

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the excerpts below by Louis Hennepin (1678-1680), a Belgian Catholic missionary and explorer traveling in what is now Illinois. Then answer the following questions.

**Excerpt: Animals and Landscape**

There are several other Beasts in that Country... Stags, wild Goats, Beavers, Otters, Bustards, which have an excellent Taste; Swans, Tortoises, [Turkeys], Parrots, and Partridges. There are also an incredible quantity of Pelicans, whose Bills are of a prodigious Size; and a great many other sorts of Birds, and other Beasts.

The Rivers are plentifully stock'd with Fish, and the Soil is very fertile. The Forests afford all manner of Timber fit for Building, and especially Oak; which is there much better than in *Canada*, and would be excellent for building Ships. That Timber might be squar'd, saw'd, and ready prepar'd upon the Spot, and brought over into *Europe*; which would be very convenient, and give time to the Trees of our Forests to grow, whereas they are in a manner exhausted.

There are in those Forests abundance of Trees bearing good Fruit and of wild Vines, which produce Grapes a Foot and a half long, which growing to a perfect maturity, may make very good Wine. One may see there also large Countries cover'd with good Hemp, growing naturally, six or seven Foot in height. In short, by the Experiments I made among the *Iflati*, and the *Illinois*, I am persuaded that the Soil of that Country would produce all manner of Corn, Fruits, & even more plentifully than in any part of *Europe*, seeing there are two Crops every Year.

The Air is very temperate, clear, and open, and the Country water'd with several Lakes, Brooks, and Rivers, which are for the most part navigable. The Gnats and other little Flies that are so troublesome in *Canada*, and some other dangerous Beasts, are unknown in this Country; which in two Years time might supply its Inhabitants, if cultivated, with all things necessary for Life, without wanting anything from *Europe*...

1. How does Hennepin describe the natural environment of Illinois? What are some words he uses?







**Excerpt 4: The Illini**

This Word *Illinois* comes, as it has been already observ'd from *Illini*, which in the Language of that Nation signifies *A perfect and accomplish'd Man*. The Villages of the *Illinois* are situated in a Marshy Plain, about the fortieth Degree of Latitude, on the Right side of the River, which is as broad as the *Meuse* [a river in Europe]. Their greatest Village may have in it four or five hundred Cabins, every Cabin five or six Fires, and each Fire one or two Families, who live together in great Concord. Their Cabins are cover'd with Mats of flat Rushes so closely sew'd together, that no Wind, Rain, or Snow may go thro' it.

When the [Illini] have gather'd in their *Indian* Corn, they dig some Holes in the Ground, where they keep it for Summer-time, because Meat does not keep in hot Weather; whereas they have very little occasion for it in Winter; and 'tis then their Custom to leave their Villages, and with their whole Families, to go a hunting Oxen, Beavers, & carrying with them but a final quantity of their Corn, which however they value so much, that the most sensible Wrong one may do them in their Opinion, is to take some of their Corn in their absence. We found nobody in the Village, as we had foreseen; for the *Illinois* had divided themselves according to their Custom, and were gone a hunting. Their Absence caus'd a great Perplexity amongst us; for we wanted Provisions, and yet durst not meddle with the *Indian* Corn the Savages had laid under Ground for their Subsistence, and to sow their Lands. However, our Necessity being very great, and is being impossible to continue our Voyage, without any Provisions, especially seeing the Oxen and other Beasts had been driven from the Banks of the River, by means of Fire, as I have related in my former Chapter, M. *la Salle* resolv'd to take about forty Bushels of Corn, in hopes to appease the [Illini] with some Presents

1. How do the Illini people store their corn? What can we conclude about the Illini relationship with corn?

