

Florida Treasures
Grade 3 Teacher’s Editions
Anchor Papers: Student Writing Samples
Unit Writing Workshop

Grade 3 Unit 1: Personal Narrative

Score Point 2

Jen’s Car Trip
by Larry C.

My famile drove to visit my Granpa in Springfield. Jen hates her car seat, she’s my baby sister. She really likes to eat mashed up pears. I knew they’re would be truble. I was sitting in the back seat with her.

She cried and through stuff. I tryed playing with her. She just kept throwing things. Even Mom couldn’t get her to stop.

When Dad got in the back seat with us, Jen fell asleep. She snores! I felt better then.

I gave her a big kiss when she woke up.

Focus—The writer has attempted to tell a story about a car trip. Some of the details are not on target, such as “She really likes to eat pears,” which does not belong in this story. There are few personal responses or feelings in the paper.

Organization—Some events are told out of order, making the story difficult to follow.

Support—Larry could have used more sequence or time-order words to help his story move along. Also, his word choice is somewhat limited and does not help the readers to visualize the events that are happening in the narrative.

Conventions—Common words are misspelled, though sentence structure is correct for the most part. Some fragments make communication a problem.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—A score point 1 paper is not focused on the personal narrative as much as the 2-point paper. There are lots of extraneous details that are not applicable to this story.

Organization—There is very little evidence of organization. Events and details are included in a disconnected way, so the story is difficult to understand.

Support—Transition words are not present. There is no development of ideas such as the writer's reaction to his sister's snores—"a big kiss."

Conventions—Spelling errors are frequent and make communication unclear. Sentence structure and fragments also contribute confusion.

Grade 3 Unit 1: Personal Narrative

Score Point 4

Spring at the Ranch

by Keri L.

Last May, my parents took me to a sheep ranch out West. My dad's friend owns the ranch. Dad worked there when he was younger. He wanted I and Mom to see it, too. Baby animals are so cute! It's only sheep though, no cows or chicks.

When I first got there, I thought Bill's ranch was very peaceful. Bill raises lots of sheep. The wide green pastures and the herds of fluffy sheep. The ranch is a busy place though. Most of the sheep gets sheered for wool. Blankets, sweaters, stuff like that. Dad explained that sheering can't hurt them.

My favorite thing was seeing the spring lambs. They looked so sweet! Their legs were very shaky. They stayed close to the mothers. One lamb had no mother. Mom and me feeded this little one with a baby bottle. It was a really good trip and the plane ride was fun. I would go there again.

Focus—The writer understands the purpose for writing and mainly focuses on the topic, although some loosely related information is included.

Organization—Some attempt at an organizational pattern is made. The response exhibits a limited number of transitional devices such as time-order words. Paper exhibits a general sense of wholeness.

Support—The writer attempts to support his or her ideas with details in parts of the response. Word choice is generally adequate but may be somewhat limited.

Conventions—Basic knowledge of conventions is demonstrated. The writer does not consistently use pronouns correctly and sometimes fails to include full sentences in the report. Some common words are misspelled.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The writing is generally focused on the topic with some extraneous information. The paper may lack an introductory sentence such as “Last May, my parents took me to a sheep ranch out West,” but on the whole presents and maintains a unifying idea.

Organization—The organizational pattern is somewhat undeveloped. Ideas are not always presented in a logical order. The exposition is composed of loosely related details and does not exhibit the logical sequence of a paper with a score of 4.

Support—Word choice is adequate but predictable and may be vague. The writing does not contain many details such as “the wide green pastures (pastures) and the herds of fluffy sheep” or “Their legs were very shakey (shaky).”

Conventions—Knowledge of the conventions of capitalization and punctuation is demonstrated. Most commonly used words are spelled correctly. The writer has attempted to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Some errors of syntax occur.

Grade 3 Unit 1: Personal Narrative

Score Point 5

A Weekend in New York City

by Frank M.

When my family and I visited New York City I really did not know what to expect. Last vacation we went to Canada. We took a taxi from the airport and drove over a long bridge. It was night, the city was lit up with twinkling lights.

The next morning we explored New York. We walked up Fifth Avenue, a busy street with lots of fancy stores. The buildings were so tall, you almost forgot about the sky. Then we reached Central Park. The strangest thing was that there were horses and carriages lined up all along the street.

“Is that how lots of people travel here?” I asked Mom.

She laughed and said, No, they take buses and subways. The horse carriages just for fun.”

My brother and I wanted to ride the subway. It was really superfast. When it was time to go back to Florida, Dad said, “What was your favorite part, boys?

We both said “The subway!

Focus—The writer demonstrates adequate understanding of the purpose for writing. The writing relates directly to the topic, and focus is maintained throughout.

Organization—The writing demonstrates a planned organizational pattern. Ideas are presented in a logical order, and transitional devices such as time-order words signal the connection between events and between sentences. The writing demonstrates a sense of wholeness.

Support—Specific details support main ideas throughout the response. Word choice is adequate but lacks precision in some areas of the response. Elaborative details are used to good effect in some sentences.

