Introduction Example:

Georgia’s Apalachee River originates in Gwinnett County and meanders south nearly seventy-five miles where it then empties into Lake Oconee. The river is not menacing and flows gently southward; in most places it is shallow enough to wade safely across. The Apalachee serves as a boundary between Walton and Oconee Counties; today, a simple, nondescript, concrete bridge spans the width of the river, dividing the two jurisdictions. Other than the occasional passenger vehicle, the site is as peaceful as any other in rural Georgia. To a student of history, however, the site is eerie and the specter of Georgia’s final lynching looms overhead. In 1946 following an argument between a black sharecropper and a white farmer, four African Americans including a pregnant woman were beaten and shot to death by an unmasked mob. The unborn baby was cut from its mother’s womb. The four adults had been shot at least sixty times. The murderers were never brought to justice. The brutality of what became known as the Moore’s Ford Lynching was detailed in thousands of American newspapers, and the outrage is often considered to be the catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Finally, civic leaders, politicians, and average citizens began repairing the damage and healing the wounds inflicted by the racist and inhumane policies of the Reconstruction and New South Eras.