

Writing and the Environment
Essay #3
(First version due at 5pm on Friday, April 29th)

In the syllabus, the third essay is described as follows:

A ten-page informative essay that builds upon your (limited) research into an environmental issue of interest to you (final version due Friday, May 6th at 2pm). The three preceding exercises will help you identify the central task of your essay and narrow the range of your research. The associated readings will provide models for this kind of informative writing.

In each of your exercises, you have identified the central question that drives your investigation. Some of you have tended to focus on questions that call for a simple answer. Before you begin planning and writing your essay, you should identify a question that allows you to get at the issue that underlies your discussion. What broader question will your research and analysis help you address? In many cases, it would be appropriate to ask a question that takes the form of “How will we (or they) be able to balance two (or more) significant social or scientific trends and deal with an emerging problem?”

If you can identify this underlying issue, you should be able to devise an introduction that helps you get at that issue. In many cases, you can begin with an example that dramatizes the issue that drives your essay. The example will draw your readers into your discussion and help them see why it matters. Be adventurous; do not begin with a paragraph devoted to defining your topic. Remember, too, that a longer paper calls for a longer introduction. A single paragraph will not suffice.

Your first version of this essay should be at least nine pages long. Be sure to include a letter addressed to your readers. Let your readers know something about your plans for revision. Point your readers to the issues that concern you.