Conventions—Frequently used words are spelled correctly, and grammatical usage is generally correct. The writer uses basic capitalization and punctuation properly, but sometimes fails to incorporate quotation marks where needed.

Grade 3 Unit 1: Personal Narrative

Score Point 6

A Camping Surprise

by Carmen J.

Last summer, my family and I went on our first camping trip. We visited a beautiful lake near our town. I was excited about hiking and swimming.

First, we set up our tent and ate dinner. Then, we sang songs and told stories. I had so much fun! I was really tired when I went to sleep.

The next morning, strange noises woke me up. Finally, I walked outside. I saw squirrels were dropping acorns on the roof of the tent. A minute later, I tripped over my backpack. I had left it out by mistake. The raccoons had ripped it open in the night. They stole nuts, fruit, and potato chips. I will never make that mistake again!

Focus—Carmen writes about a trip she took with her family, and although it is a relatively short piece, she covers everything she needs to and does an excellent job. She has a clear topic stated in a topic sentence, and she stays focused throughout the response.

Organization—The writer tells about the way she felt during the trip and the fun she had, as well as a lesson that she learned. All the details are grouped so that this personal narrative is cohesive and easy to follow.

Support—Carmen uses time-order words to make sequence clear and easy to understand. Her work is lively, interesting, and funny.

Conventions—The writer uses good syntax, grammar, and spelling so communication is clear. Carmen uses correct punctuation to give her paper a personal and interesting flavor and a strong conclusion.

Grade 3 Unit 2: Persuasive Letter

Score Point 2

1404 march St.
New winston, NC 27610
january 7, 20__

Dear Mr. Rivera,

Our classroom needs a pet. a small reptil called the collared lizard. My family saw many of these reptils on a trip through Oklahoma. My brother liked them, they look really strange.

We study many different animals in science. Taking care of a lizard will be fun. And interesting for everyone.

These lizards run around aquarums. They are awake during the day. They are easy to take care. They jump on rocks and greet people. Collared lizards can be left alone over the weekend too.

Yours truly
Jake W.

Focus—The letter is an attempt to persuade a teacher to get a certain type of classroom pet, and is on target most of the time, but there are not enough persuasive reasons why the collared lizard is the best pet. The writer does not need to include personal information about his family to make his case. He does need more evidence of why he thinks this is the best pet for the classroom.

Organization—Ideas and even paragraphs are out of order and do not help the writer’s cause. The second paragraph would be better as a conclusion, than as the middle of the letter.

Support—The writer does not use enough opinion words to buttress his facts. He needs to be stronger in his arguments about why the collared lizard would be a good pet for the classroom.

Conventions—Spelling has not been checked with a dictionary. Capitalization and punctuation are problems. Sentence fragments and run-on sentences interfere with straightforward communication.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The response is only slightly focused on a persuasive appeal. The writer does not marshal his or her arguments in a convincing manner, and thus he or she fails to persuade the audience about the cause.

Organization—Opinions and details are not grouped in a logical progression so the language is choppy and disjointed. The lack of organization does not help the reader to follow the letter to a conclusion which would make the reader agree with the writer.

Support—There are even fewer facts, details, and opinions to sway the audience than there are in the score point 2 paper about owning a collared lizard.

Conventions—Spelling, syntax, and other mechanics are mostly incorrect and do not help to further the cause the writer seems to be espousing.

Grade 3 Unit 2: Persuasive Letter

Score Point 4

41 Barker Road
Southport, CT 06890

February 4, 20__

Dear Liza,

How are you? My mom suggested you go to Camp Lakeside with me this summer. I think this is a really great idea. Let me tell you about the camp so that you and them can make a good decision about it.

Camp Lakeside is a camp for boys and girls right near a beautiful blue lake. It offers lots of activities. Like learning to paddle a canoe, take nature hikes, do arts and crafts, and learn water safety. There's also lots of other things like softball and having campfire sings in the nights. I went last year and I loved it.

If you and me go to the same camp, we could be in the same cabin. I bet.. You could meet all the kids I met last year. We will have the best time! Please ask your mom and dad if you can go. I really hope you do.

Your friend,

Megan

Focus—The paper demonstrates an adequate sense of purpose and audience. The response is directly related to the topic, and the focus on making a persuasive appeal is consistent.

Organization—An organizational structure is evident. Appropriate letter form is observed. The writer presents supporting reasons in a logical, coherent order. The paper demonstrates a sense of wholeness.

Support—The writer uses a number of facts, reasons, and persuasive words to support the appeal. Vocabulary is adequate although it may be lacking in precision.

Conventions—Most frequently used words are spelled correctly. Varied sentence structures are employed. Syntactical errors occur but do not impede communication.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The writing is generally focused on the topic with some extraneous information. The paper may lack such a cohesive argument as “My mom suggested that you go to Camp Lakeside with me this summer. I think this is a really great idea.” The response nevertheless includes a unifying idea.

Organization—An organizational pattern has been attempted, although lapses are evident. Ideas are not always presented in a logical order, or transitional devices may be lacking. In some areas, the exposition is composed of loosely related details and does not exhibit the logical sequence of a paper with a score of 4.

