

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT FOR US HISTORY I

Introduction: The academic discipline “History” comes under the broader category “Social Studies” because it is more than a recitation of things that have happened. Studying History is an attempt to analyze and understand past societies using as tools various principles that have been developed to analyze cultures and societies that collectively are known as “the Social Sciences,” but which are each separate disciplines. They include the following:

- **Sociology:** the study of society, social institutions, and social relationships
- **Economics:** a science concerned with the process or system by which goods and services are produced, sold, and bought
- **Political Science:** the study of governments and how they work
- **Anthropology:** the study of human races, origins, societies, and cultures
- **Psychology:** the science or study of the mind and behavior.

This year our goal is to learn not only what happened in the early part of United States history, but also understand why things happened the way they did, and how this history impacts our society today.

America Before Columbus: We are going to start with an exercise regarding the people indigenous¹ to America before the arrival of European explorers and settlers. A term used in Anthropology, ethnocentrism, helps us understand why the Europeans who first encountered Native Americans tended to ignore their rights and claims of ownership in the land and resources the Europeans wanted. Because Native American societies were so different from the European’s own cultures, Europeans generally considered Native Americans primitive. We are going to analyze that assumption.

Assignment: You are to do research on one Native American tribe of people, write a paragraph in proper form containing certain information about the tribe, answer questions about the source or sources you used for information, and submit your work in a Google Doc format.

1. **Research:** Using the first letter of your last name, find a Native American tribe whose name begins with a letter in the same group below as your last name.

- A to E
- F to J
- K to O
- P to T
- U to Z

2. **Analysis:** Read about the tribe you select and find three interesting facts about their culture.² The facts should relate to what their society was like, so use the social sciences defined above as tools for analysis. Look for and be prepared to categorize the facts as they relate to

Sociology: How their society was organized; their dwellings and family units; the things they created and valued as art; their religious beliefs

¹ Words that are underlined are vocabulary words you will be expected to know and use appropriately in this exercise. Look up the definitions if you need to.

² Our focus is on America before Columbus, but it is not necessary to know exactly the timeframe of the facts you choose.

Economics: What was the basis of their economy; how did they get what they needed to live; what did they hunt, make or grow; how did they use their environment; what did they trade and with whom; how did they exchange things (Money? Barter?)

Political Science: Describe their political system; Who was in charge; How did they choose leaders; Who had rights and who didn't; Did they make laws, or did someone rule them; Did the tribe have autonomy, or were they aligned with other tribes

3. **Paragraph:** Write a paragraph that has the following structure:

- A Topic Sentence that names the Native American tribe and where they were (or are) located.
- The three interesting facts about them that you identified in the **Analysis** above using at least three but no more than a total of five sentences to explain the facts.
- A Clincher Sentence that summarizes what the tribe was like.

Type the paragraph in Google Docs, using your name and the tribe's name as the title of the document.

4. **Source or Sources:** Under the paragraph on the same document, identify the source or sources from which you got information for the paragraph. Examples of sources and the information needed are listed below.

- If it's from a book, the name of the book and the publisher.
- If it's from an internet site, the name of the article and the home page.³
- If it's from a magazine or a newspaper, the name of the article, the name of the magazine or newspaper, and the date it was published

Note: You are not being asked to do a citation. You are being asked to identify and think about the type of source from which you got your information.

Submitting the Assignment: You should complete this assignment before the beginning of school whether you have History in the first or second semester. On the first day of class you will be given instructions for how to submit the completed assignment electronically to your teacher, and you will be expected to be prepared to use the assignment on the second day of class. This assignment will be part of several additional assignments.

³ To identify the home page, delete everything after the first backslash in the URL window and hit enter.