

Open Up the Textbook (OUT)

Enlarge

Complicate

Contest

Vivify

Title: Nevada's Unique Scenery and Tourism

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In this OUT analysis, fourth grade students will study Nevada's unique scenery in order to better understand how these features help shape our state's economy. This OUT analysis provides students with documents that are meant to deliberately vivify the textbook.

This strategy is implemented most effectively when students collaborate to analyze the texts in small, heterogeneous groups. The texts that accompany the textbook are complex and often include difficult vocabulary and syntax. (For a few words that are likely unknown to students and unidentifiable based upon context clues, helpful synonyms are provided in the footnotes.) Students should first annotate each text and then collaborate to answer the text dependent and specific questions that follow. Questions will highlight sourcing and perspective of the author, close reading of key details from the document that enlarge, complicate, contest, or vivify the textbook, as well as questions that help students corroborate (or not) the accuracy of individual documents. The writing task that follows is an independent activity wherein students will employ evidence from multiple sources to justify their analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Source A: The Textbook – *Nevada: Our Home, G.P. BeDunnah et al., page 245*

Nevada is one of the most visited places in the world. People come from all over to stay and play in Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe, Mesquite, Laughlin, and Reno. They come to see famous entertainers, major sporting events, and of course, to gamble.

Because tourism is such a big part of our state, many Nevadans work in this industry. Hotels need hundreds of employees to take care of their visitors. Casinos need dealers and cleaning people. Restaurants need servers, cooks, and dishwashers. Thousands of people work in our state's large service industry.

But Nevada has much more for visitors than gambling and shopping. Tourists also come to enjoy our unique scenery and special events. They visit Great Basin National Park, Lehman Caves, Hoover Dam, Lake Mead, the Black Rock Desert, and the Red Rock Canyon. People also flood into Elko for the annual cowboy poetry gathering. Outdoor lovers head to Lake Tahoe to fish, boat or hike. Others practice their *kayaking* skills in Reno's Truckee River.

Tourists spend a lot of money in Nevada, which helps our state build a strong economy.

Source A Questions for Consideration

1. Based on evidence in the passage, why would tourists choose to visit Nevada?
2. Make a list of the natural attractions and man-made attractions listed by the author. Which type of attractions does the text emphasize as most important? What phrases make you think this?
3. Is there any detailed evidence in the text that helps convince people from elsewhere to come visit Nevada? If so, what?

Source B: Secondary Source, About Lake Tahoe. Retrieved from www.keptahoblue.org

Why is it so blue?

Tahoe's clean air and water are the keys to the lake's dazzling blue color. Lake Tahoe's water is so pure and deep that it reflects the blue sky and surrounding landscape. From afar, Lake Tahoe is a deep cobalt blue. Closer to shore, the water is crystal clear, reflecting dazzling turquoise, sunset reds and stormy purples. You can see why it is called the "Lake of the Sky."

Tahoe's clarity has impressed visitors since the time of Mark Twain in the 1880s. Historical accounts indicate the water may have been as clear as 120 feet during that time.

Why is Tahoe so clear?

One reason Lake Tahoe is so clear is that 40 percent of the precipitation falling onto the Lake's watershed falls directly upon the Lake. The remaining precipitation drains through marshes and meadows, which are a good filtering system for water. Unfortunately, many of the Lake's natural filtering systems have been disturbed by development¹ and Tahoe's clarity is diminishing.

Scientific measurements of water clarity started in 1968. At that point, one could see a white disk submerged to a depth of 100 feet. Today, clarity has dropped to around 70 feet. That means Tahoe is losing about one foot of clarity per year

Source B Questions for Consideration

1. The text notes that Lake Tahoe is also known as the "Lake of the Sky." Cite evidence from the text that explains why this is an appropriate nickname for Lake Tahoe?
2. The text reveals several reasons for Tahoe's clarity. What are they?
3. The text claims that "many of the Lake's natural filtering systems have been disturbed by development and Tahoe's clarity is diminishing." Based on this sentence, write a definition for the work diminishing.
4. Reexamine the source of this passage. Based on this, describe what you believe to be the objective of these passages? In other words, how do the authors want you to feel about Lake Tahoe's diminishing clarity?
5. State evidence from the text that could be used to convince people that Tahoe is a unique and beautiful place to visit.

