

Our Changing Community

Conducting Research

Grade Levels K-4

Objectives: In order to understand the essential question of, “How has my community changed over time?” students ask “I Wonder” questions, interview community elders, conduct research using a graphic organizer, interpret historic photographs, and write a report.
Time Needed: Approximately 6 hours

Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities:

- 1.8 Report Writing
- 1.19 Research
- 4.5 Students understand continuity and change
- 5.14 Students respond to media

Grade Level Expectations:

- H&SS1-2:3 Students design research
- H&SS1-2:4 Students conduct research
- H&SS1-2:8 Students connect the past with the present

Materials & Resources:

Landscape Change Program Archive, www.uvm.edu/landscape For example, photos from Hinesburg, Vermont
 “Same and Different” Worksheet
 Assignment Organizer & “Before and After” Observations Sheet

Activities:

<p style="text-align: center;">1. Hook Your Students</p> <p>Students are asked to draw a picture showing what they think their town looked like in the past. Students ask “I Wonder” questions. This activity can be used as a pre-assessment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4. Culminating Activity</p> <p>Students write a report about how their town has changed over time. These reports will be presented to the Town Hall for display.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Introduce Concepts</p> <p>Students are introduced to a research framework (Assignment Organizer, below) that will ask them to research how the town of Hinesburg has changed over time.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5. Assessment</p> <p>Vermont State Writing Rubric for Reports: http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_curriculum/literacy/writing/benchmarks/grade_3/grade_3_1_8_report.pdf</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Apply Skills</p> <p>Students visit with elders, ask questions, observe historical photographs, and collect data in order to make comparisons that will show how their town has changed or remained the same over time.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6. Extensions</p> <p>Students write oral histories of Hinesburg elders who are interviewed.</p>

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Lesson Plan Details

Detailed summary of curricular format:

Students will learn a process for conducting research. Students will ask questions, collect data and use resources to show how some aspects of their community have changed overtime and how others have remained the same. They will use several resources (interviews of Hinesburg Elders and the Landscape Change website) in order to make some comparisons. Students will write a report showing what they have learned.

Lesson One: The Hook (45min) Students will be asked to draw a picture showing what their town might have looked like in the past.

- Provide time for the children to share with one another in small groups
- Next ask the children working in small groups to write down “I wonder” questions about the past.
- Meet as a whole group and compile a list of “I wonder” questions to be used for interviewing Hinesburg elders.

Lesson Two: (35min) Introduce the Assignment Organizer (Research Format) students will use to collect their data. This will be done as a whole group.

- Have a brief discussion about how many writers, historians, and scientists need to conduct research in order to find the answers to their questions.
- Next using overheads of the assignment organizer go over the different steps of the framework as a whole group.
- Tell the children they will be trying to find the answers to their “I wonder” questions.
- Ask for some suggestions on how we can find answers to our questions.
- Make a list of resources
- Sum up the steps with the class.

Lesson Three: (35min) Interview Guest Speakers

- Guest speakers will talk with the children and then children will have an opportunity to ask questions from the class generated “I wonder” questions.

Lesson Four: (30 min) Students will complete the “Same and Different” Worksheet based on the answers to their interview questions with Hinesburg Elders.

- Students will work in small groups completing the worksheet together.
- Call all groups together for a whole group sharing time.
- Complete a class chart with each group sharing their ideas.
- Save this class chart to be used later as a reference for their report writing.

Lesson Five: (40min) Go to the media center or use a projector so that the whole class can view the Landscape Change Program website together.

- Tell the class they will be viewing photos of their town long ago.
- Tell students they will need to be detectives and to use their observation skills to look very closely to find changes in our town.
- Show photos and call on students to share what they have noticed.

- After viewing the photos, working in small groups, have students complete a worksheet that will be divided into the categories of buildings, roads, landscape and transportation. You can have students create categories themselves or you can choose to create categories for your students. You may want to adjust these categories according to the particular slides you are viewing. Tell them they will need to either draw pictures or write down the changes they noticed.
- Share as a whole group and create a class chart.
- Keep this chart for students to use as a reference for writing their reports.

