STUDENT TEXTBOOK

GRADE 3 HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Early Alabama: Maps, People and Colonial Encounters

CHAPTER 4 | FIVE CORE LESSONS

Read first. Practice second. Review with a teacher.

INCLUDES

Vocabulary | Full readings | Worked examples | Review

Original Ahava instructional edition, 2026

How to use this book

This is the student reading book for one chapter of Grade 3. Read a full lesson before opening the matching day's workbook. Important vocabulary appears first; the reading explains the ideas; a worked example demonstrates how evidence or reasoning is used.

- Step 1: Read the chapter lesson and its vocabulary.
- Step 2: Study the example or visual explanation.
- Step 3: Answer the quick-check questions without looking at the teacher guide.
- Step 4: Complete the matching 12-question daily workbook PDF.
- Step 5: Ask a teacher to review your work, then revisit anything you missed.

Chapter lessons

- Day 1: Maps, Evidence, and Early Travel
- Day 2: Contact, Trade, and Different Perspectives
- Day 3: French Colonial Mobile and Forts
- Day 4: Environment, Economy, and Consequences
- Day 5: Early Alabama Historical Inquiry Review

Scope: This is a complete reading edition for the named chapter, not a complete Grade 3 school-year textbook. Use the separate teacher guide for model answers, differentiation and progress checks.

Lesson 1: Maps, Evidence, and Early Travel

Words to know

- route map: a map showing a path of travel
- legend: an explanation of map symbols
- scale: a way to compare map distance with real distance
- primary source: a record or object from the period being studied

Read and understand

A route map helps show where people traveled and which rivers, paths, or settlements they may have passed. A legend explains the symbols used for routes, rivers, or towns. A scale connects distance measured on paper with distance in the represented place. Not all historical maps are drawn to a reliable modern scale.

A map has an author, a date, and a purpose. An explorer may have drawn a route to report a journey, while a government might map land to support administration. The map’s blank spaces do not prove nobody lived there. Indigenous communities lived across the Southeast long before European expeditions.

European expeditions had multiple motives, including trade, wealth, claims to territory, and diplomatic or military power. Traveling long distances was difficult because of weather, navigation, unfamiliar terrain, disease, and supply needs. Different people on the same journey might experience it differently.

Two maps may disagree about a river path or a place name because the mapmakers had different information, purposes, languages, or dates. Students must write the disagreement and seek another source rather than simply choosing the nicer map.

Worked example

A 1700s map labels a river but omits a nearby village marked in a later record. You can observe the village is absent from the first map. You cannot conclude the village did not exist. Compare the map date, purpose, and independent records.

Check your understanding

- What does a route map show?
- Why record a map’s date?
- Why record its creator?

- Can a map alone prove every event occurred?
- Name one challenge of long-distance exploration.

Now open Grade 3 History and Social Studies, Chapter 4, Day 1 in the matching daily practice workbook. Explain your answers from this reading rather than guessing.

Lesson 2: Contact, Trade, and Different Perspectives

Words to know

- encounter: a meeting or interaction between people or communities
- trade: exchange of goods or services
- historical claim: a statement about the past that needs evidence
- corroboration: support from other, preferably independent, evidence

Read and understand

European settlers and Indigenous nations encountered one another through trade, diplomacy, conflict, military activity, and the use of land. These interactions were not the same everywhere or for every community. Indigenous nations had their own governments, histories, languages, and interests, and their descendants and nations continue today.

Trade can involve the exchange of food, animal skins, tools, textiles, or other goods. Different groups may view the same exchange differently depending on its value, fairness, and long-term effects. Disputes about land or authority can produce conflict, but the causes of a particular event require actual historical evidence.

A primary source could be a period letter, map, trade record, or archaeological artifact. It can show what its maker wrote or recorded but may omit other voices or exaggerate. Later historians compare multiple sources, including Indigenous perspectives and archaeological findings, to avoid accepting a one-sided narrative.

Corroboration means checking one claim against other relevant evidence. If two sources disagree, historians study who created them, when, for whom, and what independent facts can be verified. A balanced summary should acknowledge differences without pretending every claim has equal evidence.