Support—Word choice is adequate but may seem vague or at times immature. Details such as “a beautiful blue lake” and “campfire sings (songs) in the nights (at night)” are sparse. The response does not feature persuasive language as in the paper with a score of 4: “a really great idea” and “We would have the best time!”

Conventions—Basic knowledge of the conventions of capitalization and punctuation is demonstrated. In general, commonly used words are spelled correctly. There is some variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Some sentence fragments occur.

Grade 3 Unit 2: Persuasive Letter

Score Point 5

Dear Mrs. Jackson,

Do you need someone to help rake leaves and shovel snow around your house? I would like to do some jobs and hope you will consider hiring me if you need any help.

I would do a good job if you give me a chance. I always help out around my house and Mom and Dad say I am a hard worker. My teachers also recommend me for finishing whatever I start and doing a good job.

Another reason is that I'm very careful. Before starting a chore I make sure I know exactly what needs to be done. I am careful with tools and never leave them lying around when the job is done.

So please call me if you have any jobs I can do. My phone number is 555-4343.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cal B.

Focus—The writing demonstrates adequate understanding of the purpose of a persuasive letter. The response relates directly to the topic, and focus is maintained throughout the paper.

Organization—The response demonstrates an organizational structure appropriate to a persuasive letter. Points are presented in a logical order, and transitional devices signal the connection between points and reasons. Writing demonstrates a sense of wholeness.

Support—Specific details support main ideas and reasons throughout the response. Word choice is adequate but lacks precision in some areas of the letter. Persuasive language supports the argument.

Conventions—Frequently used words are spelled correctly, and grammatical usage is generally correct. The writer uses basic capitalization and punctuation properly, and there is variety in sentence structure.

Grade 3 Unit 2: Persuasive Letter

Score Point 6

34 Oak St.
Spring Valley, NY 10977
October 12, 20__

Dear Mrs. Britt,

I think a guinea pig would make the best pet for our classroom. I have owned a guinea pig for two years. It wiggles its nose at me all the time! I have learned that these animals are lots of fun to watch.

Guinea pigs are also very quiet. They will not disturb us while we are working. In addition, they are easy to care for. Students could take turns cleaning the guinea pig's home every other day. You can feed a guinea pig for pennies a day. They like to eat fresh vegetables and need fresh water.

A classroom pet will teach us responsibility. It will show us how to keep a pet healthy and safe. I believe that a guinea pig will make a super addition to our room.

Sincerely,
Christie C.

Focus—This is an excellent example of a letter written to persuade people of a point of view. The writer states her opinion in the topic sentence at the beginning. She backs up her view with facts and reasons that reinforce her choice for a classroom pet.

Organization—Christie proceeds in an orderly and logical fashion to set out her reasons for choosing a guinea pig. She includes her own experiences and adds reason why the whole class might benefit from her choice, and she closes her letter with a strong conclusion.

Support—The writer uses opinion words such as “I think” and “I believe” as well as facts about the ease and lack of expense required to care for a guinea pig. She includes her opinions about how much it would help the whole class to have a guinea pig along with her own involvement with her guinea pig at home. She makes her pet sound like fun.

Conventions—Christy has spelled her words correctly and has used proper syntax. She has followed the standard form for a letter; her response is excellent overall.

Grade 3 Unit 3: Fairy Tale

Score Point 2

The Special Garden

by Marla S.

A young girl Ashley lived with her mother. Ashley worked hard to grow food. Plants did not grow.

An old man with a hat came to the garden. He said, "You look tired. Go to bed. Come out to the garden tomorrow."

Ashley went to sleep. When she woke up, she went outside! She was surrounded by food. At the end of the garden, she saw a scarecrow wearing the old man's hat.

Focus—This fairy tale needs background, color, and some evidence of fantasy and imagination. There is no way to grasp characters, setting, and resolution of the problem in the story since the details are so scanty. There is a bare outline of a plot that might have been further developed.

Organization—There is some order to the events, but a scarcity of time-order words makes sequence hard to follow.

Support—This story would be immensely improved by some active verbs and some interesting and more developed descriptive words and phrases. As it stands in this version, it is barely an outline of what could be a very good fairy tale.

Conventions—Spelling and most conventions are correct, but the lack of detail and color detract from the inherent possibilities of the story.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—There is even less focus in a score point 1 paper than in the score point 2 version. It is hard to follow the order of events or see much connection between them. There are a few elements which might form the basis for a fairy tale, but most of the details to develop the story are not included.

Organization—The story is difficult to understand because what events there are do not appear in the correct order. There are no transition or time-order words to help the reader follow the tale.

Support—Details are not developed so there is only a sketchy idea of what the story is about.

Conventions—Some mechanics are in place, but most are incorrect. Spelling is a problem and interferes with communication.

Grade 3 Unit 3: Fairy Tale

Score Point 4

William's Talking Bird

by Derek W.