Lesson Six: (Writing activity will take several days) Using a graphic organizer students will organize their ideas and may use the class charts as a resource to show at least three ways that their community has changed overtime and three ways it has remained the same. You may choose to differentiate expectations depending upon grade level and individual differences. Using their completed graphic organizer students will take the information they have collected and write a report. They will be asked to “Tell how Your Community has changed in some ways and remained the same in other ways”.

- Students will use the painted essay format to write a report.
- Students will need:

An introduction stating their focus

Proof paragraphs with supporting details

A conclusion that restates the focus and makes a personal connection.

(Expectations can be differentiated based upon individual student needs.)

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Same and Different Worksheet

Same	Different

Our Changing Community

Assignment Organizer and “Before and After” Observations Sheet

Mrs. O'Brien

Hinesburg Community School

K-3


Super 3 Assignment Organizer


Name: _____



<i>What is my essential question?</i>
How has Hinesburg changed over time?

Super 3 #1	Plan (Begin!)	CONTENT
What am I supposed to do?	<input type="checkbox"/> Think of questions for our speakers. <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out the compare and contrast chart. <input type="checkbox"/> Write down my ideas.	
What will it look like if I do a really good job?	My report will: <input type="checkbox"/> be neat <input type="checkbox"/> use correct punctuation <input type="checkbox"/> be spelled correctly <input type="checkbox"/> have a correctly labeled illustration	
What do I need to make to show what I've learned?	Write a report.	
What do I need to find out?	List questions:	
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Super 3 #2		Do (Middle)	PROCESS
<p>What can I use to find what I need?</p> <p>people:</p> <p>UVM website:</p> <p>Hinesburg Digital Archives: R: Drive</p> <p>books:</p>		<p>What am I going to do or make?</p> <p>write: painted essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction <input type="checkbox"/> focus statement #1 <input type="checkbox"/> focus statement #2 <input type="checkbox"/> Proof paragraph #1 <input type="checkbox"/> focus statement <input type="checkbox"/> supporting details <input type="checkbox"/> Proof paragraph #2 <input type="checkbox"/> focus statement <input type="checkbox"/> supporting details <input type="checkbox"/> Conclusion <input type="checkbox"/> restate focus <input type="checkbox"/> make a personal connection <p>draw: <input type="checkbox"/> labeled illustration</p>	<p>Do it!</p>

Super 3 #3:		Review	PRODUCT
How will I know that I have done my best?			
Is my job done?		Did I do what I was supposed to do?	
Should I do something else?		Am I proud of my work?	

Before

After

Roads		
Buildings		
Landscape		
Transportation		

Our Changing Community

Vermont State Writing Rubric for Reports, Grade 3

Vermont Department of Education

Fall 2002

Revised Annotations April 2007

1.8

Report

Benchmarks

1.8 In written reports, students organize and convey information and ideas accurately and effectively. This is evident when students:

PreK-4:

- A. Analyze a situation based on information gathered, and suggest a course of action based on the information, and
- B. Discuss a situation or problem, then predict its possible outcomes based on information gathered.
- C. Engage the reader and develop a controlling idea;
- D. Use appropriate organizing structures; and
- E. Use a range of appropriate elaboration strategies such as including appropriate facts and details, describing the subject or narrating a relevant anecdote.

5-8: Evidence PreK-4 applies, plus -

- F. Organize information gathered through reading, interviews, questionnaires, and experiments so that a reader can easily understand what is being conveyed;
- G. Establish an authoritative stance on a subject, and appropriately identify and address the reader's needs to know;
- H. Include appropriate facts and details, excluding extraneous and inappropriate information; and
- I. Develop a controlling idea that conveys a perspective on the subject.

9-12: Evidence PreK – 8 applies, plus -

- J. Use a variety of strategies to develop the report, and
- K. Organize text in a framework appropriate to purpose, audience, and context.

