

24a

I sprinted silently through the maze-like forest as I loaded my bow, I tightened the string then let go. I watched intently as the arrow sliced through the air and pierced its target. I walked slowly over to my prey, listening to the crackle of leaves under my footsteps. It was a clean shot for it layed on the ground limp and lifeless. I thought if this was the life of a Native-American living on the edge, rely on your own talents and those of others to survive. I thought if I could travel through time I would go back to the past, before America became tamed - when the Indians ruled the land, because it has always amazed me how they lived, their art intrigues me, and I find interest in the ways they hunt. I picked up my dead prey and headed back home.

First, the life Indians lived has always caught my interest like a cat to fish. They survived hardships we could no longer imagine today. Every day they lived such certain lives, they trusted each other to live - to survive. Today, we can no longer trust those that are near us even those who you call "friends". They could drag you down to the darkest pit and leave you. The Indians had pride, something that most Americans today either lack or have to much of. They respected each other as a loving family, relying upon one another, while today in America we have found ourselves dragging each other down to get to the top. But all we do is tear ourselves down even more while in the time when the Indians ruled that would have been barbaric.

Second though, their art arouses my love and passion. They put so much hard work and time in one pot, it would not just be a pot, but a small piece of artwork. While today art is over looked the Indians noticed and respected it highly. They saw the true importance of it all.

All the colors were exotic, and could catch the color of the blazing sunset on a brush or in clothing. But I think the most thing that interests me in their art is that it is unique. It is so foreign and almost alien to us today, that it makes you wonder. Wonder about life, the forgotten mysteries, and secrets held in the picture itself.

Finally and most important, I love the way they hunt. Hunters in tribes were highly honored and skilled. So many people underestimate the skill it takes to launch an arrow through the night sky, or a knife into the heart of your prey, or to walk silently with the growing world. The first time I shot an arrow I felt my adrenalin pumping through my veins like fire. I had hit the target straight-on and I quickly went to reload. Soon I moved on to moving, breathing creatures. But the first time I killed a rabbit, I crumbled at its dead feet, feeling something of regret, as a hot tear streamed down my face. It dropped on the rabbit's fur, mixing with the crimson blood. I never forgot that day. I had found something I didn't know I had - the power to kill. I do not take it lightly for it is a serious matter. That might be why hunters in tribes were so greatly honored. They were not only hunters, but warriors, too.

So I hope you see through my eyes that when I chose to go back to the time when Indians thrived, because of their magnificent art, their life, and their hunting ways. For now I know a secret. It lies deep inside me, next to my heart. I have a relationship to them. A past - an unknown world.

Essay #24**Score Point: 6**

This outstanding essay demonstrates a high degree of proficiency in expository writing skills. The writer chooses to travel “back to the time when Indians thrived,” embedding narrative and descriptive elements into his/her response to richly illustrate and fully develop key ideas. The writer commits some errors in spelling and usage; however, he/she clearly demonstrates extraordinary facility in the use of language and command of syntax to effect the reader (“the first time I killed a rabbit, I crumbled at it’s dead feet, feeling something of regret, as a hot tear streamed down my face. It dropped on the rabbit’s fur, mixing with the crimson blood.”). The response displays superior unity and organization.