



ATCHAFALAYA BASIN ARTIFACT PACKET: COMMUNITIES IN THE SWAMP

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2021

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The logo for the Iberville Museum is a black-outlined hexagon. Inside the hexagon, the words "Iberville Museum" are written in a large, black, cursive script, slanted upwards from left to right. Below this, the words "PLAQUEMINE" and "LOUISIANA" are written in a smaller, black, sans-serif, all-caps font, stacked one above the other.

Iberville Museum

PLAQUEMINE
LOUISIANA

COMMUNITIES IN THE SWAMP

Name:

Date:

Section:

READING

Settlement in the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area changed drastically over the course of three centuries. First, Native Americans lived in semi-permanent camps throughout the swamp and along its natural levees. Then, in the 1700s, French colonists began developing small permanent settlements along the swamps exterior bayous. Most of these settlements benefited from the arrival of Acadians. When they landed in Louisiana in 1764, they traveled across the swamp to settle along the bayous. The new settlers farmed cash crops, raised livestock, or fished. As a result, Louisiana's trade continued to grow. Finally, in the mid-1800s, the heart of the swamp saw its first permanent settlers. Sugar planters looking for more real estate moved into the Basin's interior. After the Civil War, the sugar industry changed into the lumber, moss, and fishing industries. Many hoping to participate in the growing markets moved to the swamps. By 1900, communities in the swamp flourished as people adapted to their surroundings and established distinct cultural traits and practices.

Due to the limited farming space, people of the Basin have always heavily relied on natural resources. This became especially true after the Civil War when planters could no longer profit from enslaved labor. Plantations in the swamp ceased production. As a result, the swamp shifted to a non-agricultural-based economy. By the 1870s, a seasonal harvest of the Basin's natural resources, such as fish, waterfowl, shellfish, turtles, frogs, Spanish moss, cypress timber, and fur animals emerged. Those living in the swamp relied less on traditional farming and more on seasonal water level changes. As a result, many swamp dwellers moved into houseboats.

Houseboats, also called camp boats, were optimal for residences in the Atchafalaya Basin. A houseboat's mobility provided flexibility for many fishers. Instead of traveling to their fishing spot every day, they could set up their home there. Most houseboats were built on **barges** made of cypress wood, an abundant resource at the time. Cypress was a valuable material that could withstand the heat and humidity of Louisiana swamps.

A houseboat could be as small as a single room or as large as a two-bedroom home with a combined living room and kitchen. People who lived in houseboats either settled as a stand-alone house away from the swamp's edge or within a collection of houseboats that formed small communities. These bayou or swamp towns consisted of a varying number of houseboats. Residents could visit other homes by walking on the floating rafts that acted as sidewalks or use pirogues to travel from house to house. Larger communities could withstand inclement weather by tying barges together to buffer their homes. These bayou communities were made up of swampers, trappers, hunters, moss pickers, fishers, and their families. However, not all communities floated. Some, like Bayou Chene, were settled on the natural high grounds within the swamp and included permanent structures that were used as homes, schools, churches, and stores. At Atchafalaya Station, another Basin town with buildings on high ground, there was also a railroad stop that connected it with Lafayette and Baton Rouge.

As swamp populations began to rise, so did the need to exchange or sell goods for money. With the invention of the internal combustion engine in 1907, local traders used small powerboats like the **putt-putt** to transport goods around the area. Larger powerboats, called **fish boats** or grocery boats, allowed fishers to sell their goods and buy other essentials for their households. Various goods were offered, such as ammunition, coffee, canned milk, cloth, and other food staples like beans, flour, or sugar. Additionally, those residing inside the Basin sometimes needed to travel to larger towns to purchase supplies or seek medical care. In these cases, swampers would tow their houseboat to a port, like the Pit in Morgan City. Here, residents could buy general supplies or be assisted by midwives for childbirth and return to their communities afterward.

Those living in these isolated swamp communities were of varying ethnicities. In Bayou Chene, most people spoke English and came from English, Irish, and other white Anglo ancestry. However, Cajun culture thrived in communities like Myette Point or Bayou Pigeon. They were mainly known for their French dialect, Catholic practices, and music created with instruments like the accordion or fiddle. They also had traditional faith healers called **traiteurs** who combined Catholic practices with

holistic medicines. Finally, communities of color formed around the end of the Civil War and were located closer to the Basin's outskirts.

Atchafalaya Basin living declined after 1927 when a disastrous flood hit the Lower Mississippi Valley. The water rose seven feet above the Atchafalaya's natural levees. As a result, more than 700,000 people, including those in the swamp, were displaced. After the flood, Congress passed the Flood Control Act of 1928, which turned the Atchafalaya Basin into a **spillway** for the Mississippi River to prevent future flooding. In addition, engineers built guide levees on either side of the swamp to lead floodwaters towards the Gulf of Mexico to prevent future disasters. Unfortunately, the new levees made it difficult for fishers to leave and enter the swamp. Additionally, the increase of Mississippi waters brought sand and silt into the Basin and started filling in the natural lakes and bayous like a bathtub. Those who had lived on the fish they caught and sold found it harder to survive in the changing landscape. By 1950, most of the families living in the swamp moved on. Today, the houseboats in the Atchafalaya act as camps for people to stay while hunting or fishing.

GLOSSARY

barge

fish boat

GLOSSARY

houseboat

putt-putt

spillway

traiteur

READING ASSESSMENT

Instructions: Answer each question to the best of your ability using specific information and evidence from the reading.

1. How were houseboat communities different compared to traditional neighborhoods or towns? How did the people of these swamp towns adapt to their surroundings? What were some unique characteristics?

2. Considering how the communities of the Basin developed over time, identify two instances of cause and effect. *Example: Cause – Need for new land to grow sugarcane; Effect – Planters establish the first permanent residences in the heart of the swamp.*

Name:

Date:

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Drip coffee pots were essential items for a home in a houseboat community. The coffee produced was strong and bitter, ideal for the people of the Basin swamp towns. After a long day of work, one house would make coffee and invite the community to sit on their porch and share it. The coffee took a lot longer to make using a drip coffee pot, so it became a way to gather and spend some time with your community. To make a pot of coffee using a drip coffee pot, you first placed a filter in the topmost cup and filled it with ground coffee beans. Next, boiling water was poured over the grounds and left to steep. Finally, fresh coffee dripped from the cup and into the kettle.

This drip coffee pot is made of metal and coated in white enamel that makes it easy to keep clean and sanitary. Enamelware became popular in the 19th century.

Specifications:

- Height - 9 1/2 inches
- Width - 5 inches



What material is it made from?

bone	leather	plastic	fabric wood
clay	glass	metal	
paper	stone	other	

What can you conclude about technology of the time?