Grade 3 Benchmarks

A Penguin's Life	Exceeds the Standard (4)
How the Coyote Survives in Vermont	Exceeds the Standard (4)
Mrs. Parks	Meets the Standard (3)
Dr. Carver	Meets the Standard (3)
Squids	Meets the Standard (3)
Lobsters	Below the Standard (2)
Tule Elk	Below the Standard (1)

Standard 1.8 Writing to Inform Revised Rubric

K - 4

1.8 In written reports, students organize and convey information and ideas accurately and effectively.

Dimensions of Writing Standard 1.5 Criteria	<u>Score Point 4</u>	<u>Score Point 3</u>	<u>K – 3 Below the Standard</u>	
	Shows evidence of exceeding the standard	Shows evidence of meeting the standard	<u>Score Point 2</u> (Grade 4) Shows evidence of being below the standard	<u>Score Point 1</u> (Grade 4) Basic and limited writing
Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context Focus/Controlling Idea Evidence of gathered information Audience 	Includes relevant background information (context) Focus is clear Report stays on focus	Includes relevant background information (context) Focus is clear Report stays on focus	Little context Has topic and attempts a focus.	No context Topic and/ or focus may be unclear and/or shift
Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall coherence Appropriate organizational patterns 	Has clear, consistent coherence and organization Has compelling introduction and/or conclusion that supports focus Uses transitions	Has clear, consistent coherence and organization Has introduction, body, and conclusion that support focus Uses some transitions	May have some organizational structure	May have little or no organization
Details/Elaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naming Describing Explaining Comparing 	Has a depth of information Details are relevant to topic, purpose, and audience Uses a variety of elaboration strategies	Has some supporting information. Details support the focus Ideas are elaborated appropriate to grade level	May have random and/or irrelevant details. Ideas are not elaborated or details are insufficient to support focus	
Voice and Tone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary Sentence structure Sentence variety 	Voice of a knowledgeable person Uses effective vocabulary, sentence structure and/or variety	Voice is of a person who desires to convey gathered information Uses appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure and/or variety	Uses confusing language (sentence structure and vocabulary). Uses pale vocabulary and basic sentence structure	

❖ The benchmarks define the performance level of the descriptors for each grade.

A Penguin's Life

It is cold here in Antarctica. I'm in an egg and there's not very much room in here. This egg is the size of a grapefruit.

My egg is under my dad's blubber. It's warm in here. Once my egg starts to crack it takes two days to crack all the way open.

When I'm out I have thick gray fur to keep me warm. My dad is here with me, but my mom is out getting food for me. When my mom comes back she has a lot of food stored in a place in her throat called a crop. She regurgitates the food in my mouth. After I have had a good meal of squid, kirl and fish, I can start to waddle around.

In six months I can go on my own, but when I go swimming I have to watch out for leopard seals, killer whales, and squas. They are my enemies.

Now that I'm all grown up I can start to mate. I have had an egg. Now the baby can go through the hassle of being in that small grapefruit size egg.

1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness Score = 4

Topic is life cycle
A Penguin's Life

It is cold here in Antarctica. I'm in an egg and there's not very much room in here. This egg is the size of a grapefruit.

*Clear context;
engaging opening*

Comparison repeated in conclusion

My egg is under my dad's blubber. It's warm in here. Once my egg starts to crack it takes two days to crack all the way open.

When I'm out I have thick gray fur to keep me warm. My dad is here with me, but my mom is out getting food for me. When my mom comes back

Voice used to convey a depth of information is consistent

Content-specific vocabulary

she has a lot of food stored in a place in her throat called a crop. She regurgitates the food in my mouth. After I have had a good meal of squid, kirll and fish, I can start to waddle around.

In six months I can go on my own, but when I go swimming I have to watch out for leopard seals, killer whales, and squas. They are my enemies.

Now that I'm all grown up I can start to mate. I have had an egg. Now the baby can go through the hassle of being in that small grapefruit size egg.

Writer reflects on information; repeats comparison from introduction

Exceeds the Standard
This creative third grade report is focused on the life cycle of a penguin. The first person point of view is an integral part of the focus. A compelling opening engages the reader, and context is clear. The voice is of a knowledgeable person using topic-specific vocabulary. The writing is organized in a chronological and cyclical manner, with the reference to the size of the egg repeated in the conclusion. It has clear, consistent organization and a depth of information. All details are relevant to the topic, purpose, and audience, giving it a strong, unified sense of purpose. The writer uses effective sentence structure.