A long time ago a boy named William lived on an island. It was in the middle of the ocean. He was a lonely boy. For food he had coconuts and bananas. Or he could catch some fish. But he wished he lived in a place with people.

One day he caught a bright green bird, he put it in a cage made of branches. The bird sang, then it got sadder and sadder. It wanted to fly away. He caught it with a net.

"Please let me go the bird begged William.

"No I am lonely and you need to be my friend William told the bird.

"But I could help you the bird said if you let me free I will get you off the island.

William set the bird free. It flew away. William felt bad. Days after that, he sailed away from the island. William got on the ship and sailed away. He went to live in a town and made many friends.

Somehow the bird had kept its promise. The bird flew back to the island and was happy in the coconut trees.

Focus—The writing is mainly focused on the topic, with a clear setting and exposition that introduces the conflict. The response remains focused on the plot.

Organization—An organizational pattern is evident, with a few lapses. The writer uses a limited number of transitional devices such as time-order words to show the relationship between events. The narrative exhibits some sense of completeness.

Support—The writer attempts to elaborate upon events with details in some parts of the response. Word choice is generally adequate but may be somewhat limited.

Conventions—Basic knowledge of conventions of capitalization and punctuation is demonstrated. The writer does not consistently use quotation marks correctly. Syntactical errors occur. Some common words are misspelled.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The writing is generally focused on development of the story with some extraneous information. The paper may lack exposition to set up the story (“A long time ago a boy named William lived on an iland [island]....he was a lonely boy...”) but does present and maintain a unifying plot.

Organization—Plotting is uncertain, with events and details sometimes presented in a non-sequential order, which makes it weaker than the paper with a score of 4.

Support—Word choice is adequate but predictable and at times immature. The writing does not contain many details such as “a bright green bird,” or “a cage made of branches.”

Conventions—Knowledge of the conventions is demonstrated. Most commonly used words are spelled correctly. The writer has attempted to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Some errors of syntax occur.

Grade 3 Unit 3: Fairy Tale

Score Point 5

The Fairy and the Clever Girl

by Becky T.

There was a very clever girl. Her name was Rosie. She lived in a little cotage in the woods. In the day, she milked the cow and fed the pigs. At night, she liked to read.

There were not many books in her house. So she had to read the same ones over and over again. If only she could have some new books to read! One day a fairy stopped at the little house for a glass of milk.

“What do you like best?” asked the fairy.

“I like good stories,” Rosie said. “But I only have a few books.”

“I can help,” the fairy said. “I will get you all the books you want. But you have to do something for me in return. You have to write a story about me. Nobody believes in fairies any more. Your story will convinse them we are for real.”

“Gladly,” said Rosie. She sat down and wrote the story, the fairy took the pages and flew away.

But the next day, there was a whole pile of new books on the table. And by magic, there were always wonderful new stories for Rosie to read.

Focus—The writer demonstrates adequate understanding of the purpose for writing a fairy tale. The exposition introduces a problem, which the conclusion successfully resolves.

Organization—The writing demonstrates a planned organizational pattern, which includes exposition, development, and a conclusion. Events are sequenced in a logical order, and transitional devices such as time-order words signal the connection between events and between sentences. The story demonstrates a sense of wholeness.

Support—Specific details support action throughout most areas of the response. Word choice is adequate but may be repetitive or imprecise. Elaborative details are present.

Conventions—Frequently used words are spelled correctly, and grammatical usage is generally correct. Syntactical errors do not impede communication. The writer uses basic capitalization and punctuation properly, and a variety of sentence structures is used.

Grade 3 Unit 3: Fairy Tale

Score Point 6

A House for a Princess

by Justin B.

Many years ago, a carpenter named Boris lived in a sunny land across the sea. One day Boris read a notice from the king. It said that Princess Lisa would marry the man who built her the best house. The contest would end in a week.

"I know how to build a house. I have the tools, but I have no one to help me," Boris said sadly.

Suddenly one of his nails turned into an elf. "My name is Nailly," the elf said. Nailly looked like a nail. He was thin, and his eyes shone like silver. "I can help you build a house. All of my friends will help."

Then all of the nails in the box turned into elves. They worked all week and built doors, windows, and stairs. The princess looked at all of the houses. At last, she saw Boris's house.

The elves finished the house for Princess Lisa just in time. She smiled at him and said, "What a beautiful home. I want to marry the man who built this!"

Boris and the princess got married and lived in their new home for the rest of their lives. Boris always kept his special box of nails in a safe place!

Focus—This excellent example of a fairy tale begins with a clearly defined setting, some classic characters, including a hero, and a situation that has to be solved. The story stays on target throughout, closing with a time-honored type of happy ending.

Organization—The events of the story are told in a logical and fluid manner, and they follow, one from the other, in the pattern of a well-developed fairy tale.

Support—Elaborative details give the reader a nice chance to visualize the action. The elf named Nailly, for instance, is thin and has eyes that shine like silver.

Conventions—Spelling and other mechanics are carefully wrought and contribute to the pleasure of reading this tale.

Grade 3 Unit 4: How-to Article

Score Point 2

A Place for Treasures!

by Kelsey C.