What can you learn from this artifact that you might not learn elsewhere?

Who used it and what was it used for?

What is the historical context of the artifact? How does it connect to the Basin?

What other types of sources could you use to better understand the artifact?

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

DOCUMENTS

"LIFE IN THE BASIN" CHAPTER FROM *HIGH WATER, LOW WATER* BY REV. MONSIGNOR R.J. GOBEIL, 1974.

The large white space on the map of Louisiana aroused little curiosity in the residents of the State, except for those who had an interest in this wilderness. Could it have been otherwise? No roads, no towns, only swamps without even an indication of principal waters. Such was the situation with the Basin until it became newsworthy as a spillway for the Mississippi River.

I have already indicated that people lived in this extensive area to be included as well as enclosed by the proposed twin levees. How was the life of these people affected by this ambitious project? I write for the year 1938, when the mode of life was still the same, presumably, as in the past. Changes there were from Civil War days, but no substantial changes.

In all the Basin, not a doctor of medicine or a registered nurse could be found. A midwife and a faith healer, yes...However, with the advent of the gasoline motor, delivery of babies and serious ailments were generally taken care of by a physician outside the Basin. There was no law enforcement officer, not even a Justice of the Peace in the territory, I make hold to say that in this area the crime rate was one of the lowest in the nation. These people of the wilderness had laws, effective laws unwritten though they were...

The Basin inhabitants had no saloons, dance halls, theaters, not even a place for some form of group entertainment. With the advent of the radio, their sole source of distraction from daily toil was this marvelous invention, which brought to them knowledge of world events. I would often "get the news" from my isolated parishioners since I used my boat radio sparingly to conserve the battery power of the boat...

A large percentage of the people living in the Lower Basin were illiterate. The children were provided with three one-room school houses for a limited elementary education, one in Bayou Chene, another at Butte LaRose, and a third at Atchafalaya Station. The Parish School Board provided boat transportation for the children to attend class. You must understand that, with rare exceptions, a visit to one's neighbor necessitated the use of a boat. In this regard, a citizen of Venice, Italy would have felt perfectly at home....

An inquiry frequently addressed to me, by townspeople, was "Father, what do your people do to make a living?"

The main industry was fishing. The fish harvested from the hoop nets and fish lines (catfish, gaspergoo, buffalo) were confined to a live box kept there until the arrival of the fish boat operating from outside the Basin. About three times a week, the fish boat made its rounds. The live fish were weighed, and the current price per pound was paid to the producer.

The fish boats carried provisions more or less similar to a general merchandise store. With the ready cash paid for the fish catch, the fisherman bought needed supplies. The fish boat dealers also served as unofficial mail carriers and would take orders from mail catalogs. No need for the residents to go outside the Basin.

High water presented no problem for those living in houseboats, a raft of high floating logs provided a Noah's Ark for those who raised chickens. After the flood, when the raft rested on dry ground, the chickens were reluctant to leave the raft where they had been fed for a considerable length of time.

The houseboat dwellers, indeed, were not disturbed with the advent of high water, which every year, exceeded the 1927 disastrous flood. High water merely meant a change in living habits...

[Gobeil, R.J. "Life in the Basin" in *High Water, Low Water*, 8-12. Printed by author, 1974.]

Name:

Date:

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

DOCUMENTS

What kind of document is it? Select all that apply.

advertisement
magazine
speech

email
newspaper
telegram

govt. document
patent
report

journal/diary entry
press release
letter

Who created the document?

What is the purpose of this source? Is it to persuade, to inform, communicate, etc.?

Who read or received it?

When was it created?

Are there any words, phrases, or people that you don't recognize? What information can you infer from the source?

Where is it from?

1. Describe the document in your own words:

2. What is the historical context of this document?

3. How does this source connect to bayou communities in the Basin?

4. What other types of sources could you use to help you understand this one?

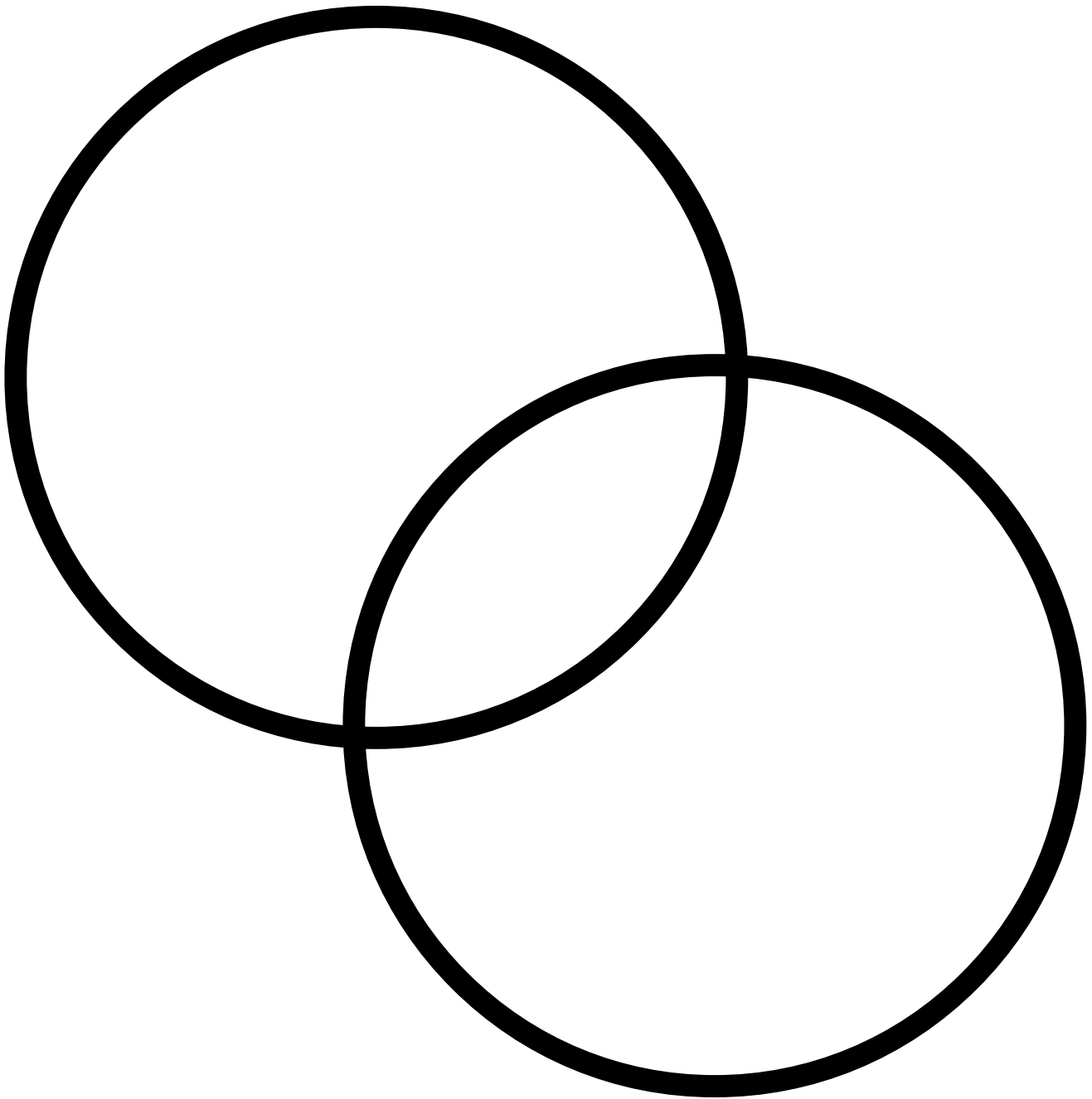
Name:

Date:

COMPARE AND CONTRAST BASIN COMMUNITIES

Instructions: In this Artifact Packet, you have learned about life in the Atchafalaya Basin's communities during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. On your own, fill out the Venn diagram below comparing and contrasting settlements in the swamp prior to 1900 and post-1900. You may use the packet as a reference.

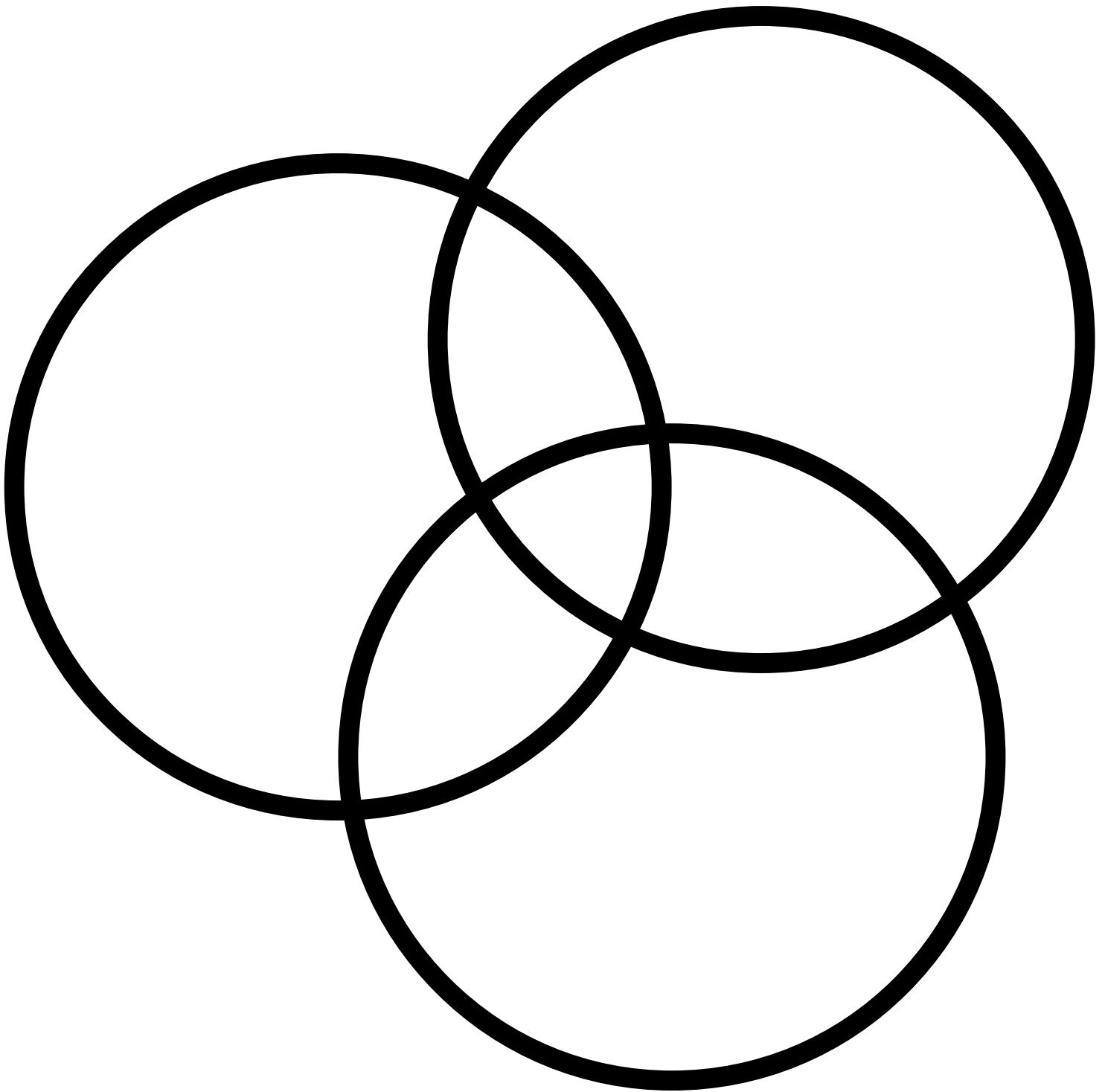
- Label each circle
- Include at least 3 points in each circle and 2 in the overlap.



Name:

Instructions: Now, you must compare and contrast this information with your way of life in the 21st century. Compare and combine your answers from the first diagram with your class to complete the triple Venn diagram.

- Your final Venn diagram must include a total of 5 points in each outside circle, 2 points in each inner circle, and 1 point in the innermost circle.
- Make a note of any evidence that you used.



UNIT FOUR: Jim Crow through Huey Long

TOPIC ONE: Atchafalaya Basin Settlement

TOPIC TWO: the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927

C3 FRAMEWORK STANDARDS

D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.

D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

D2.His.13.6-8. Evaluate the relevancy and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

D2.His.16.6-8. Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

LOUISIANA BELIEVES STANDARDS

8.2.5 Analyze causes and effects of major events and evaluate their impact on the growth and development of Louisiana.

8.2.7 Explain major social, political, and economic changes that affected Louisiana during the Progressive, Great Depression, and Huey Long eras.

8.4.3 Explain ways in which inventions and technological advances have affected Louisiana's culture.

8.5.1 Describe how natural phenomena impact the physical environment of Louisiana.

8.10.1 Analyze how scarcity of resources affects the choices of individuals and communities.

8.10.3 Describe historical factors influencing the economic growth, interdependence, and development of Louisiana.

8.1.1 Produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences by: conducting historical research, evaluating a broad variety of primary and secondary sources, determining the meaning of words and phrases from historical texts, recognizing buried points of view within historical context.

8.9.3 Analyze and explain factors affecting the production and allocation of goods and services in Louisiana, the United States, and the world.

