

Animal Rights:
In Thailand and the United States
A Non-fiction Critical Analysis
Unit for 8th Grade

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This is a non-fiction critical analysis unit in which students evaluate a series of international topics regarding issues concerning animal rights. Particular focus is given to the United States and Thailand. This unit will use animals and their complicated relationship with human beings as a way to connect students to Thailand, while also giving students the skills to deeply examine and question the current issues affecting animals and the environment throughout the world. Upon evaluation of each given topic, students take a stance, arguing for whether they agree or disagree with the quality of animal treatment. Ultimately, students will create a performance-based argumentative piece of non-fiction writing taking a stance on whether animals do indeed have rights; and what level of responsibility humans have in protecting those rights. Finally, the unit will provide students an opportunity to argue for something in which they believe, while fostering their ability to justify that argument. This unit would fit nicely into non-fiction work in an English Language Arts class or a Social Studies class. A critical analysis or service-learning class would also be an appropriate forum for this unit. A service-learning project regarding animal rights would be an appropriate off-shoot of the unit and should be considered by the educator.

It must be noted that the goal of this unit is not to pit one country against another or determine who has a higher regard for animal rights and who does not. This unit is meant to provide a series of complicated issues regarding animals in both the US and Thailand, and to seek evaluation from the students. Ultimately, the students should learn a mutual appreciation for activities that provide humane situations for animals, and for the countries that are supporting these initiatives.

US Core Curricular Standards addressed in the unit (8th Grade ELA):

Unit Flow:

5 thematic issues are presented. Teachers model with one issue in that thematic area for their week's mini-lessons. Students are divided into work groups throughout the unit; it is highly recommended that students choose group roles throughout the unit (Leader, Recorder, Presenter, Timekeeper, Artist.) These groups receive text and other materials in their groups and they are to follow the same type of non-fiction/evaluative reading analysis that is being modeled for them. Jigsaw share-out will follow at the end of each thematic area.

Logistics:

Use the resources linked in the following pages to create one folder per thematic area per group.

Example:

Each thematic area has Groups 1-4. Therefore when studying DOGS, teachers are modeling non-fiction reading strategies while using the Michael Vick Dog Fighting Case as a model text. Students then break into groups and receive one of the follow folders:

Group 1 Folder: Stray Dogs in Thailand

Group 2 Folder: High kill/No kill/pounds/shelters in US

Group 3 Folder: Breeders vs. Puppy Mills in the US

Group 4 Folder: Exotic Animals as Pets

This folder should contain copies of the articles for students, websites they must consult, and a disc with relevant photographs and videos to enhance learning (all provided in this Curriculum Unit.) The DVD that accompanies this unit comprehensively provides the photos, videos, links and soundbites that concern the topics presented from my trip to Thailand. Each group will receive their folder and a touch kit on each new theme.

Key Words: Evaluate, Critical Analysis, Example, Explanation, Determine, Humane, Inhumane

Word of Advice: Students should maintain reading their fiction text in class at least 15 minutes a day and keeping reading logs/reading responses at home throughout this non-fiction unit.

Resources for Intro Week:

Day 1- What is this unit? What does Animal Rights mean?

How will this unit be structured?

Also the appropriate time for a pre-assessment Argumentative Writing Piece to take place in Writing Workshop:

Today we start our new Animal Rights Unit where we will better enhance our non-fiction reading skills and better organize our ability to argue about issues we can evaluate.

Teaching Point: What are animal rights? And why should I care?

Day 2- In Writing Workshop, students complete a pre-assessment writing activity in the form of an Argument (Opinion) letter. Teachers may choose to use text concerning the fairness of using horse-drawn carriages in NYC Parks.

The prompt should read something like this:

“This week, NYC decided it would build 4 more zoos so that each borough would have its own animal paradise. Brooklyn’s Zoo will be located in Carroll Gardens, a residential neighborhood with a large population of students who could benefit from the fun of visiting a zoo and learning about all the animals. The zoo plans on having elephants, tigers, zebras, monkeys and even farm animals like chickens and cows! Some people are fighting the building of the zoos because of issues surrounding Animal Rights and the health of the animals there. All students are asked to write a letter to Mayor Bloomberg expressing their own opinion about zoos so that all voices can be heard. Letters should be addressed to May Bloomberg, 1 City Hall, NYC, NY 10001.”

