Unit 3  People and Nature

Writing Focus: Informative/Explanatory
**Write Like a Reporter**

**Informative/Explanatory Paragraph**

**Student Prompt**  Reread pp. 383–390 of *How Do You Raise a Raisin?* Think about how raisins are made. Write an explanation of the process as a series of steps. Use information from the text to tell what is involved in each step. Add time-order words to clarify the sequence of the steps.
Write Like a Reporter

Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt, p. 70  Reread pp. 383–390 of *How Do You Raise a Raisin?* Think about how raisins are made. Write an explanation of the process as a series of steps. Use information from the text to tell what is involved in each step. Add time-order words to clarify the sequence of the steps.

Writing to Sources  Tell students to state their topic at the beginning of their explanation. Remind them that they will need to look in the text for facts and details about making raisins. Brainstorm a list of time-order words, such as *first, next, later,* and *after,* for students to use in their explanation.

Students’ explanations should:
- introduce the topic
- develop the topic supported by facts and details from the text
- use time-order words to indicate the order of the steps in the process
- demonstrate strong command of the conventions of standard written English

Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

**Student Prompt**  Compare and contrast *How Do You Raise a Raisin?* and “Worms at Work.” Look at their organization and graphics as well as their words. Write an explanation of how the texts are alike and how they are different. Provide evidence from the texts to support your ideas.
Connect the Texts

Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt, p. 72  Compare and contrast How Do You Raise a Raisin? and “Worms at Work.” Look at their organization and graphics as well as their words. Write an explanation of how the texts are alike and how they are different. Provide evidence from the texts to support your ideas.

Writing toSources  Ask students to go back into the texts and find similarities and differences to list on a two-column chart. Suggest that students begin by identifying the genre of each text. Explain that a chart of evidence drawn from the texts will help them organize their ideas before they write their explanation.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric

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<td>Organization is clear and effective, creating a sense of cohesion.</td>
<td>Evidence is relevant and thorough; includes facts and details.</td>
<td>Ideas are clearly and effectively conveyed, using precise language and/or domain-specific vocabulary.</td>
<td>Command of conventions is strongly demonstrated.</td>
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<td>Main idea is clear, adequately supported; response is generally focused.</td>
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Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Student Prompt  Reread pp. 421–423 of *Pushing Up the Sky*. Write a summary describing what the characters in the play are trying to do and how they try to do it. Include an explanation of what the myth demonstrates about cooperation. How does cooperation figure into the story’s resolution? Use text details to support your ideas.
Informative/Explanatory

Write Like a Reporter

Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt, p. 74 Reread pp. 421–423 of Pushing Up the Sky. Write a summary describing what the characters in the play are trying to do and how they try to do it. Include an explanation of what the myth demonstrates about cooperation. How does cooperation figure into the story’s resolution? Use text details to support your ideas.

Writing to Sources Remind students that writing a summary involves using their own words to tell the most important ideas or events of a selection in a few sentences. Their summary should focus on the events on pp. 421–423. Students should explain what these story events reveal about cooperation: that the problem isn’t solved until everyone works together. Have students provide text evidence to support their ideas.

Students’ explanations should:
• include a summary of the major events in part of the story
• tell what those events reveal about the given topic
• provide facts and details from the text to support their ideas
• demonstrate strong command of the conventions of standard written English

Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Comparison

Student Prompt  Look back at Pushing Up the Sky and “Catch It and Run!” Compare and contrast these two myths. Describe their characters, settings, plots, and themes. Write an explanation of how the texts are alike and different. Support your ideas with evidence from both texts.
Informative/Explanatory Comparison

Student Prompt, p. 76 Look back at *Pushing Up the Sky* and “Catch It and Run!” Compare and contrast these two myths. Describe their characters, settings, plots, and themes. Write an explanation of how the texts are alike and different. Support your ideas with evidence from both texts.

**Writing to Sources** Have students return to the texts and find and write similarities and differences on a Venn diagram. Point out that since both texts are myths, students can write this detail in the center section of the diagram. When they have finished filling in their diagram, tell students that as they write, they can use this evidence from the texts to help them organize and support their ideas.

### Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric

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© Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Write Like a Reporter
Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt  Reread pp. 449–451 of Seeing Stars. Look for and list details from the text that answer this question: How can you see stars at night? Write a short report on the topic using the facts from the text. Introduce the topic at the beginning and provide a concluding statement.
Write Like a Reporter

Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt, p. 78  Reread pp. 449–451 of Seeing Stars. Look for and list details from the text that answer this question: How can you see stars at night? Write a short report on the topic using the facts from the text. Introduce the topic at the beginning and provide a concluding statement.

Writing to Sources  Have students write the question and then look closely at the given pages to find and write information that specifically answers the question. Explain that they will need to organize the information in a way that makes sense, grouping related ideas and using linking words and phrases. Remind students to provide introductory and concluding statements in their report.

Students’ reports should:

• introduce the topic and group related information together
• connect ideas using linking words and phrases such as also, and, and but
• provide a concluding statement
• demonstrate strong command of the conventions of standard written English

Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Report

**Student Prompt**  Think about the authors and their selections *Seeing Stars* and “Scien-Trickery: Riddles in Science.” Write a short report that focuses on the authors’ topics, genres, use of language, and purposes for writing. Use evidence from the texts to support your ideas.
Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Report

Student Prompt, p. 80  Think about the authors and their selections Seeing Stars and “Scien-Trickery: Riddles in Science.” Write a short report that focuses on the authors’ topics, genres, use of language, and purposes for writing. Use evidence from the texts to support your ideas.

Writing to Sources  Have students review both texts. Suggest that they make and fill in a chart with two columns for the authors and their selections and four rows for the listed categories. Point out that this chart will help students gather details from the texts and organize their ideas before they begin writing.

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Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Write Like a Reporter
Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt Reread A Symphony of Whales. Look for facts in the text and illustrations about the lives of the villagers in the Arctic. Use these facts to write a short report about aspects of their lives such as food, clothing, houses, transportation, and beliefs.
Write Like a Reporter

Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

**Student Prompt, p. 82** Reread *A Symphony of Whales*. Look for facts in the text and illustrations about the lives of the villagers in the Arctic. Use these facts to write a short report about aspects of their lives such as food, clothing, houses, transportation, and beliefs.

**Writing to Sources** As students reread the selection, have them take notes on the facts they find about the villagers’ lives. Suggest that students organize these notes by category and then arrange the categories in a logical order. Point out that this preparation will help them when they write their report.

**Students’ reports should:**

- state the topic clearly
- group related information by category
- use facts and details from the text
- demonstrate strong command of the conventions of standard written English

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**Common Core State Standards**

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Student Prompt  Look back at *A Symphony of Whales* and “He Listens to Whales.” Both selections contain information about whale songs. Find this information and use it to write a short report on whale songs. Organize your report using the text structure of main idea and details.
Informative/Explanatory Report

Student Prompt, p. 84 Look back at *A Symphony of Whales* and “He Listens to Whales.” Both selections contain information about whale songs. Find this information and use it to write a short report on whale songs. Organize your report using the text structure of main idea and details.

Writing to Sources Tell students to read the fictional story carefully to find several facts about whale songs. In the magazine article, the last section, “Long Songs,” is about whale songs. Students may want to take notes on both selections first and then organize the facts they find. Have students consider what idea all the facts relate to as a way of identifying a main idea.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric

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Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Write Like a Reporter
Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

Student Prompt  Which two animals in Around One Cactus are dangerous to people? Use information from the poem and the Field Notes to identify these animals and what makes them dangerous. Then write an explanation describing what these two animals do that makes them a danger to people.
Write Like a Reporter
Informative/Explanatory Paragraph

**Student Prompt, p. 86** Which two animals in *Around One Cactus* are dangerous to people? Use information from the poem and the Field Notes to identify these animals and what makes them dangerous. Then write an explanation describing what these two animals do that makes them a danger to people.

**Writing to Sources** Tell students to review the poem to find the two animals that are described with the words *stinging* and *deadly* and then to read about these animals in the Field Notes. Point out that the focus of students' reports is on how these animals are dangerous to people; therefore, the details in their reports should support this main idea. Remind students that these details must come from the text.

**Students' reports should:**

- state and focus on the main idea
- provide details that support the main idea
- use facts and details from the text
- demonstrate strong command of the conventions of standard written English

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**Writing 2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Report

Student Prompt  Look back at *Around One Cactus* and “The Water Cycle.” Write an explanation of how the water cycle works in the desert environment in *Around One Cactus*. Use facts from both selections to support your explanation.