COMPELLING QUESTION: How did people live and thrive in the Atchafalaya Basin at the turn of the twentieth century?

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS:

1. What was life like for people living in the Basin before and during the twentieth century?
2. Why were houseboat communities an essential of living in the Atchafalaya's inland swamps and bayous?
3. How did houseboat communities adapt to their environment?
4. How did external changes like industry, flooding, and politics affect life in the swamp?

CONTENTS OVERVIEW

- *Reading (Instructional Strategies 1-3 and Summative Assessment)*
 - Reading about communities of the Atchafalaya swamps and bayous at the turn of the twentieth century and how they adapted to their surroundings.
 - Appropriate reading level for 8th grade.
- *Glossary*
 - Relevant vocabulary to the Artifact Packet.
- *Reading Assessment (Instructional Strategy 1)*
 - Two short answer questions based on the compelling and supporting questions for students to answer with knowledge from the reading.
- *About the Artifact (Instructional Strategy 2)*
 - The accompanying artifact of the packet (drip coffee pot) with a picture and its relevant information.
- *Artifact Analysis (Instructional Strategy 2)*
 - Analysis section for the artifact of the packet (drip coffee pot) to be filled out by the educator and students as a class.
- *Primary Source (Instructional Strategy 3)*
 - The accompanying primary source of the packet ("Life in the Basin" chapter from High Water, Low Water by Rev. Monsignor R.J. Gobeil, 1938.) with its relevant information.

CONTENTS OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

- *Primary Source Analysis (Instructional Strategy 3)*
 - Analysis section for the primary source of the packet ("Life in the Basin" chapter from High Water, Low Water by Rev. Monsignor R.J. Gobeil, 1938.) to be filled out by students in small groups.
- *Basin Communities Venn Diagram (Summative Assessment)*
 - Assessment section that has students create a concept map about the materials and information in this Artifact Packet.

FORMS OF REPRESENTATION:

Students will be applying information they have gained from the attached secondary source to analyze this packet's artifact and primary source.

BASIC SKILLS KNOWLEDGE:

Students will be using their basic skills in reading and writing to comprehend the attached reading and use it to complete the instructional strategies and summative assessment. They will need to use their critical thinking skills to provide evidence to defend their conclusions.

READING OUTLINE (INFORMATION NOT EXPLICITLY STATED IN BOLDFACE; VOCAB UNDERLINED)

1. Settlement in the Basin

- a. Native Americans lived in semi-permanent camps throughout the swamp and along its natural levees.
 - i. **Moved seasonally, living in the swamp where the water levels were complementary to their lifestyle of fishing or hunter/gathering.**
 - ii. **There is evidence that suggests some natives did grow small subsistence crops in the higher parts of the swamp.**
- b. By 1700, French colonists began establishing small, permanent residences along the Basin's outer bayous.
 - i. Acadian immigrants helped develop these small bayou communities.
 - 1. The Acadians first began arriving in Louisiana after 1764 and quickly grew Louisiana's economy and trade.
 - 2. They traveled across the Basin, **entering the swamp via Bayou Plaquemine, and many settled along Bayou Teche and the prairies to the west.**
 - 3. These new settlers farmed cash crops, raised livestock--**such as cattle**--or fished in the many bayous.
- c. In the mid-1800s, the heart of the swamp saw its first permanent settlers.
 - i. Sugar planters looking for more real estate moved into the Basin's interior.
- d. After the Civil War, the sugar industry declined **and all production of it in the swamp ended.**
 - i. **This was due to destroyed levees from the war and the industries' change from enslaved labor to wage labor.**
- e. Those in the swamp turned to the growing lumber, fishing, and moss industries for work.
 - i. Many hoping to participate in these developing markets moved to the swamps at this time.
- f. By 1900, swamp communities flourished as people adapted to their surroundings and established distinct cultural traits and practices.

2. Importance of Natural Resources

- a. Due to limited farming space, people of the Basin always relied on its natural resources to survive.
- b. Post Civil War the swamp shifted to a non-agricultural-based-economy.
- c. By the 1870s, a seasonal harvest of the basin's natural resources, such as fish, waterfowl, shellfish, turtles, frogs, Spanish moss, cypress, and fur animals emerged.

READING OUTLINE (INFORMATION NOT EXPLICITLY STATED IN BOLDFACE; VOCAB UNDERLINED)

- i. As a result, those living in the swamp relied on seasonal water level changes and moved onto houseboats.
- 3. Houseboats also known as camp boats were optimal residences in the Atchafalaya Basin
 - a. Their mobility provided flexibility for many fishers.
 - i. Allowed them to set up their home next to their fishing spot.
 - b. Most houseboats were built on barges made of cypress wood, an abundant resource at the time.
 - i. Cypress was a valuable material that could withstand the heat and humidity of Louisiana swamps
 - c. A houseboat could be as small as a single room or as large as a two-bedroom home with a combined living room and kitchen.
 - d. They were usually settled in a community of houseboats, but some also lived remotely in the heart of the swamp.
 - i. Those in a houseboat community used pirogues or floating rafts that acted as sidewalks to visit each other
 - ii. In bad weather, they tied the houseboats together to buffer the winds
 - iii. These communities of swampers were made up of trappers, hunters, moss pickers, fishers, and their families.
- 4. Not all swamp communities floated
 - a. Some were settled on high grounds in the swamp. like Bayou Chene, and included permanent structures that were used as homes, stores, schools, and churches.
 - b. Atchafalaya Station, another Basin town with buildings on the high ground, also had a railroad stop that connected it with Lafayette and Baton Rouge
- 5. Trade
 - a. With the invention of the internal combustion engine in 1907, local traders were able to use small powerboats, like the putt-putt to transport goods around the area.
 - b. Larger powerboats, called fish boats or grocery boats, allowed fishers to sell or **trade** their goods for other essentials for their household.
 - i. Such as ammunition, coffee, canned milk, cloth, and other food staples like beans, flour, sugar, and **fruit**

READING OUTLINE (INFORMATION NOT EXPLICITLY STATED IN BOLDFACE; VOCAB UNDERLINED)

6. Medicine

a. **There were no professional medical doctors in the swamp**

- i. Traiteurs in Cajun communities combined Catholic practices with holistic medicines to heal ailments
- ii. Swampers were required to tow their houseboat to nearby towns, like the pit in Morgan City, to see a doctor or be assisted by a midwife for childbirth
- iii. **Occasionally, doctors from New Iberia or Plaquemine would make house calls to basin communities**