I made a treasure box for my mom. She loved it! Look around the house for a box. Paist a great picture on it? Paist other things on it that you think will look nice. Buttens might look good?

Be sure to write the words TREASURES BOX on it. Give it to the person. That person will like it!

Focus—The main idea is introduced in the first sentence and continues to be evident throughout the article, but it is not sufficiently developed to be more than minimally helpful to a reader.

Organization—There are no time-order words and no logical steps set out for the reader to follow, essential elements of a how-to article.

Support—More details about the types of objects to affix to the box as well as the method for doing it need to be included to make this a genuine description of how to do a project.

Conventions—Commonly used words are misspelled, which interferes with communication. Syntax, incomplete sentences, and faulty punctuation mar the article.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—There is a very basic description of the project in a 1-point paper, but the actual steps for doing it are left out. The enthusiasm evident in the 2-point paper, in such phrases as “That person will love it!” is lacking as well.

Organization—The writer needs to organize the steps in this process in a more logical manner, using time-order and space-order words, such as *first, then, and finally*.

Support—Details of production are not present, and it is hard to grasp exactly what Kelsey did to make her Treasure Box appealing.

Conventions—Misspelled words, incorrect syntax, and awkward sentence structure make this response an unlikely guide to making a box for treasures.

Grade 3 Unit 4: How-to Article

Score Point 4

Making Bead Necklaces

by Jelani Y.

If you want to make a bead necklace, here's all the steps you'll need. First buy the beads you like. Bigger holes are easier to string. Also you need stretchy string or wire plus hooks and crimp beads, those are the ones that hold the other beads in place. With stretchy you don't need hooks.

Next you design. How do you want your necklace to look. How I do the next part is, I put the hook on one end of the wire. Put the crimp bead on and make a loop around the hook. You will do the same thing with the ring on the other end when all the beads are on. Press the crimp bead with pliers. A special tool called a crimper, too.

So now you put the beads on, right? The last thing is the ring, that gets another crimp bead to hold it on tight just like at the other end. If you do it right the beads don't fall off. That's it!

Focus—The purpose and audience for writing are clear. Writing is generally on topic, and focus is maintained consistently in presenting the instructions.

Organization—An organizational pattern is evident. The writer has tried to put steps in order with some lapses. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness.

Support—The writer attempts to support his or her explanation with the necessary instructional steps. Details are included in some areas of the instructions, with the writer attempting to use time-order and space-order words. Clarity is sometimes impaired by vague language.

Conventions—Some verb form errors occur. Commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. In general, knowledge of the conventions of capitalization and punctuation is demonstrated. Some effort has been made to construct varied sentence structures, but most are simple constructions.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The response is basically focused on the topic with some irrelevant information. Steps in the process are less clear than in the paper with a score of 4, but the writer manages to create a set of instructions.

Organization—The organizational pattern is uncertain. Steps are not always in a logical progression. Essential information would not be presented in the logical sequence of a Score Point 4 paper. Time-order and space-order words are used in some areas of the response but less frequently than in the paper with the higher score (“First...next...at one end...around the hook.”).

Support—Word choice is usually adequate but may be vague. The writing does not contain many details such as “...put the hook on one end of the wire” or “Press the crimp beads with plyers (pliers).”

Conventions—Knowledge of the conventions of grammar and mechanics is demonstrated. Commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. There has been some attempt to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Errors of syntax occur more frequently than in the paper with a score of 4.

Grade 3 Unit 4: How-to Article

Score Point 5

How to Make Play Dough

by Mitchell K.

It's easy to make play dough right at home. Follow these simple steps. Be sure to ask a grownup for help with the stove.

First, get your materials together. You will need a cup of flour, a cup of warm water, two teaspoons of cream of tartar. Also, a teaspoon of oil (corn oil is good) one quarter cup of salt and some food coloring. Unless plain white is okay with you.

Next, mix up all these ingredients in a big cooking pot. The food coloring should go in last. Here is the part to ask a grownup for help. Put the pot on the stove and heat up the mixture. Stir. When it looks smooth, take the dough from the pot. Then you knead it (that means smush it) until the dough feels smooth. Don't burn it when you are doing the cooking part.

Last, put the dough in a plastic bag or other container. You can play with it when it is cool. Be sure to always put it away again so it doesn't dry out. Have fun!

Focus—The purpose and audience for writing are clear. Writing is consistently focused on the topic, with little or no irrelevant information in the explanation.

Organization—A strong organizational pattern is evident with few lapses. The writer has successfully put steps in order. Transitional devices to show steps in sequence are included, as well as space-order words where needed. A sense of completeness is demonstrated.

Support—The writer successfully supports the main point with the necessary instructional steps. Details are included to make instructions understandable. Word choice is generally clear throughout the response.

Conventions—The writer forms verbs and subject-verb agreement correctly; any grammatical or syntactical errors are minor and do not impede communication. Commonly used words are spelled correctly. Knowledge of conventions of spelling and punctuation is demonstrated.