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Informative/Explanatory Report

Student Prompt, p. 88  Look back at Around One Cactus and “The Water Cycle.” Write an explanation of how the water cycle works in the desert environment in Around One Cactus. Use facts from both selections to support your explanation.

Writing to Sources  Point out that students will need to read both texts closely to identify facts they can use in their explanation and to draw conclusions from those facts. Remind students that graphics often accompany expository text to support or extend information. Suggest that students include diagrams or illustrations with their explanation.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric

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Prove It!
Informative/Explanatory How-to Report

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<th>Academic Vocabulary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In a how-to report, a writer explains “how to” make or do something. The writer provides a set of steps written in the order in which they are to be followed. These steps may be in a numbered list, or they may be written in paragraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduce Genre</td>
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Starting a Group Project

Informative/Explanatory How-to Report

In this unit, students have read examples of informative/explanatory writing, including expository text and procedural text, and have had the opportunity to write in this mode. Remind students of texts and writing tasks (such as Write Like a Reporter and Connect the Texts) in which they have encountered and practiced informative/explanatory writing.

Key Features of an Informative/Explanatory How-to Report

- explains the task or activity using a series of steps
- groups related information together
- includes illustrations when useful in aiding comprehension
- develops the topic with facts, definitions, and details
- uses words such as first, next, and last to show the order of the steps
- uses linking words such as also, and, and but to connect ideas
- uses sentences with strong verbs to guide readers
- provides a concluding statement

Writing Task Overview

Each unit writing task provides students with an opportunity to write to sources. To successfully complete the task, students must analyze, synthesize, and evaluate multiple complex texts and create their own written responses.

Starting a Group Project

Part 1: Students will read and take notes on the selected sources. They will then respond to several questions about these sources and discuss their written responses with partners or in small groups.

Part 2: Students will work individually to plan, write, and revise their own how-to report.

Scorable Products: evidence-based short responses, how-to report
Starting a Group Project: Writing Task – Short Response

Teacher Directions:

1. **Introduce the Sources** Refer students to the following texts in the Student Edition:

   1. *How Do You Raise a Raisin?*, pp. 378–393

   Explain to students that they will need to draw evidence and support from the texts above in order to answer evidence-based short response questions and to write a how-to report. Students should take notes and categorize information as they closely reread the texts. Students should be given paper or a relevant graphic organizer from the TR DVD for note-taking.

2. **Provide Student Directions and Scoring Information (p. 94)** Answer any task-related questions students may have. If necessary, provide additional paper for students to write their responses.

3. **Initiate the Writing Task** If you are timing this part of the task, you may wish to alert students when half the allotted time has elapsed and again when 5 minutes remain.

4. **Facilitate Collaboration** After students have completed their written responses to the evidence-based short response questions, assign partners or small groups and have them discuss their responses. If students struggle to work together productively, provide them with tips and strategies for expressing their ideas and building on others’.

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**Common Core State Standards**

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Speaking/Listening 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. (Also Writing 2.a., Writing 2.b., Writing 2.d.)
**Scoring Information**

Use the following 2-point scoring rubrics to evaluate students’ answers to the evidence-based short response questions.

1. What projects do groups of people work on in the three selections? How are the ways in which the groups work on the projects similar and different?

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<th>Analysis Rubric</th>
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2. If you were starting a group project, how would you get people interested in the project? Cite examples from the texts of ways people get involved in group projects.

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3. Prepare a checklist to evaluate how well a group of people works on a group project. Rate each group of people in the three selections using this checklist. Cite examples from the text.

<table>
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| 2                 | The response:  
|                   | • demonstrates the ability to evaluate texts in order to create a rating checklist and rate groups of people working on group projects  
|                   | • includes specific details that make reference to the texts |
| 1                 | The response:  
|                   | • demonstrates a limited ability to evaluate texts in order to create a rating checklist and rate groups of people working on group projects  
|                   | • includes some details that make reference to the texts |
| 0                 | A response receives no credit if it demonstrates no ability to evaluate texts or includes no relevant details from the texts. |

Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Writing 8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
Starting a Group Project
Writing Task – Short Response

Student Directions:

Your assignment You will reread several selections from Unit 3 and take notes on these sources. Then you will answer three questions about these materials. You may refer to your notes or to any of the sources as often as you like.

