

Foreign Cultures_Keane_April6

The skeleton of the “Isle de
Jean Charles.”

Unit essential question

How has development and other human activities affected ecosystems and the people who live in or rely on them? Have these activities been intentional or accidental?

Day 1

Complete the warm up activity and copy I can statement.

Read the background information about a place off the coast of Louisiana called Isle de Jean Charles.

Click on the links to view maps and photographs so you understand the region we are learning about.

I can determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source.

Warm up (2 to 3 sentences)

How has human activity changed the area where you live? Think of topics such as construction and building, pollution, the number and types of wild animals and plants, or other things that have changed the area where you live.

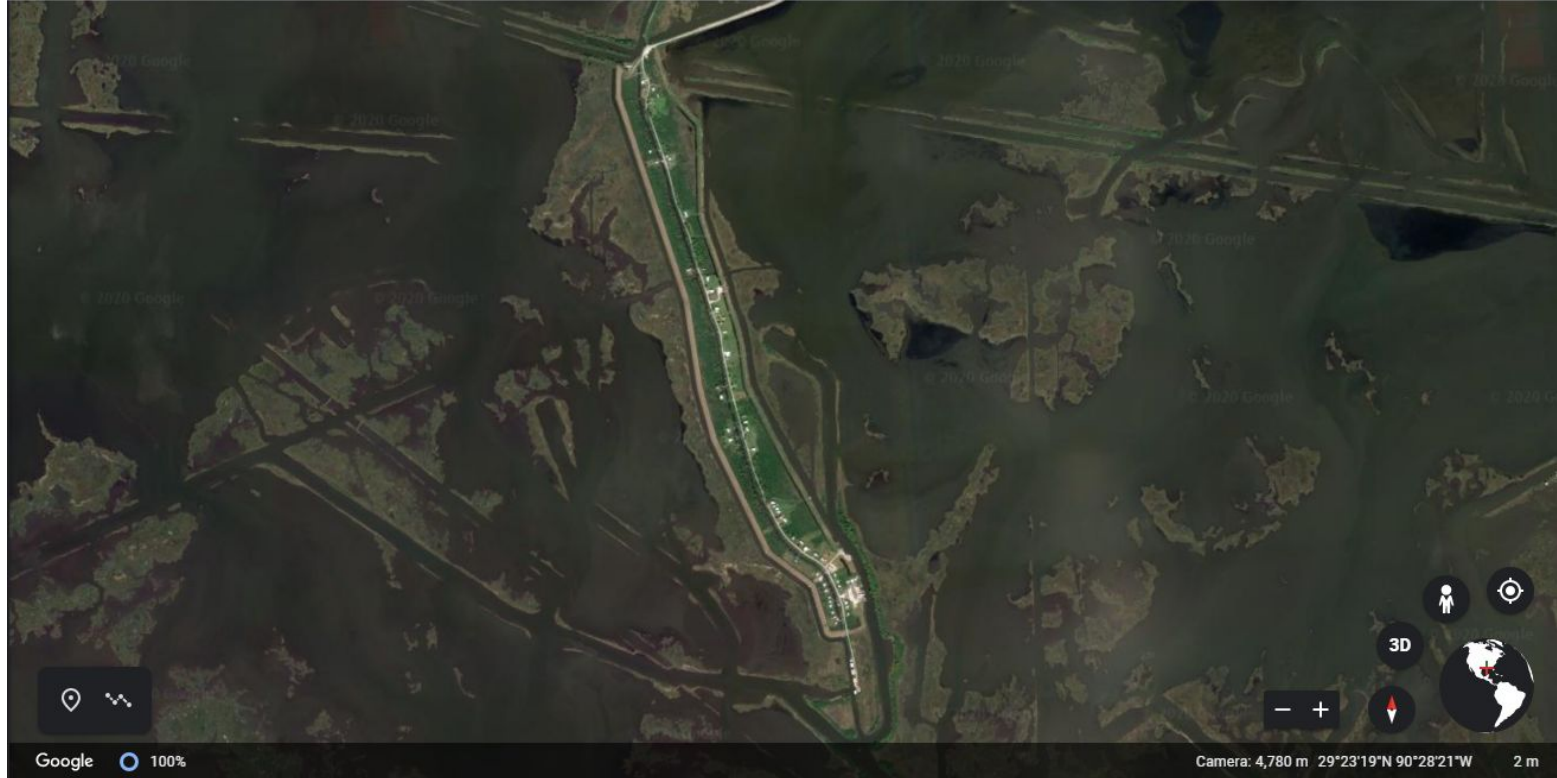
Background

This story focuses on a tiny island community off the Louisiana coast that is literally losing ground. For over 150 years, Isle de Jean Charles has been home to a small band of Native Americans who have made their living from fishing and farming. But in the last 50 years, 90 percent of this once lush island has been swallowed up by water; it is now just a quarter-mile wide sliver of land covered with dead trees. Most of the island's residents have been forced to leave, as they can no longer support themselves there.

Background

Several factors have contributed to the island's disappearance. Starting in the 1930s, oil companies carved canals in the surrounding marshlands to access their oil rigs. The canals brought in salt water, eroding the island and killing plant life. In addition, flood control dams and dikes on the Mississippi River prevented the natural flow of silt that historically helped rebuild the island. And, with climate change, the rising sea level due to melting polar ice is covering more land. As the island continues to shrink, so does the community that has depended on it for its livelihood.

Use [Google Earth](#) to explore this area further.



The Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe

Read about the native tribe that has lived around the Isle de Jean Charles for generations. [The Island](#)

Think about the following questions:

1. What are 3 key events in the history of Native Americans in the area?
2. What are the goals of current tribe members for the island?
3. How has modern human activity affected the tribe's presence on the island and its ability to sustain life on the island?