

Instructions for the essay

Read the provided text and write a single essay that responds to all three essay questions. Use full sentences and paragraphs and respond to the questions directly. You have 70 minutes to complete this essay.

Your essay should be between 550-800 words. Please stay within the word limit and give your essay a title.

Context: In the mid-1700s, the government of the British colony of Virginia in North America wanted the support of the Iroquois tribes in a conflict against the French. In order to do this, the colonists offered to accept Iroquois boys into the University of Virginia to educate them. What follows is the response from Iroquois Chief Canasatego:

We know you highly esteem¹ the kind of learning taught in those colleges, and that the maintenance of our young men while with you, would be very expensive to you. We are convinced therefore that you mean to do us good by your proposal, and we thank you heartily. But you who are wise must know, that different nations have different conceptions of things, and you will therefore not take it amiss² if our ideas of this kind of education happen not to be the same with yours.

We have had some experience of it. Several of our young people were formerly brought up at the colleges of the northern provinces. They were instructed in all your sciences. But when they came back to us they were bad runners ignorant of every means of living in the woods, unable to bear either cold or hunger, knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer or kill an enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for hunters, warriors, nor counsellors. They were totally good for nothing.

We are however not the less obliged³ by your kind offer, though we decline⁴ accepting it. To show our grateful sense of it, if the gentlemen of Virginia will send us a dozen of their sons, we will take great care in their education, instruct them in all we know, and make men of them.

1. **esteem:** to regard with respect
2. **take it amiss:** be offended
3. **obliged:** grateful or indebted
4. **decline:** politely refuse

Essay Questions:

1. What does the text reveal about Chief Canasatego and his society?
2. What is the tone of this response? What choices did the writer make in order to convey that tone?
3. What message is Chief Canasatego *really* trying to send to the Virginians?

Sources:

“Benjamin Franklin: Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America.” *The Wampum Chronicles*, The Wampum Chronicles, www.wampumchronicles.com/benfranklin.html.

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, The Packard Humanities Institute, franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=42&page=558.