¹ The construction of houses and other structures in the Lake Tahoe basin

Source C: Secondary Source: Great Basin National Park– Retrieved from National Geographic Travel Website (<http://www.travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/national-parks/great-basin-national-park/>)



Great Basin National Park in Nevada is home to some of the world's oldest trees—bristlecone pines worn smooth by centuries of wind, sand, and ice. (Photograph by Richard Olsenius)

Location: Nevada

Established: October 27, 1986

Size: 77,180 acres

An Ice Age landscape of glacier-carved peaks rises more than a mile from the desert floor. The park takes its name from the vast region that extends east from California's Sierra Nevada to Utah's Wasatch Range, and from southern Oregon to southern Nevada, encompassing most of Nevada and western Utah. Called Great Basin by explorer John C. Frémont in the mid-1800s, the region actually comprises not one but at least 90 basins, or valleys, and its rivers all flow inland—not to any ocean.

The park road winds up Wheeler Peak, the second highest mountain in Nevada. When the road ends at 10,000 feet, trails lead to the 13,063-foot summit and to the region's only glacier, near a stand of bristlecone pines. Great Basin is a young park compared to a Yellowstone or Yosemite, yet within its confines are some of the world's oldest trees.

The bristlecones form the rearguard² of a Pleistocene forest that once covered much of the region. Now surviving in scattered stands, some trees are 3,000 years old—alive when Tutankhamun ruled Egypt. In the flank of the mountain, at an altitude of 6,800 feet, lies Lehman Caves with 1.5 miles of underground passages. These formed when higher water tables during the Ice Age made pockets in the limestone. Park rangers guide visitors past flowstone, stalactites, and delicate white crystals that grow in darkness.

The number of visitors has reached more than 80,000 yearly since 1986, when the cave and neighboring mountains became a national park. But the park has 65 miles of trails, offering access to the hills and a chance to see glacial moraines, alpine lakes, and spectacular sweeping views of the surrounding basin and range country.

² outside edge of the bristlecone pine forest

Source C Questions for Consideration

1. What do you learn about this text by considering where it was retrieved from? Based on this knowledge, who is the audience for the text?
2. Several statistics and measurements are listed about Great Basin National Park in the text. Cite phrases in the text that describe the unique geographical features of the park.
3. 80,000 people visit the Great Basin each year. What evidence helps you understand why people choose to participate in the park's activities?
4. What feature of Great Basin National Park would you want to visit? Why? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.

Source D: Secondary, The Grand Dam by Julian Rhinehart Retrieved from <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/hooverdam/History/articles/rhinehart1.html> (excerpted)

When Hoover Dam was built in the 1930s, the great dam was known for its engineering superlatives. It was the highest dam ever built, the costliest water project, home of the largest power plant of its time.

Today, as Hoover celebrates its 60th anniversary, we can see that the dam is not only an engineering wonder. It also is a work of art.

Few structures in America display the diversity of design and craftsmanship that you see at Hoover Dam. It is a showcase of seldom-seen skills of artists and artisans--beautifully presented terrazzo tiles, sculpture, metalwork, and even military emplacements.

The dam's architectural design varies a great deal from its initial plans. Bureau of Reclamation engineers, more concerned with flood control than appearance, simply wanted to embellish the dam with eagles, cornices, and other ornamentation.

The more streamlined look of the completed project was influenced by two men who were not engineers: architect Gordon B. Kaufmann... and artist Allen True...

Kaufmann simplified the dam's design and replaced ornamentation with the flowing lines of Modernism and Art Deco. He transformed the power plant with color and facades. He blended four protruding towers on the crest into the face of the structure. He smoothed the upper portions of the four intake towers and reworked the two spillways to accent Art Deco elements.