How the Coyote Survives in Vermont

The coyote is a dog-like animal that can grow to 3' long and weigh up to 40 pounds. They also have strong canine teeth near the front of the mouth. Coyotes' teeth are also used for holding their prey. When February comes, coyotes find a mate to have babies with. The male coyote goes to get the food while the female coyote watches the babies. Other times, the female coyote goes and gets the food and the male coyote watches the babies. I think the habitat for the coyote is good in Vermont because their food is plentiful.

The Vermont habitat is good for the coyote because of the forests, mountains, and ponds. Also, the coyote can adapt to mostly all seasons. The coyote finds a cave and turns it into its den to stay out of the rain and to escape from other animals.

In addition, the food is plentiful for the coyote because they can eat deer, jackrabbits, white rabbits, mice, and on occasion, rats. Vermont has lots of these animals for the coyote to eat.

In conclusion, the coyote lives in Vermont because of the natural habitat and the good supply of food. If there were no forests in Vermont, there would not be any coyotes, and coyotes are magnificent animals.

1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness Score = 4

Topic → Focus
How the Covote Survives in Vermont

The coyote is a dog-like animal that can grow to 3' long and weigh up to 40 pounds. They also have strong canine teeth near the front of the mouth. Coyotes' teeth are also used for holding their prey. When February comes, coyotes find a mate to have babies with. The male coyote goes to get the food while the female coyote watches the babies. Other times, the female coyote goes and gets the food and the male coyote watches the babies. I think the habitat for the coyote is good in Vermont because their food is plentiful.

Specific context is related to and leads up to focus

Clear focus reflects thinking about information

The Vermont habitat is good for the coyote because of the forests, mountains, and ponds. **Also**, the coyote can adapt to mostly all seasons. The coyote finds a cave and turns it into its den to stay out of the rain and to escape from other animals.

Uses effective transitions (in bold font)

Elaboration of habitat and food; Details are relevant to topic, purpose and audience

In addition, the food is plentiful for the coyote because they can eat deer, jackrabbits, white rabbits, mice, and on occasion, rats. Vermont has lots of these animals for the coyote to eat.

In conclusion, the coyote lives in Vermont because of the natural habitat and the good supply of food. If there were no forests in Vermont, there would not be any coyotes, and coyotes are magnificent animals.

Writer reflects on information

Exceeds the Standard

Instead of writing all-you-want-to-know about coyotes, this third grade writer has focused the report on the food in the habitat of Vermont that helps the coyote survive. Even the context in the first paragraph is strongly connected to the idea of survival and food. Paragraphs are connected with effective transitions. In the conclusion the writer demonstrates synthesis of the information. The voice is of a knowledgeable person.

Mrs. Parks

Our class is learning about famous African Americans. My report is about Rosa Parks. Rosa Parks gave black people rights everywhere in our country. She also was a famous African American who started the bus boycott that desegregated blacks from whites. Rosa Parks is the bravest person I know.

One brave thing Rosa Parks did was act calm when she was being arrested for not moving, this is important because she gave courage to people who were afraid. She led a march to end desegregation, that was important because black people learned to stand up for themselves. She refused to sit in the back of the bus, this was good because people learned not to be pushed around. She fought for the right for blacks and women to vote.

One time I was brave when I got my retainer. When I am brave I think of Rosa Parks. If it wasn't for Rosa Parks, the world may still be segregated. She was certainly a brave woman.

1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness Score = 3

← *Topic*

Mrs. Parks

Our class is learning about famous African Americans. My report is about Rosa Parks. Rosa Parks gave black people rights everywhere in our country. She also was a famous African American who started the bus boycott that desegregated blacks from whites. Rosa Parks is the bravest person I know.

Context could have contained more specifics, but it sets up the focus

One brave thing Rosa Parks did was act calm when she was being arrested for not moving, this is important because she gave courage to people who were afraid. She led a march to end desegregation, that was important because black people learned to stand up for themselves. She refused to sit in the back of the bus, this was good because people learned not to be pushed around. She fought for the right for blacks and women to vote.

