In your previous essay, you looked at the natural and economic forces that shape life in your region. Of course, life isn’t all biology and business. As people (and not just carbon compounds), we are also profoundly influenced by our region’s culture: its history, traditions, popular entertainments, and modes of communication. In this **3-4 page** essay, you will explore a particular aspect of your region’s history or culture, seeking to understand either its origin (its causes) or its later influence (its effects). You will use at least **3** sources, **1** of which must be a database source or library book (not a web page).

It is impossible to tell the whole history of a region or to discuss every aspect of its culture in such a short essay. For this reason, your paper will need to have a narrow focus; you should discuss in detail **one** aspect of your region’s history or culture. You might analyze, for instance, a particular Civil War battle fought in your region, looking at either the reasons why this battle had to be fought at this exact location at this exact time (its causes) or the ways in which this battle affected your region’s immediate or long-term future (its effects); or perhaps your town has a yearly parade/pageant that, it occurs to you now, might be worth investigating; or maybe you’ve heard of a peculiar “secret” ceremony that’s piqued your interest (Chi Burning?) However you elect to proceed, I would encourage you to cast a wide net at first as you attempt to identify a manageable (and interesting) topic; feel free, as before, to talk to parents, grandparents, pastors, friends, etc., as you work to generate ideas.

I will expect your essay to contain the following elements:

1. **Introductory paragraph.** Introduce your readers to your topic by providing necessary background information. Show readers why they should care about your topic; display why it is interesting (bizarre, curious, odd) or important (its impact on people’s lives).

2. **Thesis.** At the end of your first paragraph, provide a thesis that concretely identifies the historical or cultural phenomenon you will be discussing and its principal causes or effects (e.g., “The closing of the Prince Edward County Schools as part of the early 1960s ‘Massive Resistance’ movement continues to haunt the Farmville community in ways both big and small.”

3. **Body.** The body of your paper should contain two basic sections, the organization of which will depend on whether your paper is focused primarily on the causes behind the historical/cultural event in question or on the effects that follow it.

Explanation: Clearly explain the aspect of history or culture you are analyzing (if we are to understand the causes or effects of your phenomenon, we must know precisely what it is). Be concrete, clear, factual, detailed, and exact; give specific examples and stories and provide any relevant quantitative data.

Causal Analysis: This section will comprise the bulk of your paper. You should identify at least **three** (not obvious or immediately apparent) possible causes **or** effects of your historical or cultural phenomenon. Each body paragraph should open with a topic sentence identifying a particular cause or effect. The body paragraph should then illustrate and support this cause or effect claim with convincingly interpreted data and examples. Provide transitions that logically connect your phenomenon to its causes or effects and these causes or effects to each other.

**4. Conclusion.** Remind your readers of the main point of your paper (in different words) and explain why it matters. Why are your ideas important? Why should readers care?

**5. Works Cited Page**. This should be in Chicago format (also, be sure to cite sources consistently throughout the paper and to employ accurate spelling and grammar).