Worked example

One period letter describes a meeting as peaceful while another recalls tension. Both are evidence about what their authors reported. A careful student writes, ’The accounts differ; more records are needed to understand the encounter,’ rather than inventing motives.

Check your understanding

- Define encounter in a historical setting.
- Name two types of interactions.
- What is a primary source?
- Give an example of a source’s limitation.
- Why compare Indigenous and European perspectives?

Now open Grade 3 History and Social Studies, Chapter 4, Day 2 in the matching daily practice workbook. Explain your answers from this reading rather than guessing.

Lesson 3: French Colonial Mobile and Forts

Words to know

- fort: a fortified place used for defense and control
- colonial settlement: a settlement established under an outside power's colonial government
- navigable: suitable for travel by a boat or ship
- diplomacy: relations and negotiations between groups

Read and understand

The region that became Alabama had Indigenous history long before the French established colonial communities. In 1702, French settlers established the early Mobile settlement at Twenty-Seven Mile Bluff on the Mobile River. After flooding and other difficulties, the settlement moved to the present Mobile area in the early 1710s. The 1702 date does not describe the founding of Alabama itself.

In 1717 the French established Fort Toulouse in the area near the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, in association with the Alibamu people. The fort was a location for political negotiations and trade, as well as a military outpost. Its position near waterways helped movement of people and goods. The arrangement involved Indigenous decision-making, not merely a French action in empty land.

In 1723 the French built Fort Conde in Mobile, replacing an earlier fort. Its defensive structure was significant to the colonial settlement, though forts can also serve administrative, commercial, and political purposes. Historic fort remains and reconstructions are not identical: museum reconstructions help visitors imagine an earlier structure, while excavated remains are archaeological evidence.

For the timeline exercise, write 1702 (early Mobile), 1717 (Fort Toulouse), and 1723 (Fort Conde) in order. Locate Mobile near the Gulf Coast on a reference map and Fort Toulouse near today's Wetumpka. A river's location can help explain travel choices, but it cannot independently prove every motive for settlement.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1702	1717	1723
Early Mobile	Fort Toulouse	Fort Conde

Worked example

Timeline: 1702, early Mobile at Twenty-Seven Mile Bluff; 1717, Fort Toulouse; 1723, Fort Conde. The order is confirmed in Alabama Historical Commission and History Museum of Mobile resources. These dates are specific events, not a complete regional history.

Check your understanding

- Find Mobile on an Alabama map.
- Locate the Alabama River near Mobile region using a source.
- What year was early Mobile established?
- What year was Fort Toulouse established?
- What year does Fort Cond date to?

Now open Grade 3 History and Social Studies, Chapter 4, Day 3 in the matching daily practice workbook. Explain your answers from this reading rather than guessing.

Lesson 4: Environment, Economy, and Consequences

Words to know

- cause: a factor that produces or contributes to an outcome
- effect: a result or consequence
- archaeology: study of the human past through material remains
- land use: the ways people use or alter an area

Read and understand

Waterways could support transportation and trade, while rivers also influenced where communities lived and grew crops. Colonial settlements changed some land uses through farming, construction, timber cutting, and military building. The extent and consequences differed by place and period, so a claim about an environmental impact must be supported by records or physical evidence.

Trade might create new opportunities or competition, but gains for one party could coincide with harm or coercion to another. Economic outcomes should not be treated as identical for every Indigenous nation, settler, or family. Students compare who benefited, who bore costs, and what sources describe each experience.

Archaeologists can investigate foundations, pottery, tools, food remains, and layers of occupation to learn about daily life. Historians also examine dated documents, maps and correspondence. A document’s date and creator can help establish what it is evidence for, but one document rarely captures every experience.

To study cause and effect, ask what changed, what else was happening, and which sources support the explanation. A two-column chart can list a proposed change, such as clearing land, alongside documented or possible effects. Mark possible effects as hypotheses until verified.

Worked example

A river crossing may encourage trade because boats and travelers can reach it. That is a reasoned geographic explanation. Whether a specific trading post became profitable in a given year requires records, not the map alone.

Check your understanding

- Name one way land use can change.