Writer supports the idea of courage with specific examples, each followed by reflection

Attempted personal connection is a digression

One time I was brave when I got my retainer. When I am brave I think of Rosa Parks. If it wasn't for Rosa Parks, the world may still be segregated. She was certainly a brave woman.

Conclusion does have reflection on significance of information

Meets the Standard

This report meets the standard for third grade: it has relevant background information and a clear focus. The strength of the writing is the development of the idea of bravery in the second paragraph. Despite a digression, the writing is enhanced by the reflection contained in the conclusion. Voice is of a person who desires to convey information. The writer uses appropriate vocabulary.

Doctor Carver

Our class is learning about famous African Americans, and I'm learning more about George Washington Carver from the book The Story of George Washington Carver, by Eva More. He helped many black farmers by making their soil better and finding many uses for plants.

He made the soil better by putting rags, trash and manure in the soil. He learned that when things rot they make good soil. He found many uses for the sweet potatoes like flour, starch, sugar, molasses, vinegar, dye and glue. He spent months in his laboratory finding these uses. After he invented more uses and there were 100 uses in all. He made 500 uses for the peanut: some were soup, mock chicken, cookies, ice cream and coffee. Because of his work black people weren't so poor.

George Washington Carver helped the world by finding many uses for plants that use less nitrogen. He showed black people that if you keep on trying you can do anything. I help the earth by picking up trash and recycling it just like George Washington Carver.

1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness Score = 3

← **Topic**
Doctor Carver

Additional context would enhance the introduction

Our class is learning about famous African Americans, and I'm learning more about George Washington Carver from the book The Story of George Washington Carver, by Eva More. He helped many black farmers by making their soil better and finding many uses for plants.

← **Clear, two-pronged focus**

He made the soil better by putting rags, trash and manure in the soil. He learned that when things rot they make good soil. He found many uses for the sweet potatoes like flour, starch, sugar, molasses, vinegar, dye and glue. He spent months in his laboratory finding these uses. After he invented more uses and there were 100 uses in all. He made 500 uses for the peanut: some were soup, mock chicken, cookies, ice cream and coffee. Because of his work black people weren't so poor.

Elaboration and listed details support focus

← **Reflection shows understanding**

George Washington Carver helped the world by finding many uses for plants that use less nitrogen. He showed black people that if you keep on trying you can do anything. I help the earth by picking up trash and recycling it just like George Washington Carver.

← **Personal connection becomes the "aha" statement.**

Meets the Standard

This report fulfills all the requirements for meeting the standard for third grade. It has a clear focus, and an introduction, body, and conclusion that support the focus. In addition, the writer demonstrates understanding of the information. Voice is of a person who desires to convey knowledge.

Squids

There are many kinds of Squids. The giant deep-sea Squid can be longer than a city bus and they are cousins of the octopus. Squid have a long body and ten arms. They live in the Caribbean. The Squid protects it self by hiding.

A Squid can squirt out a blob of inky stuff. The inky blob may confuse hungry creatures. Its eggs come in handy because it surrounds itself with eggs and protects itself that way. Isn't this amazing that it can be camouflaged in one second? They hide by moving with jet propulsion. If a shark tries to attack a Squid it will shoot out ink so it confuses the shark and zips away. Remember about the eggs? This is something like it. They swim together to protect themselves. They Squirt out dark liquid to hide themselves from enemies. They change their color and patterns to blend in with their surroundings.

Therefore you can see that the squid have many ways of hiding.

*1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness Score = 3*

Topic
Squids

There are many kinds of Squids. The giant deep-sea Squid can be longer than a city bus and they are cousins of the octopus. Squid have a long body and ten arms. They live in the Caribbean. The Squid protects it self by hiding.

Background information helps set context; clear focus

A Squid can squirt out a blob of inky stuff. The inky blob may confuse hungry creatures. Its eggs come in handy because it surrounds itself with eggs and protects itself that way. Isn't this amazing that it can be camouflaged in one second? They hide by moving with jet propulsion. If a shark tries to attack a Squid it will shoot out ink so it confuses the shark and zips away. Remember about the eggs? This is something like it. They swim together to protect themselves. They Squirt out dark liquid to hide themselves from enemies. They change their color and patterns to blend in with their surroundings.