Grade 3 Unit 4: How-to Article

Score Point 6

How to Decorate Your Bedroom

by Alex N.

You can have a great time decorating your bedroom. My brother and I did it. We had fun! You can do the same thing.

First, choose a theme for your room. Is there anything you love? We both love basketball, so we picked basketball as our theme. Then, look around for anything you own that fits your theme. We went through our closet and desks. We found an old basketball hoop and put it over the top of our waste basket. We can take a shot every time we throw something out! We lined up our collection of basketball trading cards underneath the glass on top of our desks.

Next, ask your parents if you can hang posters on the walls. If they say yes, ask them to help you hang them. My posters show basketball stars. You can also make your own pictures, using paper, crayons, or markers. For example, if you like music, you can draw pictures of your favorite musicians. Finally, enjoy your special room!

Focus—The purpose and audience for writing are clear. The focus on the topic is excellent, with little or no irrelevant information included.

Organization—The writer creates a strong organizational pattern, with steps in clear order. Transitional devices help to show steps in sequence, and space-order words appear where needed. A sense of completeness is demonstrated.

Support—The writer successfully supports the main point with the necessary instructional steps. Details make the instructions understandable. Word choice is good throughout.

Conventions— Knowledge of conventions of spelling and punctuation is demonstrated. The writer uses verb forms and subject-verb agreement correctly; any grammatical or syntactical errors do not impede communication. Commonly used words are spelled correctly.

Grade 3 Unit 5: Compare and Contrast

Score Point 2

Jobs That Help

by Kara P.

Doctors and teachers keep their patients and students safe. Doctors and teachers go to college to learn how.

Teachers work with the same students for a long time. Most doctors work in hospitals or in their offices. Teachers work in schools. Teachers teach many subjects. Doctors try to focus on one area. Doctors see many different patients each day.

Doctors and teachers are important.

Focus—The focus is on two types of professions, and there is an attempt made to stay on the topic as the jobs are compared and contrasted.

Organization—The writer uses a different way of grouping information in the second paragraph. Describing first one profession and then the other would have made a stronger paper. Transition words are lacking in general.

Support—The use of compare-and-contrast words would have contributed some strength to the writer's case. Further development of details would also help the paper.

Conventions—Incorrect spelling and short, choppy sentences do not help the language flow in this response.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—Focus is present but not consistently, and the thread of the compare-and-contrast essay is lost at most points along the way.

Organization—Facts about the two professions are not ordered in a logical way. It is sometimes difficult to grasp which profession the writer is discussing.

Support—Phrases such as “Teachers teach many subjects” and “Doctors try to focus on one area” would not be present as they are in the 2-point paper.

Conventions—Spelling and mechanics are mostly incorrect and form a barrier to understanding the writer's presentation.

Grade 3 Unit 5: Compare and Contrast

Score Point 4

Jobs that Help People

by Amrita S.

Two jobs that help people who are in trouble are a police officer and a firefighter. Both offers an important servise to the comunity. They both workers who keep us safe. They go into dangerous areas. Dangers cannot stop them because they have special training. They save lives every day. They wear unaforms too.

In some ways, police officers and firefighters are different. The police usually try to stop crime. They catch people if they break the law. They give tickets to drivers who speeds. Firefighters mainly put out fire. They carry people out of burning buildings. They could try to tell who starts the fire. Police do that too sometimes. I saw a t.v. show about that. They can use fire dogs on the job too.

Both kinds of workers are very important. They make cities and towns safe for us.

Focus—The response demonstrates an understanding of the purpose for writing. Some information irrelevant to the comparison/contrast is included. Overall, focus is maintained throughout the response.

Organization—The writing shows some appropriate comparison/contrast organization but is repetitive. A few lapses occur. In some areas, the response includes transitional devices between points of comparison or contrast.

Support—The paper supplies adequate information with additional details in some areas, while in other areas supporting ideas are not developed. Word choice is generally adequate although it may lack precision. The writer expresses an opinion about the value of each job.

Conventions—The writer generally demonstrates mastery of the conventions of capitalization and punctuation, with some lapses. Most frequently used words are spelled correctly. Occasional errors in noun and verb forms are noted, but the writing is generally fluent. Some errors of syntax occur but do not significantly impede communication.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The writing is generally focused on the topic with some extraneous information. The paper may lack a controlling sentence such as, “Two jobs that help people who are in trouble are a police officer and a firefighter” or a concluding paragraph such as, “Both kinds of workers are very important. They make cities and town safe for us,” but generally maintains focus.

Organization—There is some evidence of an organizational pattern, but lapses in the comparison/contrast pattern are evident. Facts and elaborative details may not directly support specific points. Organizational pattern is weaker overall than in a response scored at 4 points.

Support—Word choice is adequate but sometimes vague. The response offers fewer supporting details than in the score point 4 paper, such as “They save lives every day” and “Police usually try to stop crime” vs. “Firefighters mainly put out fire(s).” The writer may not express an opinion about the topic.

Conventions—Knowledge of the conventions is demonstrated, although lapses occur more frequently than in the score point 4 paper. Commonly used words are generally spelled correctly. The writer attempts to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Syntactical errors occur more frequently than in the paper with a score of 4.

