



## DICIPLINE SPECIFIC GUIDING QUESTIONS

Developed for Project REACH  
by

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As architectural, archeological and historical discoveries are uncovered during the restoration of the 1828 Rice House and 1833 Looney Tavern a corresponding layer of educational opportunities continues to emerge revealing enormous educational potential across the academic and age spectrum. These opportunities are as diverse and as exciting as are the findings themselves. This multiplicity of discoveries addresses the central theme of Project REACH – *telling us about us*. These discoveries can be utilized to engage site visitors in linking the past to the present. As participants are drawn into the past they will be challenged to make comparisons to the present. From such exploration learning takes place.

The study of cultural heritage embraces shared beliefs and practices of a group of people identifying the particular place where they lived and the time to which they belonged. Beliefs, customs, and practices of past years are illusive and not easily categorized. Cultural changes evolve slowly and are not easily identified over the course of time. The present twenty-first century world is culturally removed from the nineteenth century past; only through a multi-faceted exploration can the evolution of such changes be understood.

Project REACH sites provide exceptional opportunities for the study of early Arkansas cultural heritage. Continuous occupation by interconnected founding families provides a rare opportunity to study both Anglo American and African American cultural evolution in a single rural agriculture-based community in northern Randolph County, Arkansas

Emerging discoveries have application for the many academic disciplines stressed in twenty-first century learning: history, cultural anthropology, sociology, psychology, music, art, literature, economics, business, criminal justice, biology and allied health, dietetics, criminal justice, and certainly, local heritage. Their complexities invite the crossing of disciplinary lines to consider how the parts fit the whole. The questions are endless; they will be constantly emerging as new aspects of the sites' histories are uncovered or unearthed yielding new ways to tie the knowledge gained to the twenty-first century.

### THEME QUESTIONS FOSTERING CRITICAL THINKING

Using authentic early-nineteenth century settlement sites students and visitors alike will have the opportunity to explore the effects of cultural changes as evidenced in present-day society. Knowledge of how cultural evolution has affected the various educational disciplines of the twenty-first century can strengthen the understanding of the content of that discipline. The following discipline-specific questions are presented as a stimulus for using Project REACH as a teaching resource. Future educational activities will generate additional contributions.

Key theme questions that can assist in identifying and analyzing cultural comparisons are:

*What issues are similar to ones today?*

*How did people of the nineteenth century respond to issues and events that might inform how we respond to similar issues and events in our own lives?*

*Why is learning about people in the past important?*

## SUGGESTED DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The following suggested discipline-specific questions are not intended to be definitive but rather to serve as a stimulus for how the Project REACH sites can be utilized in teaching a variety of subjects and engaging students/participants in linking past and present.

### LOCAL COMMUNITY HERITAGE

What is a community?

What did community mean then and now?

How did people at this site express and cultivate (the) community?

Why was community important then and today?

What can you do to promote a healthy community?

What is/was the role of the individual in a community?

What was (is) the role of storytelling, folklore and myths in this community and yours?

Compare past and present stories, folklore and myths.

What do popular forms of entertainment tell us about a place and time? Use examples from this site and your own society.

What is material culture and how does it influence us? Use examples from this site and your own life.

### CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY/SOCIOLOGY

Compare class structure, mobility and class interaction at this site with your own society. Evaluate the differences. What can you learn from this that is important in your life?

What were sources of power in this society? Compare with your own society.

What values seemed important in this society, in your own, which are more appealing?

Compare gender roles with this site and your own society and assess the differences. What values underlie these differences?

Compare the role of religion in this society with your own.

Compare typical family dynamics in this society with typical dynamics in your own society.

Can we truly speak of typical family dynamic today? What is your evidence?

What was the role of the elderly in this society compared to our own?

Compare education in this society with your own.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of each model?  
What might we learn from their model that might improve our own?

Compare how this group responded to cultural diversity contrasted with your present-day society.

Who were in and out groups to the people at these sites and in your own society?  
How did people here respond to those in each group?  
How does your society respond to those in each group?

How did technology impact the lifestyle of the people at this site and people of this area today?

### ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Compare trading patterns of people at this site with those living there today. What caused the changes and what are the consequences?

Compare the interplay between the national and the local economy then and now.

Explain how needs, wants and scarcity influenced the economic decision-making of people at this site then and today.

Using data from this site compare life in a pre-industrial life with an industrial life in post-industrial economies.

Compare entrepreneurship then and now.

Compare farming at this site with farming in the region today. What might farmers in each era learn from the other?

How has the evolution of the U.S. economy since the 1830's impacted our lives and life styles?

What have we gained and what have we lost?  
What are the strengths and weaknesses of each economy?

Using this site as an example, explain how should society's resources be distributed--needs, desert, potential for use-- in a world of limited resources and unlimited wants?

Based on an analysis of this site, how should society's burdens be distributed--ability to pay, benefits/use, earned exemptions?

### HISTORY

Architecture provides a physical "window" into a society. The style, material and purpose can tell a lot about the builders' society. What does the architecture at these sites tell us about the builders?

Key themes in U.S. history are:

- The search for economic opportunity. How do these sites exemplify that search?
- The search for social justice. How do these sites exemplify that search?
- The search for freedom. How do these sites exemplify that search?
- The attempt to balance community with individual liberty. How does this site exemplify that effort? What do you think is an appropriate balance and why? What might be done to move contemporary society towards the balance you favor?