A similar version of this writing activity will take place at the end of the unit to function as a post-assessment.

Day 3- Share out of letters from students, followed by whole-class goal setting activity for the unit. On the board, and potentially on a notecard to be stapled in students folders, make a list of goals for the unit, such as:

- Learn more about Animal Rights
- Improve our Non-fiction Reading
- Decide what we really believe about issues regarding animals- zoos, dog-fighting, pets, elephants and conservation
- Learn about a new culture- Thailand
- Improve our group work skills

Day 4- Where did Ms. Reedy go this summer? And why should we care?

An explanation of Thailand and Vietnam and why Ms. Reedy went. Photos, video and map should be presented. Followed by an explanation of why this matters to us. Independent Work: Students read short non-fiction text about Thailand and write 2 questions they have about Thailand. These questions should be placed on a notecard and stapled into their notebooks to answer as they receive more information.

1st Week (DOGS):

Noticing text elements and what they do to the meaning of the text

Day 1 (Read aloud) Students read news article about Michael Vick and the dog-fighting scandal as a class.

- a. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZYk91q0Tyk> CNN story of dog-fighting scandal- 2 min.
 - b. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBZdj4RfQA> Gruesome details emerge regarding Michael Vick Dog Fighting Scandal
- Teachers model thinking.
 - Students then move to work groups. Determine Group Roles and read text selections of various perspectives. Talking prompts to guide similar thinking can be used.

Rest of Week's Teaching Point:

Phenomenal non-fiction readers pay attention to table of contents, fonts, bullets, headings, photos, captions, graphs and boxes as they read. (Depth of Knowledge Level 3)

Mini-lessons for the week:

Students complete a non-fiction text scavenger hunt with a text in their folder. Items they look for are the elements they have just highlighted in the model text such as "table of contents, headings, graphs, captions, ect."

2. Pay attention to these text elements. Read a section of text without an important heading, caption, ect.... Determine the main idea of the section. Then add the text extra. Now determine the main idea again. Notice the change in main idea. Answer the question: Why is it important to pay attention to the extras?

3. Next, practice predicting/creating/writing headings and subheadings and captions for a piece of text. Write them in so that they make more sense and have more cohesive structure.

4. The actual reading of a text means constantly confirming, revising or adding to one's initial expectations from the text. Teach students to read with curiosity. The goal that readers find their expectations become more focused and specific. "Oh, this is not just about tigers. It's about how the confinement of tigers in zoos is not healthy for the tiger."

Materials Needed: Resources, text elements scavenger hunt, copies of articles for each student so they can mark them up with adding text elements.

Differentiation: Texts with lines where headings, subheadings and captions to should be; Prompting questions for students to write in the text elements; 1:1 work and group roles.

TEXT RESOURCES FOR DOGS:

Teacher Model Topic: Michael Vick dog fighting

Student Work Groups in following areas:

1. Stray dogs in Thailand	<p>http://www.mongabay.com/external/stray_dogs_thailand.htm Stray Dogs in Thailand- Buddhism</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stray_dogs_in_Bangkok, Wikipedia Stray Dogs in Bangkok</p>
2. High kill/No Kill/pounds/shelters in US – a visit from Roscoe (from high kill shelter in GA)?	<p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ_XK00Eqj4 A Small Furry Prayer: Dog Rescue Ranch Video</p> <p>A Small Furry Prayer: Dog Rescue and the Meaning of Life - Steven Kotler</p> <p>http://www.examiner.com/animal-welfare-in-tampa-bay/how-animals-at-a-high-kill-shelter-really-die Newspaper article “How animals at a high kill shelter really die”</p> <p>http://www.blackdogrescueproject.com/no-kill-shelters.html, What’s the best type of shelter?</p>
3. Breeders vs. Puppy Mills in US – a visit from Olive (from breeder)?	<p>http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/puppy_mills/ Puppy Mill explanation (+video) from Humane Society</p> <p>http://www.pupmillrescue.com/joey's_page.htm News articles of Puppy Mill shut down case</p>
4. Exotic Animals as Pets	<p><i>(interview from Grace about keeping pygmy goats and sugar gliders)</i></p> <p>ATTACHED TO THIS DOCUMENT</p>
Additional Texts for the week could be:	<p>Animal Rights (Introducing Issues with Opposing Viewpoints) - William Dudley</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Animal Rights: Noble Cause or Needless Effort? (USA Today's Debate: Voices and Perspectives) - Marna Owen 2. Equal Rights for Animals (New Directions) - Rosalind Kerven

