

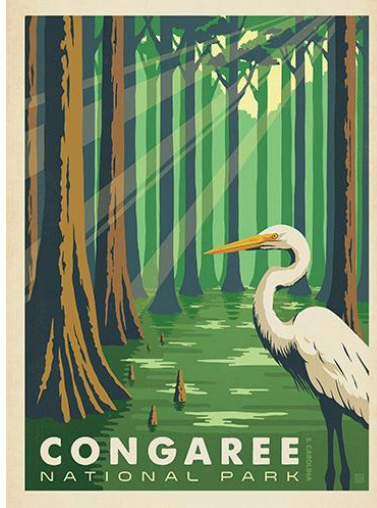
National Park Resource Review

Date of Excursion: Saturday, April 2

Final Draft Due Date: Tuesday, April 12

Length: At least 4 *full* pages, no more than 6

Final Grade: 20% (revision a possibility)



From [Anderson Design Group](#)

Assignment Description:

For this assignment, you will analyze how Congaree National Park interprets and/or manages one of its cultural, natural, wilderness, or historic resources. As a resource review, this assignment is meant to be not only *descriptive*, but also *evaluative*; in other words, you will both describe how Congaree interprets your chosen resource *and* evaluate how well CNP tells the story of that resource to visitors. Here are some of the central questions your analysis should answer:

- Why is it important that CNP interpret this particular resource?
- How does CNP currently interpret this resource, if at all?
- Are the current interpretive strategies for this resource effective? What makes them effective? How else could this resource be interpreted?
- What recommendations, if any, do you have for how CNP could interpret this resource?

Possible Topics to Evaluate:

- Indigenous history
- Insect life
- Floodplain ecology
- Champion trees
- Revolutionary or Civil War history
- African-American history
- Owls, red-bellied woodpeckers, or other birds
- Weather events, such as flooding
- History of logging
- Fireflies

- Reptilian or amphibian life
- History of farming, agriculture
- Women's history
- Wilderness resources
- History of park's founding
- “Nuisance” animals (wild hogs and armadillos)
- Mosquitos, snakes, or spiders
- Spanish history

Writing & Research Process:

1. **Planning:** Before heading to CNP on April 2, you should have a couple of broad topics in mind for this assignment. For example, you might know that you want to evaluate a wildlife resource or cultural resource before actually visiting the park. Head to CNP's official website, click on “Learn about the Park,” and take note of the particular resources and histories the park chooses to highlight. Feel free to choose a topic that in some way relates to your research paper topic.
2. **Gathering Evidence:** The “evidence” in this essay will come from your own observations of and experiences in the park. This means that you should take notes during our visit to Congaree. You are not expected to use any outside sources in this essay. However, feel free to cite from park brochures, the *Foundation Document*, park website, trail maps, trail signs, Visitor Center interpretive materials, or other texts that lend support to your chosen topic. Take photos of signs and other materials that relate to your topic; not only will these photos be useful for your research, but you might decide to include them in the paper itself. Let's say you decide to write about how the park interprets Native American history. During our trip to Congaree, you might take note of how the park's film interprets these histories. How does the Visitor Center interpret Native American history? Do any signs along the boardwalk educate visitors on how Native Americans used the land prior to European settlement?
3. **Synthesize, Evaluate:** In the days following our visit, you will need to make sense of and synthesize these interpretive materials as they relate to your topic. Here are some questions to consider after you have gathered observations in the field: What is most effective about how Congaree's interpretive materials narrate Native American history to visitors? What kind of history is Congaree telling about Native Americans? What kinds of perspectives or interpretive materials could add to the current narrative? Consider how signs, educational programs, Visitor Center displays, posters, reenactments, readings, outreach programs, invited speakers, new trail designs, interactive displays, technology, tours, or a tweaking of the rhetoric on current interpretive materials could transform the way your chosen topic gets narrated/experienced at the park. If you are perfectly satisfied with the way Congaree interprets your topic, then tell readers, specifically, what makes the current materials so effective.

4. **Draft:** After you have planned, gathered evidence, and synthesized your observations via pre-writing activities, you can begin the drafting process. Your site review should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
 - a. In the one-paragraph *introduction*, you should introduce your chosen topic/resource and provide a succinct, one- to two- sentence evaluative thesis statement. (We will discuss thesis statements in class prior to visiting the park.)
 - b. The *body* of your review should remain focused on your thesis statement. Each paragraph should both describe and evaluate how Congaree interprets your chosen resource via interpretive materials. Each body paragraph should include a topic sentence, evidence/observations from the park, and an evaluation of the evidence.
 - c. Your one- to two-paragraph *conclusion* summarizes how the park effectively interprets your chosen resource, remarks on some of the possible shortcomings, and offers solutions for how this resource could be interpreted in the future. Be very specific when it comes to your solutions. Simply saying that “more signs should be devoted to Native American history” is not specific enough. What should those signs look like? What should they say? Where should they be located? Etc.

5. **Edit & Revise:** This essay should go through a series of revisions. One round of edits is not enough. Instead, give yourself at least two days to review the essay on both a global (content, thesis development, organization) and local (grammar, spelling, sentence structure) level. We will not be conducting peer editing for this assignment in class, but I encourage you to workshop these papers with fellow classmates on your own time. Additionally, consider visiting the USC Writing Center, located in the Byrnes Building.

Misc.:

- Give this essay a unique title that relates to your topic. Do not bold or underline the title; simply center it.
- Make sure your last name and page number appear at the top right of every page (Ach 1).
- Follow MLA formatting for spacing, heading, font size, and font type. -2% for formatting issues.
- Please review the “Late Work Policy” in the syllabus.