Sources
1. How Do You Raise a Raisin?, pp. 378–393
2. Pushing Up the Sky, pp. 412–423
3. A Symphony of Whales, pp. 476–491

Be sure to read closely and take good notes. Your sources and notes will be the basis for writing your own how-to report in the second half of this writing task.

Evidence-Based Short Response Questions Answer the short response questions on the lines provided below each question. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Be sure to base your answers on the sources you have just read. Remember that you may refer back to your notes or to any of the sources.

After you have answered the questions, you will discuss your responses with a partner or in a small group. Your teacher will let you know when to begin the discussion part of this task.

Scoring Information Your responses will be scored based on how you demonstrate the ability to:

• compare and contrast information across texts
• name ways of getting people interested in a project
• evaluate how well a group works together
• include specific details from the sources
Evidence-Based Short Response Questions

1. What projects do groups of people work on in the three selections? How are the ways in which the groups work on the projects similar and different?

2. If you were starting a group project, how would you get people interested in the project? Give examples from the texts of ways people get involved in group projects.

3. Prepare a checklist to evaluate how well a group of people works on a group project. Rate each group of people in the three selections using this checklist. Cite examples from the text.

Collaborative Discussion

After you have written your responses to the questions, discuss your ideas. Your teacher will assign you a partner or a small group and let you know when to begin.
Starting a Group Project: Writing Task – How-to Report

Teacher Directions:

1. **Provide Student Directions and Scoring Information (p. 98)** Explain to students that they will now review their notes and sources and plan, draft, and revise their how-to reports. Although they may use their notes and sources, they must work alone. Students will be allowed to look back at the answers they wrote to the short response questions, but they are not allowed to make changes to those answers. Have students read the directions for the how-to report and answer any task-related questions they may have. Students should be given paper on which to write their how-to reports.

2. **Initiate the Writing Task** If you are timing this part of the task, you may wish to suggest approximate times for students to begin writing and revising. If students wish to continue writing rather than revising, allow them to do so. Alert students when 5 minutes remain.

3. **Scoring Information** Use the scoring rubric on the next page to evaluate students’ how-to reports.

4. **How-to Report Prompt** Review what you learned in *How Do You Raise a Raisin?*, *Pushing Up the Sky*, and *A Symphony of Whales*. Write a how-to report that tells how to start a group project. Explain how to get people involved in the project. Use examples from the selections to support your ideas. Be sure to follow the conventions of written English.
Common Core State Standards

Writing 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Writing 2.a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. Writing 2.b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. Writing 2.d. Provide a concluding statement or section.
Starting a Group Project
Writing Task – How-to Report

Student Directions:

Your assignment  Now you will review your notes and sources and plan, draft, and revise your how-to report. While you may use your notes and refer to your sources, you must work on your own. You may also refer to the answers you wrote to earlier questions, but you cannot change those answers.

How-to Report Prompt  Review what you learned in How Do You Raise a Raisin?, Pushing Up the Sky, and A Symphony of Whales. Write a how-to report that tells how to start a group project. Explain how to get people involved in the project. Use examples from the selections to support your ideas. Be sure to follow the conventions of written English.

Scoring Information  Your how-to report will be assigned a score for

1. Focus – how well you maintain your focus and convey ideas and information clearly
2. Organization – how well the steps flow logically from first to last using an effective text structure
3. Development – how well you develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details
4. Language and Vocabulary – how well you use linking words and phrases to connect ideas
5. Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Now begin work on your how-to report. Try to manage your time carefully so that you can

• plan your how-to report
• write your how-to report
• revise and edit for a final draft
Starting a Group Project: Writing Task – How-to Report

Teacher Directions:

1. **Publish**  Explain to students that publishing their writing is the last step in the writing process. If time permits, have students review one another’s compositions and incorporate any comment their classmates have. Discuss different ways technology can be used to publish writing.

2. **Present**  Students will now have the option to present their how-to reports. Have students give speeches about their how-to reports in front of the class. Use the list below to offer students tips on listening and speaking.

**While Listening to a Classmate...**
- Think about the speaker is saying.
- Raise your hand to ask a question.

**While Speaking to Classmates...**
- Stay on topic.
- Speak clearly.

**Things to Do Together...**
- Follow agreed-upon discussion rules.
- Ask and answer questions.

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**Common Core State Standards**

**Writing 6.** With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others. **Speaking/Listening 4.** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.