2nd Week (ZOOS):

Determining Main Idea (box) and supporting details (bullets)

Week's Teaching Point:

Non-fiction readers determine the main idea (box) and the supporting details (bullets) as they read. They keep track of these in boxes and bullets notes as they read.

Mini-lessons for the week:

1. Students must chunk a text and say back the important information as a summary. Give students a piece of text that they draw boxes in to chunk. After students have chunked each paragraph or subsection, they write a summary of that section on a boxes and bullets outline. It is extremely important that the students ascertain the main idea (box) and the supporting details (bullets). Avoid letting students pick up smaller (details) bullets without connecting them to bigger boxes (main ideas). Continually ask "what is the big idea that this text is teaching and what are the supporting details that connect with this?"
2. This same procedure should be repeated throughout the week with various texts.

Differentiation: Students use graphic organizer to track their boxes and bullets. They have probing questions and group work/1:1 instruction.

TEXT RESOURCES FOR ZOOS

Teacher Model Topic:	Baby Tiger holding along with Chimp Video. <u>Zoo Story: Life in the Garden of Captives</u> - Thomas French text selections throughout the week. All folders also contain selections of Zoo Story.
1. Alligator batting at Alligator farm in Bangkok	http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2010/mar/10/alligator-wrestling-daredevils-getting/ article about alligator wrestling getting professionally organized (in US)
2. Sanctuaries vs. Circuses	http://www.helpelephants.com/circuses.html <i>Elephant Life in Circuses</i> http://www.helpelephants.com/circuses.html <i>Elephant Life in Sanctuaries</i>
3. Merit building from feeding zoo animals at Alligator farm in Bangkok. Zoos vs. Sanctuaries.	http://www.helpelephants.com/inside_zoos.html <i>Elephant Life in Zoos</i> http://www.helpelephants.com/zoos_vs_sanctuaries.html <i>Zoos vs. Sanctuaries Graph</i>
4. Birdcage culture in Thailand	Short article about birdcage making attached to this file

3rd Week (ELEPHANTS):

Determining Importance and Synthesizing in Expository Non-fiction Text

Week's Teaching Point: Non-fiction text comes in many different structures. Readers understand the text more when they pay attention to the structure of the text.

Mini-lessons for the week:

Each day students learn about a different structure to non-fiction text. They are: Cause/Effect, Time-order Sequencing (or Chronological Sequencing), Problem/Solution, Comparison/Contrast, Question/Answer.

Students will read an example of these different types of text as a class. Then they will highlight the features that make this type of writing distinct. Students should make cheat sheet cards that they keep stapled in the back of their notebook that explain the features of each type of text.

When students break into their work groups to dive into their own texts, they must determine what type of non-fiction text they are reading and what features determine that type of text. These same non-fiction structures should be carried into Writer's Workshop as students explore writing various forms of non-fiction on their own.

Differentiation: Students read leveled texts; enact work group roles that highlight their individual skill set; can be told the type of non-fiction text they are reading and hunt for the features that make it that on their own; use graphic organizers to organize their thinking.