7. Ethnicities

- a. Those living in the swamp were of various ethnicities
- b. In Bayou Chene most people spoke English and come from English, Irish, and other white Anglo ancestry
- c. Cajun culture thrived in places like Myette Point and Bayou Pigeon
 - i. They were known for their french dialect, Catholic practices, and music created with the accordion or fiddle.
- d. Communities of Color formed around the end of the Civil War and were located closer to the Basin's outskirts. **Nearer to Bayou Grosse Tete.**

8. The Decline

- a. Atchafalaya Basin living declined after 1927 when a disastrous flood hit the lower Mississippi River valley
- b. Waters rose above the levees and displaced more than 700,000 people, including those in the swamp
- c. After the flood, Congress passed the Flood Control Act of 1928, which turned the basin into a spillway
 - i. This was to reduce future flooding by directing Mississippi River water into the swamp
 - ii. Additionally, new levees were built on either side of the swamp
 1. Made it harder to enter and exit the swamp
 - iii. The Mississippi river waters brought sand and silt into the swamp and filled in its natural lakes and bayous.
 1. Fishers found it harder to survive in the changing landscape; **lost prime fishing spots**
- d. By 1950, most of the families had moved out of the swamp.
- f. The houseboats in the swamp today are used as hunting or fishing camps.

GLOSSARY

Barge

- A flat-bottomed, buoyant base for houseboats. A powerboat could attach a towline to a houseboat's barge in order to move it.

Fishboat

- Boats that allowed Basin tradesmen to sell their products (like fish or furs) and to buy supplies (like groceries or cloth). Sometimes called grocery boats.

Houseboat

- A boat built atop a barge to be used as a home for people living in the inland swamps of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

Putt-putt boat

- Nickname given to the small powerboats used by Atchafalaya Basin residents because of the "putt-putt" sound made by the internal combustion engine.

Spillway

- A structure or passageway used to safely control and release floodways from one area to another.

Traiteur

- A person who uses their faith combined with holistic medicines to heal ailments like disease or wounds. Their most common method involves the laying on of hands.

READING ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWER KEY

1. How were Basin communities different compared to traditional neighborhoods or towns? How did the people of these swamp towns adapt to their surroundings? What were some unique characteristics?

- ***They were surrounded by water on highland in the swamp or on houseboats.***
 - ***Required the use of boats to travel as there were no roads***
 - ***Floating houses on barges***
- ***Didn't rely on western medicine; no doctors; Cajun communities used traiteurs***
- ***Purchased goods from fish boats or grocery boats instead of going to the store***
- ***No farms = relied on fishing and other natural resources***
 - ***Sold or traded their catch for household goods***
- ***Unique occupations: swampers or loggers, hunters, moss pickers, fishers, and trappers***

2. Considering how the communities of the Basin developed over time, identify two instances of cause and effect. Example: Cause - Need for new land to grow sugarcane; Effect - Planters establish the first permanent residences in the heart of the swamp.

- ***Cause - Lumber, moss, and fishing industries boomed at the end of the nineteenth century; Effect - Many pioneers and laborers moved to Atchafalaya Basin for work***
- ***Cause - Growth of the fishing industry; Effect - Fishers and their families settle on houseboats to optimize mobility***
- ***Cause - Population and industry in the swamp began to rise; Effect - Fish boats or grocery boats that acted as traders, merchants, and mail carriers emerged***
- ***Cause - 1927 Flood; Effect - Basin is transformed into the Mississippi River Spillway***
- ***Cause - Spillway created to prevent further flooding; Effect - Changed life in the Basin forcing people to leave***

ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

- Description
 - Drip coffee pots were essential items for a home in a houseboat community. The coffee produced was strong and bitter, ideal for the people of the Basin swamp towns. After a long day of work, one house would make coffee and invite the community to sit on their porch and share it. The coffee took a lot longer to make using a drip coffee pot, so it became a way to gather and spend some time with your community. To make a pot of coffee using a drip coffee pot, you first placed a filter in the topmost cup and filled it with ground coffee beans. Next, boiling water was poured over the grounds and left to steep. Finally, fresh coffee dripped from the cup and into the kettle.
 - This drip coffee pot is made of metal and coated in white enamel that makes it easy to keep clean and sanitary. Enamelware became popular in the 19th century.
- Specifications:
 - Height - 9 1/2 inches
 - Width - 5 inches
- Citation

Ophelia Johnson. Jug, Clay. IM.2001.011.01. Iberville Museum, Plaquemine, Louisiana.

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS: DOCUMENT ANSWER KEY

The information given in sections I-IV is definite answers. Sections V-IX can be answered in numerous ways. The information given in that section is just a guide for interpretation.

- I. Who used it and what was it used for? ***Swamper communities; recreational and comfort;***
 - II. What is the historical context of the artifact? How does it connect to the Basin?
 - ***Used in Basin to bring the communities together after long working hours of logging or fishing***
 - III. What material is it made from? ***metal and white enamel coating***
 - IV. What can you conclude about the technology of the time?
 - ***Need for efficiency in simple objects. i.e. enamel coating keeping metalware cleaner***
 - ***Comparing the way drip coffee pots work to a modern coffee maker***
 - V. What can you learn from this artifact that you might not learn elsewhere?
 - ***Now you can make coffee faster but the act of meeting for coffee has stayed consist***
 - ***The importance of community for those living in the Basin***
 - VI. What other types of sources could you use to better understand the artifact?
 - ***Journals from someone recording their day when they gathered for coffee***
 - ***Advertisement for a Drip Coffee Pot***
 - ***Oral History from a swamper***
- Secondary
- ***Essays written on the lives of those in the Basin***
 - ***Other sources about enamel coffee pots***

ABOUT THE PRIMARY SOURCE

Please see the Attachments section for a copy of the primary source.

This lesson uses a chapter from Rev. Monsignor R. J. Gobeil's memoir *High Water, Low Water* in which he discusses "Life in the Basin" as a primary source to discuss and review communities in the swamp.

Rev. Monsignor R. J. Gobeil spent ten years as a missionary priest in the lower Atchafalaya Basin. In 1938 he was assigned to the chapel in Bayou Chene, which was estimated to reach about 1,000 people and had not had a priest in many years. Gobeil set up his headquarters in Charenton, LA, and secured a small cabin cruiser to use as transportation and home while in the swamps. He worked here until 1948, when he was reassigned to Patterson, LA.

[Gobeil, R.J. "Life in the Basin" in *High Water, Low Water*, 8-12. Printed by author, 1974.]

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS: DOCUMENT ANSWER KEY

The information given in sections I-VI are definite answers (minus III. and V.). Sections VI-XI can be answered in numerous ways. The information given in that section is just a guide for interpretation.