What might be identified as core U.S. values and how do these sites express them?

History is the study of the interplay between continuity and change.

- How do these sites reveal both?
- Why is knowing about the interplay of continuity and change important?
- What historic trends or patterns can be found here that continue to operate in the region today?

What historic patterns of life here no longer exist? What accounts for their demise?

How are these sites microcosms of national changes in the U.S. since 1820?

What does this site suggest about how majority/dominant groups in the U.S. have dealt with people who are different from the majority?

Do we use those patterns of response today?  
Do you approve of these patterns? Why, why not?

By studying the people who lived here almost 200 years ago, what can we find of value that might be useful in guiding our country and our lives today?

How did the people at this site deal with conflict? What can we learn, if anything, from their experiences in this realm?

What did security mean to the people at this site? How did they try to achieve security? What might we learn from their efforts?

The Turner thesis suggested that the presence of a frontier had a profound impact on the U.S. Use these sites to support or debunk the Turner thesis.

## GEOGRAPHY

A key theme in geography is considering what is the appropriate relationship between people and nature? How would the people who lived at these sites, you and other U.S. residents and non-U.S. residents answer that question today? What can we learn by exploring these responses?

Are people more or less aware of their environment today than they were when people lived at these sites? What are the implications if there are different levels or types of awareness?

Region is basic concept of geography. What did 'region' mean to the people living at

these sites? What does it mean to people living in the area today? Why is understanding the concept of region important to you?

The movement of people, goods and ideas is a powerful theme in geography. How did these movements impact the people who founded these sites? How might this theme be useful in studying this site and the world you live in?

### POLITICAL SCIENCE

What do these sites suggest about how should conflicts be handled? What do you think?

What do these sites suggest about what is an appropriate balance between dissent and consensus? What do you think?

What do these sites suggest about what is the appropriate role and scope of government? What do you think?

What would the people who lived here say is the responsibility of government regarding maintaining a minimal standard of living, health and safety, education, employment, income, etc.? What do you think about this issue and why?

Based on your analysis of these sites should government be an agent of social change?

What would the people who lived here say about how should governmental and societal decisions be made? What do you think?

What would the people who lived here say about how should society's priorities be determined? What do you think?

At the time people lived here what was a citizen and their rights and responsibilities? What are they in our society today?

What is a civil society and did these people have one?

How might the shift from a society where the majority of people lived relatively isolated on rural farms to living in urban environments, influence power distributions in a federal form of government?

What are some salient changes in the operation of the U.S. political system since this site was settled and assess their consequences.

### DIETETICS

Evaluate the diet of the people who lived at this site.

Why might diets today have the potential to be both more and less healthy than the diet of the people who lived here?

How might the diet and effort needed to produce it impact people who lived here?

What are the costs and benefits of food preservation technology today compared with those used by the people who lived here?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of food cultivation today compared to those used at these sites?

## MUSIC

Compare the role of music played at these sites with the role of music in society today?

What were some of the themes expressed in music played at these sites? Compare those themes to themes in music today. What do those themes tell us about each society?

## BIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH

What knowledge of biology did people at these sites need and how did they use that knowledge?

Are average people today as knowledgeable about biology as the people who lived here? Defend your position.

How might disease and mortality patterns have impacted the society and values of the people who lived here? Pay particular attention to average life expectancy of women and children. How might disease and mortality patterns today impact our values and society?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the changes in medical technology in the years since people lived here?

Compare technology for creating desirable plant and animal characteristics today and at the time these sites were settled. What might be some positive and negative results of those changes?

How have climate changes since the settlement of this site impacted the biological systems of the area?

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What did "justice" mean to the people who lived here?

Compare their approach to corrections to those used today?

Compare the legal issues facing the people who lived here to those facing residents of the region today.

How might having a strong community network where people knew each other impact the crime rate? Use contemporary theories of criminology to explain your answer.

Compare approaches to corrections used by the people who lived here to correctional models today.

Examine court records from the time period of this site and compare them to court records today. What caught your attention and why?

## LITERATURE

How would the people who lived here respond to the following questions and how would have some of the world's greatest authors answered them:

A. What is the appropriate relationship between people and nature?

B. What is the good life?

C. What is moral?

D. What are the responsibilities of being human?

E. Do the ends justify the means?

F. What is a good society?

G. What should be produced, by whom, and how should it be distributed?

### FORENSIC SCIENCE

Please contact Project REACH staff to discuss their artifact collection and how it might be used to teach your discipline. New items are being found frequently.

### ARCHEOLOGY

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### DEMONSTRATING UNDERSTANDING AND MASTERY

Students/participants may demonstrate their understanding and mastery of these content areas through a variety of techniques including, but not limited to:

- art
- writing
- oral communication
- public speaking and presentations
- web page construction
- photography –digital or traditional
- PowerPoint presentations
- video creation
- living history re-enactments
- role plays of period people

### THEME QUESTIONS FOR DEBRIEFING

In debriefing students/participants working with any of the issues listed above the following are suggested questions:

*What?* –What have we learned from studying this topic?

*So What?* - Why is knowing what we learned important?

*Now what?* – What do you intend to do with this knowledge?