Zulu parade form other is that their themes are also social issues. This year their theme was

dedicated to the black lives matter movement in efforts to make people aware of their support

and also of the moment. Also Zulu have characters outside of the royal court that are very popular to the organization. There characters are Mr.

Big shot, the Witch doctor, and many other ones. They call it novelty characters that represent the different cultures within the black

community. Each character has their own float with either a statue, or like the picture on the right a gigantic head on display right in the front.

These floats are elaborate, but stay within the Zulu theme. And the crew on the floats all pain their faces black and were afros. I think the costume

that the crew members wear is what makes the parade cultural. And as

mentioned before there are no barricades so people are free to go up to the float like in the

picture. This can be dangerous at times, but thankfully parents know what precautions to take to keep the children safe. In the picture on the left, you can see how packed in the people are as the

parade flows. Also not that socially, there are more African Americans than any other race that comes out to view the Zulu parade. It is open to any and every one, but I think because of the





history behind the club, it just appeals to more African Americans. You can also see the tents, and chairs, and food to not that this is more of a picnic than just watching the parade. You can consider this portion of the parade route (Basin and Canal) a family setting as oppose to Bourbon street or any area around there.

In the last picture to the... is my mother and I. I spend Mardi Gras every year with my family, and we go to the same spot every year for every parade we go to. Because there is always lots of walking and moving, my mother and I both try to dress comfortable but still decent. I decided to wear jeans because at night it gets cold, sunglasses to block the sun so we do not get hit with beads, and tennis shoe for the walking. I would say though it is nice to dress up for Mardi Gras, but keep in mind that depending were you are, you might have to stand the hole time. And being out in the sun can be draining and tiresome for some people. In the background behind my mother and I, you can see tents. Like any other parade some people camp out all night with their tents and have picnics. Then there are others like my family that do not camp out and just show up when the parade is about to start. There are many people that come out to the parades so if you do want a good spot to have, then you most likely would have to camp out for it.

This last paragraph concludes the paper well in the sense of completing the narrative, but the paper would have benefited from paragraph(s) that connect the ideas presented throughout; now that the author has presented and analyzed all these aspects of Mardi Gras, what can the author say about Mardi Gras? Is there a broad idea that came from analyzing each element of Mardi Gras?

Overall this paper provides a good level of detail about each thing it discusses. All the information helps the reader to understand not only what Mardi Gras is, but who takes part and in what ways they do. *The author offers interpretation and analysis that goes beyond describing the data.*