- I. What kind of document is it? **Journal/Diary entry**
- II. Who created the document? **Rev. Monsignor R. J. Gobeil**
- III. Who read or received it? **Anyone interested in swamp life or the work of Gobeil**
- IV. When was it created? **1974**
- V. Where is it from? **Lower Atchafalaya Basin; Louisiana; Bayou Chene**
- VI. What is the purpose of this source? Is it to persuade, to inform, communicate, etc.? **Inform**
- VII. Are there any words, phrases, or people that you don't recognize? What information can you infer from the source?
- VIII. Describe the document in your own words. **Description of life in the Atchafalaya Swamp, starting in 1938.**
- IX. What is the historical context of this document? **Way of life for those living in the swamp post-1927 Flood**
- X. How does this source connect to bayou communities in the Basin? **Presents a focus on how those lived**
- XI. What other types of sources could you use to help you understand this one?
Additional memoirs or oral histories from residents or fish boat drivers; Newspaper articles from the time period referring to the flood, building of the levees, or fish market prices

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: COMPARE AND CONTRAST BASIN COMMUNITIES ANSWER KEY

All answers depend on individual students' abilities to comprehend and reiterate information from the reading and analyses.

- Double Venn Diagram: Basin Communities
 - Circle A: Before the 20th Century
 - *3 points listed using information from the reading*
 - Circle B: During the 20th Century
 - *3 points listed using information from the reading*
 - Circle AB:
 - *2 points of overlapping information*
- Review as a class
- Triple Venn Diagram: Basin Communities and You
 - Circle A: Before the 20th Century
 - *5 points listed using information from the reading and class review*
 - Circle B: During the 20th Century
 - *5 points listed using information from the reading and class review*
 - Circle C: Your Life in the 21st Century
 - *5 points listed using information from the reading and class review*
 - Circle AB:
 - *2 points of overlapping information.*
 - Circle BC:
 - *2 points of overlapping information*
 - Circle CA:
 - *2 points of overlapping information*
 - Circle ABC:
 - *1 point of overlapping information*

Please see the Summative Assessment section and grading rubric in the Attachments section for more information.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

1. READING & ASSESSMENT

Materials

- Artifact Packet: Communities in the Swamp (see Attachments)
- Reading Outline (see Content Knowledge)
- Reading Assessment Questions and Answer Key (see Content Knowledge)

Directions

1. Students will be given their own copy of the Artifact Packet: Communities in the Swamp. They will keep this for the duration of the lesson.
2. The educator will provide the students with the lesson's vocabulary words. Students will then be instructed to read the reading provided in the Packet. They will do this on their own in the classroom. The reading provides a brief overview of the early settlement of the Atchafalaya, way of life in Basin communities, different ethnicities that lived in the swamp, and how the 1927 flood changed the swamp.
3. After completing the reading, students will use their newly learned information to individually answer the assessment questions. These answers should be based solely on the information given in the reading and students are encouraged to give specific examples or quotations.
4. The reading and students' answers will be discussed as a class to ensure that students understand the historical value and context of the people of the Atchafalaya Basin. Discussion will be led by the following compelling and supporting questions:
 - a. How did people live and thrive in the Atchafalaya Basin at the turn of the twentieth century?
 - i. What was life like for people living in the Basin before and during the twentieth century?
 - ii. Why were houseboat communities an essential of living in the Atchafalaya's inland swamps and bayous?
 - iii. How did those in basin communities adapt to their environment?
 - iv. How did the Flood of 1927 change Basin living?
5. The reading and each students' responses will be kept accessible by students for the duration of the lesson. They will need it in order to analyze the artifact, primary source, and complete the summative assessment.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)**2. ARTIFACT ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION*****Materials***

- Artifact Packet: Communities in the Swamp; “About the Artifact” section
- Artifact Analysis Answer Key (see Content Knowledge)
- Artifact Photograph - Drip Coffee Pot (see Attachments)

Directions

1. Using their Artifact Packet, students will turn to the “About the Artifact” section. They will be instructed to read over the materials but to wait to fill out the analysis section as a class.
2. The educator will present the picture of the artifact (Drip Coffee Pot) on a projector visible to the entire class. Students will be given several minutes to silently observe the artifact’s picture and description. This ensures that students are able to see the artifact in full detail to better assess its appearance and materials before analysis.
3. As a class, the educator will assist students in filling out the artifact analysis section of the Artifact Packet. To successfully complete this analysis, students will need to access prior knowledge from Instructional Strategy 1. The educator must also emphasize that students use their critical thinking skills to infer information using the artifact’s picture, description, and citation.
4. Discussion will focus on:
 - a. The artifact’s purpose.
 - b. The artifact’s historical context.
 - c. The artifact’s connection to the overall theme of people in the Atchafalaya Basin.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

3. PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Materials

- Artifact Packet: Communities in the Swamp; “Primary Source” section
- Primary Source: “Life in the Basin” chapter from *High Water, Low Water* by Rev. Monsignor R.J. Gobeil, 1974. (see Attachments)
- Primary Source Analysis: Document Answer Key (see Content Knowledge)

Directions

1. Students will be divided into groups of 2 to 4 individuals and turn to the “Primary Source” section of their Artifact Packet. The educator will present the primary source is supplied in their packet. Students will be given several minutes of silent reading to fully assess the source and its information or the educator may read through the primary source with the class.
2. As a group or individually, students will work to fill out the “Primary Source Analysis” section. They will need to access prior information learned from Instructional Strategies 1 and 2 as well as critical thinking skills to infer information using the primary source and its citation. It is essential that students work in small groups to compare and contrast their information from the previous Instructional Strategies.
3. After students have completed their analyses, the educator will review this section as a class. It is recommended that the educator takes turns asking each group or students for their specific answer to provide a variety of perspectives.
4. Discussion will focus on:
 - a. How the primary source connects to the overall theme of communities in the Atchafalaya Basin.
 - b. The evidence students used to complete their analyses.

SUMMATIVE AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT**COMPARE AND CONTRAST BASIN COMMUNITIES**

D4.2.6-8. Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

In this Artifact Packet, you have learned about life in the Atchafalaya Basin's communities during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. On your own, fill out the Venn diagram below comparing and contrasting settlements in the swamp prior to 1900 and post-1900. You may use the packet as a reference. Label each circle and include at least 3 points in each circle and 2 in the overlap.

Materials

- Artifact Packet: Communities in the Swamp; "Compare and Contrast Basin Communities" section.
- Summative Assessment Grading Rubric (see Attachments)

Directions

1. *Students will turn to the "Compare and Contrast Basin Communities" section of their Artifact Packets.*
2. *Following the instructions given in the packet, students will apply all of their previous knowledge and analyses surrounding communities of the bayous in the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area. They will first fill in the double Venn diagram with one circle about Basin communities before the twentieth century, and the other circle during the twentieth century. They will complete this section on their own.*
3. *Next, the educator is to review the first Venn diagram with the class.*
4. *Then students will combine their information from their first diagram and the class review to complete the triple diagram, which adds a circle to compare and contrast their own lives in the twenty-first century. This allows students to think collectively about the lives of Basin communities and how they have adapted and changed over time. It also allows them to compare different experiences and viewpoints by combining information.*
5. *Presentations are optional to combine and gather more information.*

REFERENCES

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Gobeil, R.J. "Life in the Basin" in *High Water, Low Water*, 8-12. Printed by author, 1974.

