

💡 Welcome to AP US History!

This summer assignment is all about helping you connect history to where you live. It's designed to spark curiosity, not stress you out! You've got flexible choices and creative options.

Goal: Connect history to where you live and who you are

🌍 Summer Exploration: Indigenous Land, Legacy, and You

Time Period Focus: Period 1 (1491–1607)

Theme Connection: Geography and the Environment (GEO)

🔍 Part 1: Explore Your Environment (1–2 Hours)

Choose ONE:

- Visit a local park, trail, or river
- Take a virtual tour of a historic site
- Interview someone about local land or cultural history

What to Do:

- Take 2–3 photos or draw something that stands out
- For each image, write a short journal reflection (4–6 sentences) answering:
 - How might Indigenous peoples have used or interacted with this land before 1607?
 - What features stand out—water, soil, plants, shelter—and how might they matter?

👉 **No access to transportation? Let me know and we'll find an alternative.**

Here's an example of one journal entry! I didn't use Augusta, since that's your city to explore!



Indigenous peoples may have used this land for fishing, fresh water, and gathering plants. The soil is soft and damp, which could help grow certain crops. I noticed lots of tall trees that would offer shade and shelter. The creek would also make travel by canoe possible. Being near water probably helped them survive and trade.

A trail at Eno River State Park (Durham, NC)

Part 2: Indigenous Mapping & Research (45–60 minutes)

Use Native-Land.ca to explore Indigenous history in your area

Research and Reflect:

- What Indigenous nations lived in or near your area? What was the environment like?
- How did land shape their housing, economy, food, or culture? Did they trade, migrate, or face conflict with others?

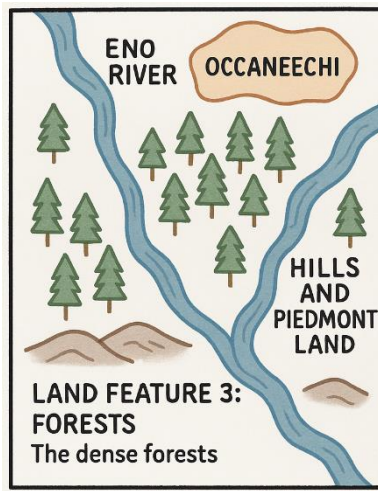
Create ONE of the following:

- A hand-drawn or digital map/sketch (with labels + color encouraged!)
- A one-page visual organizer (bullet points, symbols, or a concept web)

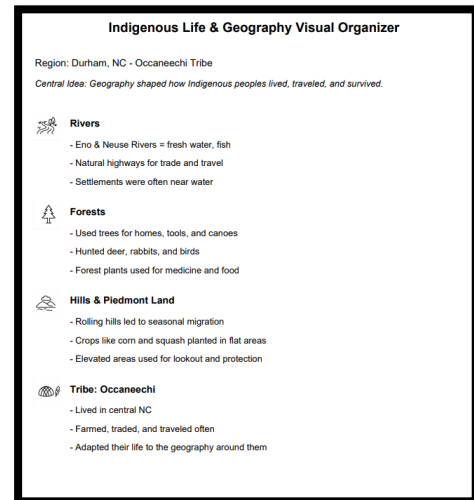
Explain 3 features geography and how they influenced Indigenous life (3–5 sentences each).

Here's an example of this assignment! I didn't use Augusta, since that's your city to explore!

Example Sketch/Map (yours would be larger)



Example One Pager Concept Map



Features and Explanation Example (would go with either product)

Land Feature 1: Rivers

The Eno and Neuse Rivers were essential to the Occaneechi and other Indigenous tribes in the region. These waterways provided fresh water for drinking and irrigation, abundant fish and shellfish for food, and served as natural highways for trade and travel. The rivers' floodplains offered fertile soil for cultivating crops like corn, beans, and squash. Additionally, the rivers held spiritual significance and were integral to the cultural practices of the tribes.

Land Feature 2: Forests

The dense forests surrounding the Piedmont region supplied Indigenous communities with vital resources. Trees provided materials for constructing homes, crafting tools, and making canoes, while the forest floor offered medicinal plants and edible herbs. Forests were also rich hunting grounds, supplying game such as deer, turkey, and rabbits. The biodiversity of the forests supported a sustainable lifestyle and influenced seasonal movements and settlement patterns.

Land Feature 3: Hills and Piedmont Land

The rolling hills and varied terrain of the Piedmont region shaped how Indigenous tribes like the Occaneechi lived and moved. Elevated areas provided strategic advantages for defense and observation, while valleys and flatlands were ideal for agriculture. The diverse landscape supported a range of plant and animal life, allowing for a mixed subsistence strategy of farming, hunting, and gathering. Seasonal migrations were common, as tribes moved to different elevations to follow food sources and climatic conditions.

Part 3: Reflection – Your Voice (250 words—about 1 page)

Answer 2 of these questions:

- How has this changed how you view the land you live on?
- Why is geography and Indigenous culture important to early U.S. history?
- What surprised or intrigued you?

Here's an example of this assignment! I didn't use Augusta, since that's your city to explore!

Rediscovering North Carolina's Indigenous Roots

After this project, I started thinking differently about the parks and land around me. I never realized they had so much history before colonization. I've always just seen them as places to relax or hike.

Learning about the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, who lived along the Eno River near present-day Hillsborough, opened my eyes to the deep roots Indigenous peoples have in North Carolina. The Eno and Neuse Rivers were not just scenic spots—they were vital for transportation, fishing, and sustaining communities. The surrounding forests provided materials for homes, tools, and food, while the rolling hills of the Piedmont influenced settlement patterns and agriculture.


I discovered that the Occaneechi were part of a larger network of Siouan-speaking tribes, including the Saponi and Tutelo, who adapted to the land's resources and challenges. Their resilience is evident in how they navigated relationships with European settlers, especially during events like Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, which significantly impacted their communities.

Understanding this history helps me appreciate the land more and recognize the importance of preserving these stories. It also makes me think about how we can honor and respect the Indigenous peoples who were here long before us.

This assignment opened my eyes to a part of history that often gets overlooked, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn about it.

What to Turn In (Due Second Tuesday of School)

- 2–3 journal reflections with images or sketches
- 1 visual product (map or graphic organizer)
- 1-page personal reflection

 Submit as a printed packet or digital PDF. If anything prevents you from completing it fully, talk to me—the goal is to learn, not to stress.