

Reflection #2: Observation and Inference (Due October 14)

We've encountered a lot of changes this semester—as we have every semester! In this reflection, think about how your plans began, how they have changed, and where you hope to see your project develop. What are you enjoying? What are you realizing you don't like? Where do you see these experiences informing how you do research/work moving forward>

Originally, our project was about water contamination. We continued to explore water contamination, but we took a look at it in the Southern Illinois area. We specifically started to study and research water contamination in Cahokia Heights. We used sources and did archival research. While doing the archival research, we digitized old newspapers at the library. While digitizing the newspapers and records, we got a chance to compare things from back then and to now. Towards the end of the semester, we focused on oral history reports. We interviewed residents of Cahokia Heights and gave them a chance to tell their story. The interviewees ranged from different ages; some of them have been residents for years, some decades, and some were born there and have been living there ever since. With the interviews, we got a chance to get firsthand accounts about their experience of being a resident in Cahokia Heights. Originally, our plan wasn't to do interviews, but so many things have changed over the course of time. I enjoy learning about the citizens of Cahokia Heights and their personal experiences. It's nothing that I don't like everything that has been done so far, I do enjoy. My favorite thing overall was digitizing the newspaper. I never knew how much work and time went into organizing archives and digitizing them. I learned how fragile archives and paper could be after such a long time. I believe the interviews were a good step to move us forward, and they gave us a more personal account instead of just facts. Overall, I want to continue learning more about water

contamination and the effect it causes in the Southern Illinois area. I'm hoping we could do more work with Heartland's and hopefully set up a drive or fundraiser for residents who have lost or damaged homes or belongings due to water contamination and storming.