Delahoussaye, Jim. "Fishboat Commerce." *Riverlogue*. February 2009.
<https://riverlogue.blogspot.com/2009/02/fishboat-commerce.html>

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LeGrange, Clifford J. "Chapter 29: 1915-1935 - Movement into the Heart of the Basin." In *Heritage of the Atchafalaya: A Natural and Cultural History of the Atchafalaya Basin*, 83-86. Printed by author, 2017.

LeGrange, Clifford J. "Chapter 38: Houseboats and Camp boats of the Atchafalaya." In *Heritage of the Atchafalaya: A Natural and Cultural History of the Atchafalaya Basin*, 125-126. Printed by author, 2017.

Artifact:

Ophelia Johnson. Jug, Clay. IM.2001.011.01. Iberville Museum, Plaquemine, Louisiana.

ATTACHMENTS



ATTACHMENTS**PRIMARY SOURCE****"LIFE IN THE BASIN" CHAPTER FROM HIGH WATER, LOW WATER BY REV. MONSIGNOR R.J. GOBEIL, 1974.**

The large white space on the map of Louisiana aroused little curiosity in the residents of the State, except for those who had an interest in this wilderness. Could it have been otherwise? No roads, no towns, only swamps without even an indication of principal waters. Such was the situation with the Basin until it became newsworthy as a spillway for the Mississippi River.

I have already indicated that people lived in this extensive area to be included as well as enclosed by the proposed twin levees. How was the life of these people affected by this ambitious project? I write for the year 1938, when the mode of life was still the same, presumably, as in the past. Changes there were from Civil War days, but no substantial changes.

In all the Basin, not a doctor of medicine or a registered nurse could be found. A midwife and a faith healer, yes...However, with the advent of the gasoline motor, delivery of babies and serious ailments were generally taken care of by a physician outside the Basin. There was no law enforcement officer, not even a Justice of the Peace in the territory, I make hold to say that in this area the crime rate was one of the lowest in the nation. These people of the wilderness had laws, effective laws unwritten though they were...

The Basin inhabitants had no saloons, dance halls, theaters, not even a place for some form of group entertainment. With the advent of the radio, their sole source of distraction from daily toil was this marvelous invention, which brought to them knowledge of world events. I would often "get the news" from my isolated parishioners since I used my boat radio sparingly to conserve the battery power of the boat...

ATTACHMENTS**PRIMARY SOURCE (CONTINUED)**

A large percentage of the people living in the Lower Basin were illiterate. The children were provided with three one-room school houses for a limited elementary education, one in Bayou Chene, another at Butte LaRose, and a third at Atchafalaya Station. The Parish School Board provided boat transportation for the children to attend class. You must understand that, with rare exceptions, a visit to one's neighbor necessitated the use of a boat. In this regard, a citizen of Venice, Italy would have felt perfectly at home....

An inquiry frequently addressed to me, by townspeople, was "Father, what do your people do to make a living?"

The main industry was fishing. The fish harvested from the hoop nets and fish lines (catfish, gaspergoo, buffalo) were confined to a live box kept there until the arrival of the fish boat operating from outside the Basin. About three times a week, the fish boat made its rounds. The live fish were weighed, and the current price per pound was paid to the producer.

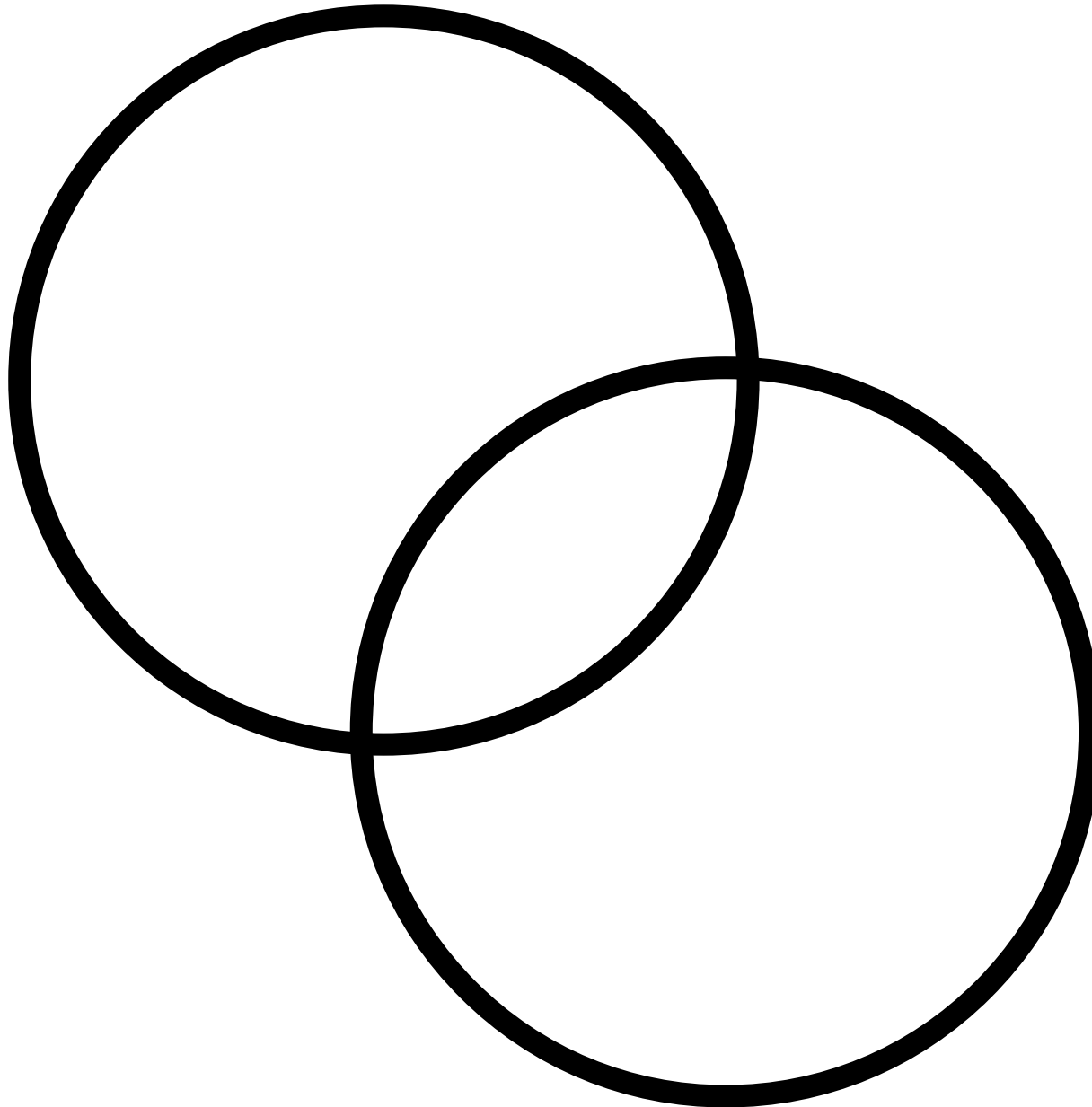
The fish boats carried provisions more or less similar to a general merchandise store. With the ready cash paid for the fish catch, the fisherman bought needed supplies. The fish boat dealers also served as unofficial mail carriers and would take orders from mail catalogs. No need for the residents to go outside the Basin.