Grade 3 Unit 5: Compare and Contrast

Score Point 5

Jobs in the Air

by Edward A.

The jobs of a pilot and an air traffic controller are alike in some important ways. They both work in and around airports. Both are there to make sure planes fly safely and get where they are supposed to go. Some people think only pilots make big decisions. Each job takes many hours of training, special skills, and information about planes. Both jobs require good eyesight and fast reflexes. A mistake by either a pilot or an air traffic controller can lose many lives.

On the other hand, there are real differences between these jobs. Pilots must be ready for any kind of emergency. The air traffic controller guide the pilot but stays in the tower. While the pilot is flying, the air traffic controller is watching planes on a screen. The two stay in touch by radio. That way there are fewer accidents. The pilot has to fly the plane through all kinds of weather.

I believe both of these jobs would be exciting. It would be worth it to do the special training needed for these jobs.

Focus—The response demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose for expository writing. Information included is directly related to the points of the comparison/contrast, and the focus is consistently maintained.

Organization—The appropriate organizational pattern for comparison/contrast is apparent with few lapses. There is evidence of a logical progression of ideas. The response demonstrates a sense of completeness.

Support—The writer uses facts and relevant details to support ideas throughout the response. Word choice is adequate but may lack precision. The writer expresses an opinion as to the value of the two jobs.

Conventions—Commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. Conventions such as capitalization and punctuation are generally observed. Sentences are mostly complete and grammatical, and sentence-combining strategies are used.

Grade 3 Unit 5: Compare and Contrast

Score Point 6

Two Interesting Jobs

by David M.

The jobs of an actor and a baseball player are alike in many ways. They both get paid to perform and to entertain people. Actors and ballplayers are often seen in magazines and on television. They're recognized everywhere they go. They also get to travel to many cities.

In other ways, actors and baseball players are different. A ballplayer works at a ballpark every day. An actor works on a stage or a movie set. A ballplayer learns how to play one position really well and wears one uniform. In contrast, actors learn how to become many different types of characters and get to wear many different costumes.

I think both jobs are interesting. Maybe I can be an actor in the winter and a baseball player in the summer!

Focus—The writer compares and contrasts different jobs as he discusses how the jobs are alike and how they are different. He stays on focus throughout his work.

Organization—The writer talks about performing for and entertaining people as well as the setting where the jobs take place. He puts forth his ideas in a cohesive and logical way. His comparisons are subtle, especially when he talks about costumes.

Support—The writer uses facts and details as well as compare-and-contrast words to make his points.

Conventions—Syntax is correct and sentences are varied, making this an interesting paper to read. Spelling and other conventions have been checked and are accurate.

Grade 3 Unit 6: Research Report

Score Point 2

The Pacific Ocean

by Anthony L.

The Pacific Ocean takes up a lot of earth's surface, more than 100 million miles. The Pacific Ocean is many times the size of the United States. The Pacific Ocean is larger than the land area of the world.

The Pacific Ocean is also home to the world's endangered animals, sea lions, sea otters, seals, turtles, and whales.

The Pacific Ocean helps people around the world, it supplies food. In 1996, more than 60 percent of the fish that people eat or use came from this ocean.

Focus—The report certainly stays focused on the Pacific Ocean. It repeats the term in almost every sentence. Some variation in terms would have made this a less repetitive report.

Organization—The report groups facts and details together in a logical way, and the sequence is clear.

Support—Details are presented along with facts to amplify and augment the information that the writer gathered. However, the language is choppy due to incomplete sentences. Transition words would help the flow.

Conventions—Imperfect spelling contributes to the awkwardness of this response. That, along with incomplete and simple sentences as well as repetitive language, make this paper difficult to read and understand.

What Does a Score Point 1 Paper Look Like?

Focus—There is little evidence of a clear focus on the subject, and factual data such as appears in the score point 2 paper (for example, "the Pacific Ocean is larger than the land area of the world") is conspicuously absent.

Organization—A score point 1 paper has some simple organization, but facts are not necessarily grouped to make it easy for the reader to grasp the whole concept behind the research.

Support—Word choice is weak, and vocabulary is not robust and varied. The language flow is choppy because there are few if any transitions between chunks of knowledge.

Conventions—Spelling and incomplete sentences impede communication and flow of language.

Grade 3 Unit 6: Research Report

Score Point 4

All About Aardvarks

by Carolyn P.

The aardvark has a strange name, but then, it is a strange looking animal. The aardvark comes from Africa. But it was the Dutch settlers that gave it its name the name means "earth pig." You can tell from that the aardvark looks kind of like a pig.

Some people call it "ant bear." Because it eats ants. Ants are one of its favorite food. Aardvarks use their long sticky tongue to eat up ants and other bugs like turmites. So it lives in places where there are many bugs, like in grassy or wood lands.

The aardvark to me is a funny kind of animal. Its body thick like a pig's. It has very thick nails on its toes that help it dig. Its head long like a horse head. Another funny thing is that they are born with regular teeth but then the teeth fall out. Then they can keep growing other teeth that are like tubes with no coating. Maybe this helps it not wear down its teeth?

