

Unit 1 Project

The Power of Place Podcasts

You are a team of anthropologists studying a place in New York City. You will use a variety of methods that real anthropologists use in the field: ethnographic notes, interviews, and academic dialogue. Because you are interested in making your research widely available, you are also going to create a podcast about your findings that you'll post online so that others can learn from you.

Your study will cover two parts: a place in the present day in New York City and, in a couple of weeks, a place in the world from thousands of years ago. To begin, your team of anthropologists needs to meet in order to figure out where you're going to do your study. You'll pick a location that everyone will go to as a team.

While you're there, each team needs the following parts:

1. Each person in the team needs to complete their **own ethnographic notes**. You'll do this by observing what's happening in the space for about 20 minutes.
2. You need to interview one person at the place you're at and **record the interview**.
3. You need to capture a **sound clip** of the place where you're at.

You will be editing these parts into a podcast, along with a discussion you'll have on Monday about what you found.

Team Agreements

What needs to happen in this group for us to be successful?

Team Members sign:

Initial planning guide

1. What are some ideas for where we could go?

2. What is everyone able to do between Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before class?
Who is allowed to do what? What are people's schedules like?

3. Where are people coming from? Where does everyone live?

4. Given that information, where should we choose to do our study of a place?

5. When can we meet up at the location to do our study?

6. Does someone in the group have a phone that can record sound?

The Power of Place: Ethnographic Research

Our chosen place is: _____

Step 1: Historical Research (HW night one)

Have you been to this place before? What information might be useful to know before you go visit?

What information did you find out about this place in your research last night?

Did you find any historical information about this place?

Who goes to this place and what kind of things do they do there?

Step 2: Focus your investigation.

What are some questions that you have about this place? Remember this is an anthropological study, so the questions have to involve something about the *humans* that are in this place.

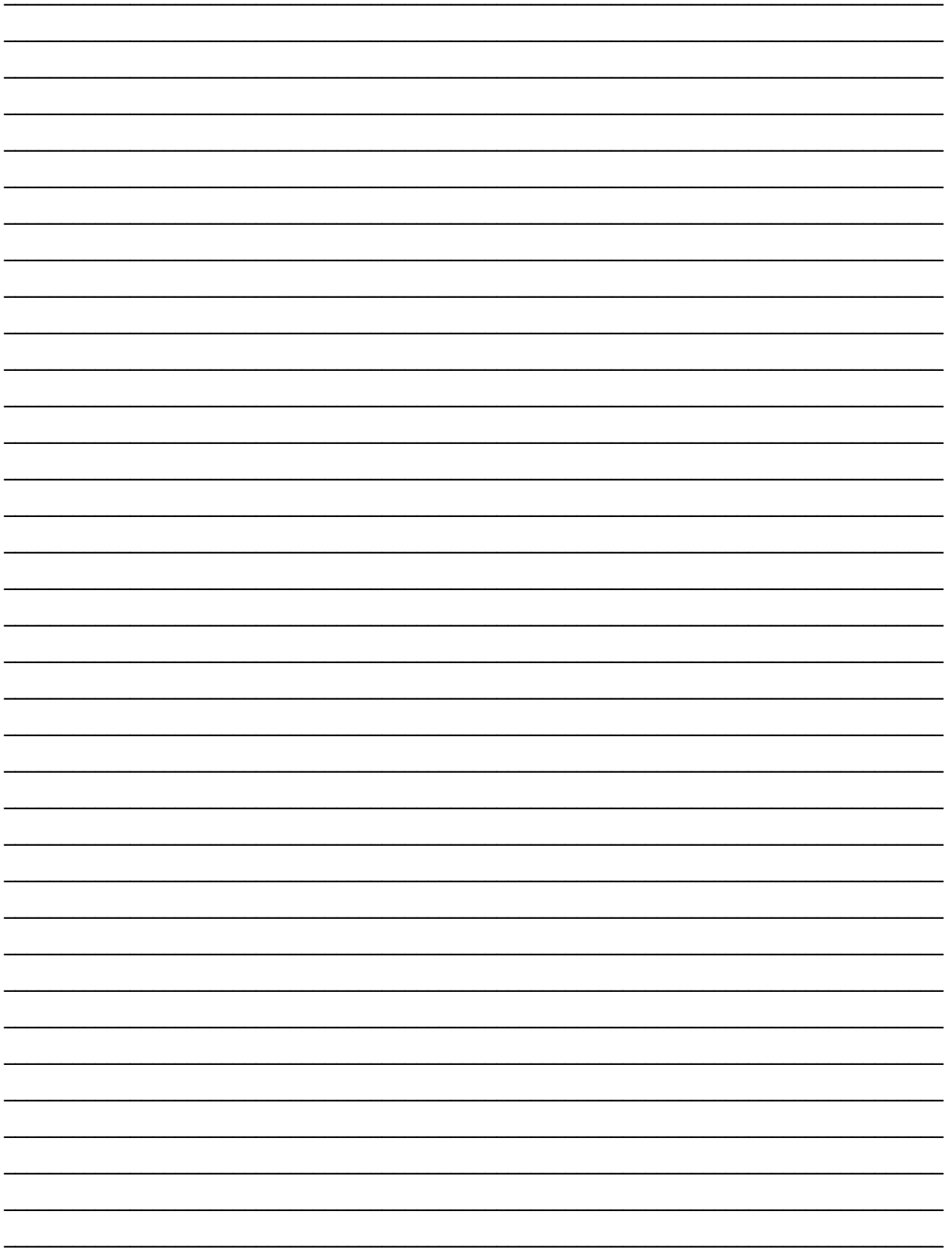
Step 3: Direct observation.