Writer uses precise vocabulary to elaborate on the different methods of hiding

Therefore you can see that the squid have many ways of hiding.

Writer restates focus but has no "aha" statement

Meets the Standard

Rather than writing an all-you-want-to-know report, this writer focuses on the different ways squid hide to protect themselves. The introduction contains appropriate context. The writer elaborates effectively on several ideas, using a strong vocabulary and a grade-appropriate variety of sentence structures. The voice is of a person who desires to convey information.

1.8 Report
Grade 3

Lobsters

Lobsters are lovely. There are 30 types of lobsters. There are 45 species of the Palinade family. Lobsters share coral reefs. Lobsters like warm water. Lobsters have a fan tail.

Lobsters are lovely. Lobsters have big backs. People think lobsters are nice. Lobsters like Cape Cod.

Lobsters are lovely. They hide in mud sand and plants predator's.

Lobsters are very lovely. Lobsters can eat fish in a matter of minutes. When lobsters come out they like a grown up. Lobsters like to live under rocks.

Usually lobsters swim by their self. They get food for their young. A female lobster is called a hen. Female lobsters carry their eggs until they hatch. A female lobster has a bigger tail than the male.

I use to think that lobsters pinch if you pick them up, but they only pinch you if you bother them.

**1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness = Below the
Standard (2)**

Lobsters ← *Topic*

← *Statement has no meaning as a focus*

Lobsters are lovely. There are 30 types of lobsters. There are 45 species of the Palinade family. Lobsters share coral reefs. Lobsters like warm water. Lobsters have a fan tail.

Lobsters are lovely. Lobsters have big backs. People think lobsters are nice. Lobsters like Cape Cod. ← *Irrelevant and not based on fact*

Lobsters are lovely. They hide in mud sand and plants predator's.

Lobsters are very lovely. Lobsters can eat fish in a matter of minutes.

When lobsters come out they like a grown up. Lobsters like to live under rocks.

Usually lobsters swim by their self. They get food for their young. A female lobster is called a hen. Female lobsters carry their eggs until they hatch. A female lobster has a bigger tail than the male.

I use to think that lobsters pinch if you pick them up, but they only pinch you if you bother them.

Random information listed in no particular order; basic subject-verb, simple sentence structure

Below the Standard (2)

The attempted focus in this piece (“Lobsters are lovely”) is meaningless as a controlling idea. Restating an irrelevant adjective does not work as a focus. There is a quantity of information in no particular order, with some irrelevant opinions. The sentence structure is simple and basic with little variation. This all-you-want-to-know report is below the standard for third grade.

Tule Elk

The Tule Elk is unique because of the antlers. I love the Tule Elk because of the fur.

The Tule Elk used to be endangered but is now protected by the California State Reserve. They were reduced in number by hunting and loss of habitat.

Tule Tule Elk can run 35 mph away from wolves, coyotes and cougars. If they are weak or injured the predators kill them.

The Tule Elk used to be on the endangered list. I was glad to find out that they are off the list and are protected. They are a beautiful animal.

**1.8 Report
Grade 3
Effectiveness = Below the
Standard (1)**

← *Topic*

Tule Elk

The Tule Elk is unique because of the antlers. I love the Tule Elk because of the fur. ← *Attempted focus*

The Tule Elk used to be endangered but is now protected by the California State Reserve. They were reduced in number by hunting and loss of habitat. }

*Focus shifts;
random
information does
not support
attempted focus*

The Tule Elk can run 35 mph away from wolves, coyotes and cougars. If they are weak or injured the predators kill them. ← *Repetition of previous idea*

The Tule Elk used to be on the endangered list. I was glad to find out that they are off the list and a protected. They are a beautiful animal.

Below the Standard (1)

This below-the-standard report for third grade attempts a focus (“unique antlers”) but then shifts (“used to be endangered”). There is minimal support for either idea. The information is sparse and random and not connected to a controlling idea. The writer relies more on opinion than on fact. Sentence structure is simple, and the use of repetition at beginning of sentences (The Tule Elk...) is ineffective. Ideas are insufficiently elaborated to support focus.