Also, aardvarks dig burrows, which are like tunnels. They live in these burrows and have their babies there. When they leave, other animals sometimes move in the burrows. Only one baby aardvark is born at a time.

That is the story of the earth pig.

Focus—The response demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of factual writing. Some loosely related information is included, but overall, focus is maintained.

Organization—The writing exhibits an organizational pattern with lapses. The report includes some transitional devices to connect supporting ideas and details. A brief conclusion is supplied. There is a sense of completeness to the report.

Support—Supporting ideas are developed with elaborative details in parts of the response. Word choice is usually adequate if repetitious. The tone is inappropriately subjective in some parts of the response.

Conventions—The writer generally demonstrates mastery of conventions of spelling and capitalization, although some frequently used words are misspelled. Sentence fragments and run-ons are noted.

What Does a Score Point 3 Paper Look Like?

Focus—The writing is generally focused on the topic with some extraneous information. The paper lacks a unifying sentence such as “The armadillo has a strange name, but then, it is a strange looking animal” and may also lack a strong conclusion, but generally maintains focus.

Organization—Some evidence of an organizational pattern is demonstrated, although facts and supporting details may be loosely positioned in the writing. The organizational pattern is generally weaker than that of a score point 4 paper.

Support—Word choice is adequate but may be immature and repetitious. A response scored as a 3 offers fewer details than does the score point 4 paper, and includes few supporting details such as “It has very thick nails on its toes that help it dig” or “Armadillos use their long sticky tongue (tongues) to eat up ants and other bugs like termites.”

Conventions—Knowledge of the conventions of spelling and capitalization is demonstrated. Commonly used words are generally spelled correctly with some errors. The writer attempts to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions. Sentence fragments and other errors of syntax are noted.

Grade 3 Unit 6: Research Report

Score Point 5

The Gobi Desert

by James P.

The Gobi Desert is one of the world's largest deserts. It measures 1,295,000 square miles. It is in China and southern Mongolia. When we think of deserts, we imagine sand, but large areas of the Gobi are rock.

The climate of this area is unusual. While many deserts are very hot, the Gobi can have freezing temperatures. It can be very cold in winter and hot and rainy in summer. In July it can get up to over a hundred degrees. Snow even forms on the sand dunes of the Gobi.

The Gobi Desert is home to different kinds of plant and animal life. There are gazelles, polecats, and some types of birds. Sometimes bears, wolves, and snow leopards go through this desert.

The Gobi has a long, interesting history. Long ago, traders crossed it on camels. It was part of the Mongol Empire. For centuries, herders have lived on the Gobi with their cattle. These people move from place to place and are called nomads. They live very much like people of old did. The Gobi can seem like a place outside of time.

Focus—The response demonstrates adequate understanding of the purpose for factual writing. Information included is directly related to the topic, and the focus is consistently maintained.

Organization—An organizational pattern is apparent with few lapses. There is evidence of a logical progression of ideas and supporting points, leading to a thoughtful conclusion. A sense of wholeness is evident.

Support—The writer uses verifiable facts and details to support statements throughout the response. Word choice is adequate but sometimes lacks precision or may be repetitious. Transitional or connecting words show the relationship between ideas.

Conventions—Frequently used words are usually spelled correctly. Conventions such as capitalization and punctuation are generally observed. Minor grammatical errors do not

impede communication. Sentences are mostly complete, and the writer has used various structures.

Grade 3 Unit 6: Research Report

Score Point 6

The Amazing Rhinoceros

by Roseanne D.

The rhinoceros is one of nature's most amazing animals. For example, it is the only animal with horns on its nose. It can have one or two, depending on what type of rhino it is.

In fact, there are five types of rhinos. These include Black, White, Indian, Javan, and Sumatran. They all have large heads, broad chests, and thick, short legs. Their legs have three toes on each foot and a hoof on each toe!

Even more surprising, the powerful rhino does not eat meat. It only eats plants. This makes rhinos seem less dangerous.

Actually, rhinos are endangered. They are only found in Asia and Africa. Buildings have replaced much of their habitat. To make matters worse, some people hunt rhinos, which is against the law.

Overall, the rhino is amazing in many ways. Its strange appearance is one of them! The world would be less interesting if there were no more rhinos.

Focus—The response is an excellent example of a research report, with a main idea stated in the introduction and a summary of the information as a conclusion. Facts are clearly stated and support the main idea throughout the paper. There is a strong conclusion, which summarizes the information.

Organization—The report starts with an interesting fact about rhino's horns, moves on to describe different types, and continues to give information in a logical fashion that the writer obviously learned from reliable sources. Roseanne uses transition words to move from one series of facts to another, making her report very readable.

Support—Elaborative details are fully developed and engagingly presented. The reader will agree with the conclusion that "the rhino is amazing in many ways."

Conventions—Spelling is accurate, and syntax and sentence structure are correct and varied, making the report easy to read and to understand.