TEXT RESOURCES FOR ELEPHANTS

Teacher Model Topic:	The elephant conservation center in Lampang, Thailand. http://www.help elephants.com/video_and_audio.html Video and Audio from Help Elephants website
1. Elephants and painting- show painting- what does this tell us about elephants?	The Struggle for Survival : The Elephant Problem - John Hanks http://www.help elephants.com/elephant_conservation.html The Truth about Elephant Conservation
2. Elephant hospital. Preciousness of elephants- Royal Chang- in Thailand.	http://asianelephantstoday.com/2010/10/14/worlds-first-elephant-hospital/ Short article/video on the elephant hospital Article on Royal White Elephant attached to this document
3. Elephants in Circuses.	http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/circuses.aspx "Circuses" about elephant abuse caught on tape on PETA website http://www.help elephants.com/circuses.html Elephant Life in Circuses
4. Elephant Abuses Throughout the World	http://www.help elephants.com/video_and_audio.html Video and Audio from Help Elephants website http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-03-18-circus-elephant-trial_N.htm "Animal Rights, Circus Lawyers Differ on Elephants," article for flipside of issue http://www.all-creatures.org/alert/alert-20090527-3.html Story of Ned's tragic death http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/426640/the_demise_of_the_thai_asian_elephant.html?cat=47 "The Demise of the Thai Asian Elephant," news article by Cassandra James
Extension Tasks	http://www.help elephants.com/index.html Excellent website for extension work

4th Week (ANIMAL CONSERVATION):

Skills for finding facts and Big Ideas in Non-fiction Text

This week's teaching point:

Non-fiction readers continue to gather information about animal rights, while they further practice detecting facts that support main ideas in a non-fiction text.

Students should also recognize by the end of the week that each non-fiction text has one big idea, and this idea is determined by the author who has a specific viewpoint.

Lessons this week:

1. While students read information about Animal Conservation, they highlight important details and keep thorough notes. They continue the work of reevaluating their predictions and thoughts based on new information. Teachers use the model text to continue to highlight these skills.
- 2.
3. Readers must look for the big idea of any text by examining the facts and main ideas of the text. Readers can then acknowledge the idea the author is trying to say.
- 4.
5. Once the reader understands the main ideas and what the author is trying to say about the topic,, then the reader can understand what the perspective of the author truly is.

Differentiation: This week moves at a slower pace so those students that are struggling can receive 1:1 attention from teachers. This is also an opportunity for the teacher to work strongly each group.

TEXT RESOURCES FOR ANIMAL CONSERVATION

Teacher Model Topic:	Elephant conservation center in Lampang, Thailand. Start with text that describes the center. Lesson on questioning what the author says. What is fact based here and what is not? My photos and Nick News Video.
1. Water Buffalo Training Camp in Thailand	http://www.chiangmai-chiangrai.com/backbone-of-thailand.html article & photos, a little hard for 8 th Graders, should edit down
2. California Condor saved from extinction	<u>California Condors (Returning Wildlife)</u> - John Becker
3. Extinction of Buffalo in US-conservation projects	<u>They Came from the Bronx: How the Buffalo Were Saved from Extinction</u> - Neil Waldman
4. Cock Fighting in Thailand	http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/cockfighting.aspx , article from PETA about cock fighting http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHWWVFzJ06k , Flipside of cockfighting- and Adrenaline sport http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjxH-rd-EFY , Thai traditional dance of Cock Fight

5th Week (FOOD INDUSTRY)

Evaluating the Rights and Wrongs of What We Read

Teaching Point this week:

Using the main ideas and supporting details that we read about in this unit, we must focus on determining what we really think about the issues around Animal Rights.

Mini-lessons:

Students should partner with members of their group to have a conversation using text prompts such as, “This text stated....which made me think...” “Then this other text stated....which made me change my thinking...Now I think...” “I agree with.....because....” “I disagree with.... because....”

Teachers should model this type of conversation while also demonstrating how their opinions must be backed up with evidence and supporting details.

Students must then put their thoughts into writing in their notebooks. They should organize their writing in the way they learned in Writer’s Workshop, utilizing the Boxes and Bullets strategy.

Ultimately students will be given the identical structure of an assignment that they began with- letter writing to an official regarding concerns of animal rights. This final product letter should be based off of two texts and be very precise and specific. It should discern main ideas and supporting details while allowing students to properly evaluate multiple pieces of information they have read. Much of this work has hopefully been completed in writer’s workshop throughout the unit.