- Name one economic effect of trade.
- Name one possible environmental effect of settlement.
- Explain why a single source may be incomplete.
- What is cause and effect?

Now open Grade 3 History and Social Studies, Chapter 4, Day 4 in the matching daily practice workbook. Explain your answers from this reading rather than guessing.

Lesson 5: Early Alabama Historical Inquiry Review

Words to know

- chronology: events arranged by time
- source perspective: the viewpoint and purpose of a source's creator
- inference: a conclusion reasoned from evidence

Read and understand

Begin with the principle that Alabama was inhabited long before the early French colonial settlements. A timeline of 1702, 1717 and 1723 records specific French colonial developments and must not erase Indigenous histories before, during, or after those years.

Practice geography with a reliable modern map: find Mobile near Alabama's Gulf Coast and the meeting of rivers near Fort Toulouse. Explain how scale, legend, date and mapmaker shape what a map can tell us. A fort's position by a river can suggest defense and transport concerns, but another source is needed to verify a particular motive.

Review historical method: label direct facts, reasonable inferences, and unknown details. A settler account may omit Indigenous experiences. Use multiple authentic sources when possible, record title and institution, and note disagreement without inventing evidence.

For the longer workbook response, write an introduction identifying the region before colonization, a paragraph with the three dated settlements or forts, and a conclusion explaining how maps and sources reveal both history and limitations. Cite actual evidence rather than filling missing details with guesses.

Worked example

Short model: 'People lived in the Alabama region before French colonization. The French established early Mobile in 1702, Fort Toulouse in 1717, and Fort Conde in 1723. Waterways influenced travel and diplomacy. Maps and records help explain these events, but they do not tell every community's experience.' Expand and cite a source for an 80-word assignment.

Check your understanding

- Was Alabama inhabited before French colonization?

- Name one type of historical map.
- State the early Mobile settlement date.
- State the Fort Toulouse establishment date.
- State the Fort Cond date.

Now open Grade 3 History and Social Studies, Chapter 4, Day 5 in the matching daily practice workbook. Explain your answers from this reading rather than guessing.

Chapter review and glossary

Use this page to check the vocabulary before completing the cumulative workbook assessment. A good explanation describes what is directly supported by a source and what remains uncertain.

Lesson 1 vocabulary

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- legend: an explanation of map symbols
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- primary source: a record or object from the period being studied

Lesson 2 vocabulary

- encounter: a meeting or interaction between people or communities
- trade: exchange of goods or services
- historical claim: a statement about the past that needs evidence
- corroboration: support from other, preferably independent, evidence

Lesson 3 vocabulary

- fort: a fortified place used for defense and control
- colonial settlement: a settlement established under an outside power’s colonial government
- navigable: suitable for travel by a boat or ship
- diplomacy: relations and negotiations between groups

Lesson 4 vocabulary

- cause: a factor that produces or contributes to an outcome
- effect: a result or consequence
- archaeology: study of the human past through material remains
- land use: the ways people use or alter an area

Lesson 5 vocabulary

- chronology: events arranged by time
- source perspective: the viewpoint and purpose of a source’s creator
- inference: a conclusion reasoned from evidence

Source notes and next steps

This book is original educational writing based on the Academy’s published lesson materials. The works listed below are research or background references and are not reproduced as textbook pages.

- Alabama Historical Commission, History of Fort Toulouse: https://ahc.alabama.gov/FtToulouseHistoryFacts.aspx
- Alabama Historical Commission, Frontier Days Teacher Packet: https://ahc.alabama.gov/properties/fttoulouse/FRONTIERDAYSTEACHERSPACKET_withoutdates.pdf
- History Museum of Mobile, Colonial Fort Conde: https://www.historymuseumofmobile.com/colonial-fort-conde/

What to do next

Read the online chapter and open the matching Grade 3 History and Social Studies Chapter 4 daily practice workbook. The student textbook provides the explanations. The separate teacher guide provides the answer key and scoring guidance.

This edition supports these five lessons and their corresponding assignments. It does not yet verify coverage of all Alabama grade-level standards or replace a complete 36-week course.