

## Example 2 Research Writing

### Essential Skills:

- Summarizing sources
- Synthesizing summaries
- Integration of source material
- Citing source material

### Powell's Exploration of the Canyon Country

John Wesley Powell's 1869 exploration of the Green and Colorado rivers, which began in Wyoming and ended in new western territory of the United States, opened up uncharted regions of the Southwest to adventurers and opportunity seekers back home east of the Mississippi River. In a way, Powell and his crew were the Corps of Discovery of the Colorado, just as Lewis and Clark's expedition explored the Missouri and its tributaries in 1804. **As *History Net* states**, "The mighty Colorado River's course had, until then, been a mystery . . . a blank space on the best maps available" ("**Mapping the Colorado**"). This mystery of untamed rivers and unexplored canyons made the journey dangerous but certainly also exciting and worthy of the charting and scientific exploration Powell undertook. The Civil War hero took off from Green River in May of 1869 with, **according to the Powell Museum**, a huge crowd of onlookers cheering and waving to the Civil War veteran and his crew as they departed in their boats, somewhat expecting that the ten men would not survive the long journey ("**The Life**"). However, the crowd's general feeling of doom as Powell set off downriver was not what Powell was anticipating. In fact, he had planned extensively for the months-long journey. **The Kaibab Organization notes** that Powell's boats were constructed especially for the wild river conditions, to "provide additional buoyancy in rough water" and to be lightweight but strong, and that the huge supply of food and equipment was "divided equally among the three oak boats so that in the event a boat was lost, no singular item would be gone with it" (**Ribokas**). Furthermore, Powell already had ventured many times into the mountains and canyons of the west and had proven himself to be a tough, intrepid explorer, despite having had half his right arm blown off in a Civil War battle.