Allen True, the Denver artist, assisted Kaufmann with interior designs and color. True was responsible for one of the dam's most distinctive motifs--the Southwestern Indian designs in the terrazzo floors. Using such sources as an Acoma bowl and Pima basket, True linked Native American geometric concepts with Art Deco design. Many of the Indian designs were based on centrifugal themes, which related to the turbines in the power plant.

True's colors were truly striking. He used black, white, green and dull-red ochre chips in the terrazzo floors to contrast with the black-marble walls. True also specified the red color for the generator shells in the power plant, a sight that still commands visitors' attention.

You can see the power plant and terrazzo work during a tour of the dam. Following an elevator descent of 530 feet, you emerge into seemingly endless galleries. There you find gleaming terrazzo floors imbedded with the Southwestern Indian patterns adapted by True from baskets, pottery, and sand paintings.

On top of the dam, two "Winged Figures of the Republic" dominate the Nevada approach. They are the work of sculptor Oskar J.W. Hansen, a Norwegian immigrant...

Hansen said the 30-foot bronzed statues represented "that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty." Perched on six-foot-tall cues of gleaming black diorite, Hansen's figures flank a 142-foot flagpole.

Hansen also created the nearby bronze plaque memorializing the 96 workers who died during construction of the dam. An inscription proclaims, "They died to make the desert bloom."

You can see more of Hansen's work on the two elevator towers. Each displays five bas-reliefs that tell a story. The Arizona tower has a tribute to Native American tribes and their Great Spirit of the ranges and the plains. The five Nevada panels portray the dam's main purposes -- flood control, navigation, irrigation, water storage, and power.

Source D Questions for Consideration

1. According to the text, what made Hoover Dam an engineering marvel? Since then, what has it become known for?
2. The author claims that “Few structures in America display the diversity of design and craftsmanship that you see at Hoover Dam.” Cite several examples from the text that supports this claim.
3. Kaufmann and True are credited with incorporating artistic design into Hoover Dam. What did they specifically do to make Hoover Dam a “work of art”?
4. What artistic features would a tourist see on a tour of the dam?
5. In what ways does the design of Hoover Dam honor:
 - a. Native American Culture Groups?
 - b. The workers who built Hoover Dam?
6. The word flank is used in both Sources C and D but as different parts of speech. Identify which part of speech flank is used as in each of the following sentences.

Source C: In the flank of the mountain, at an altitude of 6,800 feet, lies Lehman Caves with 1.5 miles of underground passages.

Source D: Hansen said the 30-foot bronzed statues represented "that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty." Perched on six-foot-tall cues of gleaming black diorite, Hansen's figures flank a 142-foot flagpole.

Writing Task

This is a persuasive writing task based on NVACS standards W.4.1, W.4.4, W4.6, W4.8. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the texts as well as the ways in which the textbook was vivified.

You've read multiple sources on Nevada's unique scenery. Use at least 3 of the sources to write an argumentative piece that works to persuade tourists to visit Nevada and our unique scenery.

Action Steps:

1. With your group, find the main idea of source A and write it on a sentence strip. Then using large post-its, cite 3 supporting details for the main idea. Be prepared to present findings to the whole class. After presenting, post on the Source A poster the sentence strip and 3 supporting post-its. Repeat process with each additional source (B, C, and D.)
2. Use information from the posters to complete a graphic organizer detailing evidence with elaboration. (Use any graphic organizer/note taker that your class is familiar with.)
3. Choose 3 of the important vocabulary terms from the box below to include in your writing. Add at least two context clues for each term to demonstrate your understanding. Highlight your context clues for each term.

clarity

formal

spanned

bristlecone

rear guard

design

encompassing

unique

4. Answer the above question in approximately one page, using evidence from at least three of the texts provided. Write a clear claim using 6 pieces of evidence to support your idea. After each piece of evidence cited in a direct quote or paraphrase (your own words), please add the source letter in parentheses, for example (Source B). For each piece of evidence, clearly reason (explain) why that piece of evidence helps support your claim.