High water presented no problem for those living in houseboats, a raft of high floating logs provided a Noah's Ark for those who raised chickens. After the flood, when the raft rested on dry ground, the chickens were reluctant to leave the raft where they had been fed for a considerable length of time.

The houseboat dwellers, indeed, were not disturbed with the advent of high water, which every year, exceeded the 1927 disastrous flood. High water merely meant a change in living habits...

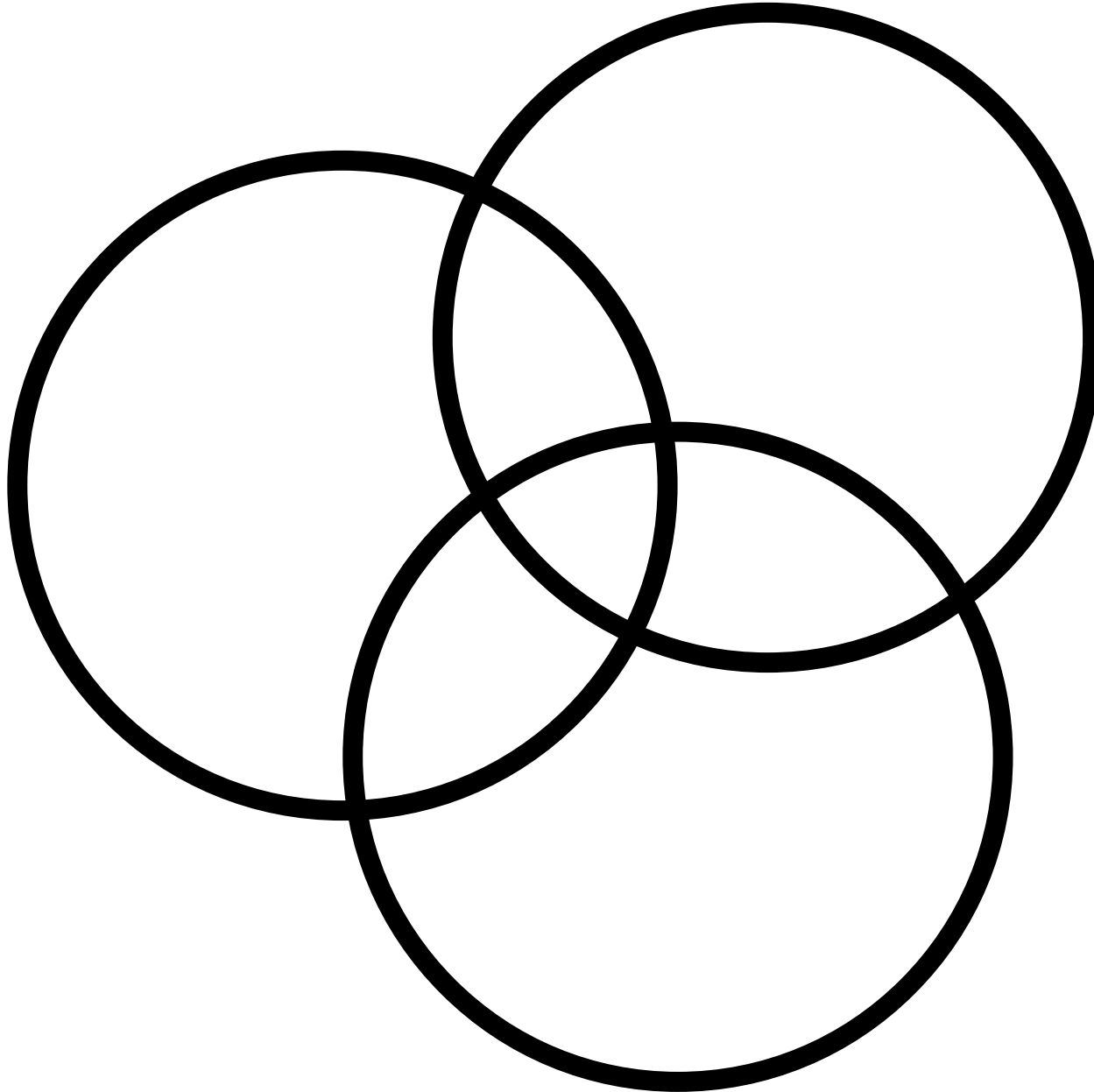
ATTACHMENTS

VENN DIAGRAMS



ATTACHMENTS

VENN DIAGRAMS



ATTACHMENTS

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT GRADING RUBRIC			
COMPARE AND CONTRAST BASIN COMMUNITIES			
	5	3	1
Double Venn Diagram Contents	Each circle of the Venn diagram contains 3 points and 2 in the overlap.	Each circle of the Venn diagram contains only 2 points and 1 in the overlap.	Each circle of the venn diagram contains less than 2 points and none in the overlap.
Triple Venn Diagram Contents	Each circle of the Venn diagram contains 5 points, 3 in the overlap, and 1 in the center.	Each circle of the Venn diagram contains only 3-4 points, 2 in the overlap, and 1 in the center.	Each circle of the Venn diagram contains less than 3 points, less than 2 in the overlap, and none in the center.
Critical Thinking	Each point in any section of the Venn diagram is in a logical placement, is well thought out, and can be backed by evidence.	Most of the points in any section of the Venn diagram is in a logical placement, is well thought out, and can be backed by evidence.	Most of the points in any section of the Venn diagram are not in a logical position, are not well thought, and are lacking evidence.
Organization and Neatness	Each circle of the Venn diagram is correctly labeled and is neat and organized.	Each circle of the Venn diagram is correctly labeled but is lacking in neatness and organization.	Venn diagram is not correctly labeled and is lacking in neatness and organization.