TEXT RESOURCES FOR FOOD INDUSTRY

Teacher Model Topic:	<p>Thai food! Ms. Reedy's photo journey and text explanation of Thai food culture!</p> <p><i>Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution videos "What's Really in a Chicken Nugget"</i></p>
1. Tyson Chicken Industry in US	<p>http://www.tyson.com , Tyson's website is very family friendly</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nM8oyrKY_ZE Tyson chicken commercial with children "I Hate Everything"</p> <p>https://secure.peta.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1121 The other side from PETA (video has inappropriate for school language) so stick to text or edit interviews</p>
2. Free-Range Organic Animal Farming	<p>Visit with an organic farmer (Everett Kramer), students write interview questions and interview him about the pros and cons of farming. (interview sheet attached to this file)</p>
3. Beef Industry in the US	<p>Chew on This</p>
4. Food Culture in Thailand- Produce	<p>http://thaifood.about.com/od/introthaicooking/a/healthbenefits.htm Article on Health benefits of Thai Cuisine</p> <p><i>Amazing Tastes of Thailand book</i></p>
Supporting materials:	<p><i>Omnivore's Dilemma- Student Edition</i></p>

Small Group Work With Narrative Non-fiction Text

Students will approach Narrative Non-fiction, as opposed to Expository Non-fiction, throughout the unit. When the whole class reads a narrative text, teachers should provide lessons around the differences in approach and structure between narrative and expository texts. More often, though, students will be given a narrative non-fiction text for independent work in their folder. Students will need the skills to digest the information. Small group work is the solution to this problem. The teacher can demonstrate these skills in a small group that meets for mini-lessons and sets students upon their independent work. Teaching goals below are an adaptation of teaching points provided by the Reading and Writing Project at TC.

Students must recognize that most narrative non-fiction has these central elements:

Focuses on the goals and struggles of a central character
Text conveys and underlying idea
May culminate in an achievement or a disaster

A progression of lessons could look like:

1. Read non-fiction narratives as stories with main characters. Treat larger groups or ideas, such as The Asian Elephant or Elephants in a Zoo, as a main character with a series of character traits and challenges that must be overcome.
2. Look for underlying ideas in narrative non-fiction. A writer does not write narrative non-fiction to convey facts, but instead to convey a Big Idea. As a reader, detect what that Big Idea is.
3. Achievement/Disaster Texts: Template in Narrative Nonfiction. Pay attention to the path of a story. Most non-fiction narrative culminates with a big success or a big failure. Follow that story arc to better understand the book.
4. Envisioning work. Challenge yourself to continually envision what is happening in the story and ask yourself if that makes sense. If it does, then you are probably on track!

Final Project:

The final project takes place in Writer's Workshop. Students write an argumentative piece non-fiction reading based off multiple texts they have read in the unit. Rubrics should reflect:

- Intro with clear topic stated, opinion stated, organization structure laid out
- Followed by reasons supported by details
- Use of words and phrases that link opinion and reason, transitions
- A concluding section relation to the opinion presented

Supporting topics/materials & topics for extension projects:

- Thai folktale demonstrating respect/admiration for elephants
- Scenes from The Cove –

In the 1960s, Richard O'Barry enjoyed a lucrative career as a specialized animal trainer; he captured the five dolphins that were used in the popular television series Flipper, and taught them the tricks and special commands they used on the show. Four decades later, O'Barry has renounced his former life as a trainer and become an animal rights activist, speaking out against the hunting of aquatic mammals and keeping them in captivity. Utilizing state-of-the-art techniques, including hidden microphones and cameras in fake rocks, the an investigative team uncovers how the small seaside village of Taji, Japan serves as a horrifying example of the animal rights crimes happening worldwide. They uncover the great secret of massive and systematic dolphin killing.

- Whaling in Japan
- Jane Gooddall and her work with Chimps
- Zoos during WWII
- The Galapagos Islands
- Corral Reefs/Great Barrier Reefs
- Ivory Trade

Thai Crafts

Horn birdcage making

Source: <http://www.bangkok-hotels-guide.net/thai-crafts.htm>

Raising Java doves is a longstanding tradition, an art of training which the enthusiast must study and carry out correctly. The bird's home is a cage, which is very important, and some bird fanciers are happy to pay high prices for fine cages, as they consider making birdcages to be an art, especially old cages with fine handiwork, such as the specialised "Sa-teng" shape from gala and "Ko-yi" form Pattani. The older are rarer they are, the more expensive they get.