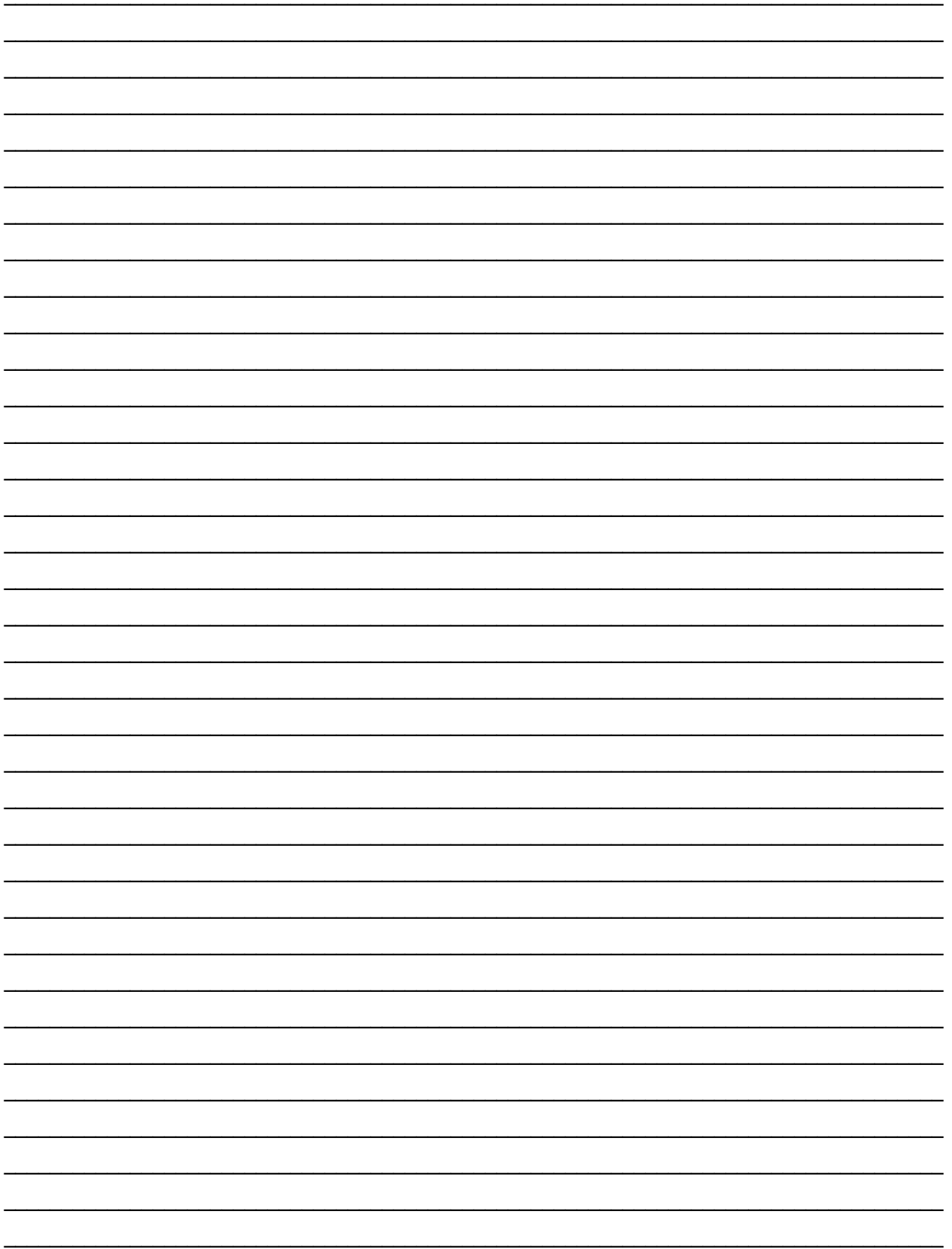
Go to your location and take notes for *at least* 20 minutes. Be as objective as possible (even though we know that's not totally possible) – try not to judge or make assumptions as you watch, just watch and record. Take notes both as and after you observe. Your page should be full of details.

Aim to capture the following:

- The physical characteristics of your place, and other observations you can make using your senses
- Its “inhabitants” and their characteristics (this doesn't mean people need to actually live here all the time, but who occupies the space while you're watching?)
- What's happening in your place during the time you observe? Is this what usually happens?
- What rules seem to govern people's behavior? How do you know?

Use the next two pages to record your notes





Step 4: Interview

Finally, based on your observations, choose three people to interview to help you fully understand this place. You might also interview people in the community with a different perspective on this place, like folks who might have known it “way back when” or members of a generation other than your own.

Create questions based on your research and observations. Based on what you have learned, what do you really want to know? **Don't forget to make a sound recording of your interview. Test your equipment first so you make sure that it's really recording--otherwise you have to do this all over again!**

Don't forget to **get a sound recording of your location, too.** You just want to get a few minutes of what the places sounds like on a regular day to use in your podcast.

Step 5: Upload your files

Upload all of your sound files to your google drive before you leave the location. Everything needs to be in your vhs google drive by Monday morning. Please check the app on your phone or computer to make sure it's there so your team can receive full credit.

**This notetaking guide was adapted from the NYT “The Power of Place: Doing Ethnographic Research on Local Sites”*