The area around Community 5 in Nong Jork has many people making beautiful birdcages that are very popular with the dove fanciers, whose tastes determine the shape and size of the cages. For instance, a classic Sa-teng or Ko-yi cage might start at 3,000 Baht and go up to as much as 50,000 Baht.

Material: Choice of material is characteristic of this kind of birdcage, such as rattan, ivory and talipot tree stem, and wood from the woody climber Dalbergia for the bars.

Hook: Cast in metal and carved, and it is popular to carve in shapes of auspicious animals such as swans and dragons.

Roof: Made from wood or ivory sawed and turned on a lathe. Sometimes it is carved with intricate patterns, and sometimes ivory is also used to make the patch.

Bars: Made from the horns of an albino buffalo which are translucent, shiny, and extremely rare, or wood is used such as Plerocapus or Dalbergia.

See Ms. Reedy's Photo and Video of Thai birdcages to get more evidence!

The Royal White Elephant of Thailand

Source: <http://www.visit-chiang-mai-online.com/royal-white-elephant-thailand.html>

The legend of the Royal White Elephant of Thailand is upheld in the deep rooted **Theravada Buddhism** beliefs of the Kingdom & can be seen in the form of large statues & paintings throughout the temples scattered across the country.

Within the story of the Lord Buddha it describes how Queen Maya (the mother of Buddha) on the eve of giving birth to him, has a dream that she is presented with a lotus flower, the symbol for both purity & knowledge by a large white elephant with six tusks.

The royal white elephant has been considered to be a sacred creature in Thailand for centuries. As a symbol of fertility and success & it was believed that young kings would have long and prosperous reigns if they kept several white elephants in their stables.

These elephants were themselves treated like royalty, they were not subject to any of the duties that normal **Working Elephants** would face, were cared for by a royal veterinarian, and fed only the best foods, as the death of one would signal disaster for the kingdom!

The Buddhist text "The Three Worlds" covers this by saying "the magnificent king has seven things: a perfect wife, and able treasurer, a wise chief minister, a swift horse, a wheel of the law and a precious gem to guide his actions: **and the most noble of white elephants.**"

The royal white elephant was so important that they were never taken to war, unlike their ordinary-colored counterparts & were also not ridden during processions, as they were seen as real life manifestations of their gods.

Similar to a beauty pageant, there were specific criteria that had to be followed for an elephant to be "approved" as a royal white elephant, these were split into seven distinct features only present in the genuine pachyderm:

* skin - must be light grey, light brown, pinkish or a pale skin (unlike the normal dark grey).

* eyes - the color around the center of the eyes should be pinkish or white.

* palate - pink or white upper palate, without ridges.

* ears - pink or white ears with hairs evenly distributed behind.

* These animals were incredibly rare, and were eagerly hunted, scouting parties were sent out by the various kings of Siam (Thailand) to look for these animals and rewards were even offered. If anybody found a white elephant, they would immediately be presented to the king, as mandated by law!

When a royal white elephant was found, it became cause for great celebrations for the whole country. It would be brought into the capital amidst a glorious procession.

The kings of Siam (Thailand) revered the royal white elephant so much that it actually appeared on the national flag right up until the early 20th century, when it was changed to being the current red, white & blue that is seen today.

Even today the royal white elephant is held in high esteem, **His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej** owns ten animals that live in stables in the heart of Bangkok.

Theme: Food Industry
Group 2: Organic Free-Range Farming

Your group is special this week! You will have a special guest join your group for one day. This guest is an organic farmer who will be a wonderful resource for your research.

Your task today is to generate a list of 10-20 questions that you will ask him about organic farming. Remember, we discussing animal rights! So you want to make sure you ask a lot of questions about the treatment of animals in organic farming and in non-organic farming.

You can also ask him any other questions about the food industry and he might be able to answer them.

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____

Question: _____

Response: _____