Georgia Performance Standards for English Language Arts – Grade 5

The following work samples and corresponding analysis, next steps, and commentary are meant to serve as reference tools only. They in no way imply that teachers must create this three part product for each piece of student work that they receive. While teachers are encouraged to analyze student work using the appropriate standards as a guide and plan instruction accordingly, a written product such as these examples is not always required. Teachers are strongly urged to share commentary with students regarding their work regularly throughout units or tasks. Feedback that occurs on a regular basis is most effective when delivered in “dollops”/small segments. This commentary can be delivered in a variety of formats including a verbal discussion. For more information regarding commentary, see the Georgia Performance Standards training module Day Seven (http://www.georgiastandards.org/training.aspx)

Grade: 5
Unit/Genre: Informational/Essay
Title: Siberian Tigers
Level of Performance: Meets the standard for information writing.
Date of Task Completion: 11/13/06
Analysis Written by: Debra Johnston, East Central Elementary School

Description/Directions
Students will read and analyze several informational resources, gather important relevant facts from a minimum of two resources, and identify audience, purpose, and structure. Students will select a non-fiction topic to research and write an expository text. The text will follow the standards for informational writing.

Circumstances of the Task
Students worked alone to create this project.
Students had time in class to conduct research and compose their pieces.
Students worked alone during composition stages.
Students received feedback via peer and teacher conferences throughout the various stages of product completion.
This draft is the final version of a Unit Performance Task.

Analysis of the Work:
This analysis reflects assessment of the final stages of an end of unit performance task. The task required students to integrate skills, knowledge, and concepts from different standards.

ELA5R1 For informational texts, the student reads and comprehends in order to develop understanding and expertise and produces evidence of reading that:

a. Locates facts that answer the reader’s questions.
b. Identifies and uses knowledge of common textual features (e.g., paragraphs, topic sentences, concluding sentences, glossary).
f. Identifies and analyzes main ideas, supporting ideas, and supporting details.
g. Makes perceptive and well-developed connections.
h. Relates new information to prior knowledge and experience and makes connections to related topics or information.

- The writer successfully incorporated the information gathered from research texts and internet searches into an original body of work. The research gathered was written in the writer’s own original style and is appropriate for their intended audience of peers.

- The writer was able to assimilate new information into existing knowledge and draw a conclusion as evidenced when she stated, “During my research, I realized how rare and endangered these stunning animals really are. I learned that there are as many tigers living free in the wild as there are in captivity. We as people need to do more to help save these precious animals.”

- The writer located facts that answered the reader’s questions when she stated, “To help maintain this healthy weight, they have to eat a lot of food! Amur tigers must eat twenty pounds of food at least, each day. Here’s an unbelievable fact, at one meal a Siberian tiger is able to consume up to two hundred pounds of meat!”
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ElA5W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student

a. Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

b. Writes texts of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.

- The writer’s topic was appropriate in its focus, length and intended audience of peers.

- The writer met genre expectations by creating an objective, informative perspective.

- The student used an appropriate organizing structure.

ElA5W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces informational writing (e.g., report, procedures, correspondence) that:

a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker’s voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.

b. Develops a controlling idea that conveys a perspective on a subject.

c. Creates an organizing structure appropriate to a specific purpose, audience, and context.

d. Includes appropriate facts and details.

e. Excludes extraneous details and inappropriate information.

- The opening question invites the reader in, and the entire paragraph establishes a perspective and a strong voice: “I am so afraid that my children will probably not ever see a Siberian tiger outside of captivity.”

- The writer’s own style is prevalent throughout the piece. The information was well selected and presented in an interesting and lively manner (Though in our eyes it might not seem fair, a father tiger leaves the family after the birth of the cubs. So much for good parenting skills!”)

- Facts were grouped together in appropriate subtopics (paragraphs) and transitions were smooth and clear.

- The writer met the requirement of at least 2 resources verified on pre-write outlines. (bibliography not yet taught. See Next Steps.)

- The level of vocabulary is very appropriate for the purposes of this paper and the writer’s style.

- As a result of the research, the writer developed a perspective laying the groundwork for writing in the persuasive genre, which will be the next unit of study, as evidenced in the opening and closing (Example: “To help save these gorgeous animals, we must first learn about them,” and “We as people need to do more to help save these precious animals.”)
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ELA5C1 The student demonstrates understanding and control of the rules of the English language, realizing that usage involves the appropriate application of conventions and grammar in both written and spoken formats. The student

d. Varies the sentence structure by kind (declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences and functional fragments), order and complexity (simple, compound, and compound-complex).
e. Uses and identifies correct mechanics (e.g., apostrophes, quotation marks, comma use in compound sentences, paragraph indentations) and correct sentence structure (e.g., elimination of sentence fragments and run-ons).
f. Uses additional knowledge of correct mechanics (e.g., apostrophes, quotation marks, comma use in compound sentences, paragraph indentations), correct sentence structure (e.g., elimination of fragments and run-ons), and correct Standard English spelling (e.g., commonly used homophones) when writing, revising, and editing.

- The writer successfully used a variety of sentence structures by kind and complexity.
- The piece has some spelling and capitalization errors.

Student Work
Siberian Tigers

Can you believe that there are only two hundred of the largest, most beautiful tigers in the world living free in the wild? I am so very afraid that my children will probably not ever see a siberian tiger outside of captivity. To help save these gorgeous animals we must first learn about them. That is the purpose of this narrative, to inform you about these tigers.

As you may have noticed from the first paragraph, I have already stressed the fact that siberian tigers, also known as amur tigers, are very majestic. Their fur can vary anywhere from a snowy white to a golden red color. Unlike most of their family that lives around the equator, an amur tiger's hair is very coarse, similar to a polar bear's fur. If you are near a big group of tigers and you want to find a siberian, look at the stripes on each tiger. The tiger that you are looking for has brown stripes. These animals are very large. The females can weigh up to four hundred and forty-seven pounds, surprisingly being much smaller than the males that can weigh a whopping eight hundred twenty pounds.

To help maintain this healthy weight, they have to eat a lot of food! Amur tigers must eat twenty pounds of food at least, each day. Here's an
Siberian Tigers

Unbelievable fact, at one meal a siberian tiger is able to consume up to two hundred pounds of meat! Their various diet consists mainly of wild boar, elk, deer, rabbits, salmon, and even bears! You better watch out if you’re you’re near one of these animals, even though they only do it for defense reasons, they sometimes attack humans.

Not everything in this tiger’s life is about hunting. The cubs should get some attention too. You know, A female siberian tiger usually has a litter of two to three cubs. Four things, they are born blind. Though in our eyes it might not seem fair, a father tiger leaves the family after the birth of the cubs. So much for good parenting skills! These cubs baby years are tough aren’t they? Unfortunately, when a mother has her cubs, she still has some worrying to do. These cubs, after birth have a serious risk of dying. Some still live though.

Where can we find these gorgeous animals? Well, you find most of them living in surrounding areas of the Arctic Circle, such as Russia, China, Korea, and Manchuria. These areas are very cold, that hints the name the Arctic Circle. Most fictional books assert that all tigers live in jungles. Some do, but most subspecies don’t. Amur tigers live in various deciduous
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Next Step Instructional Plans

Review:

- Examine simple, compound, and complex sentences. Discuss the punctuation of each sentence type. The student will practice revising compound and complex sentences.

- Briefly review common errors and have the student add examples from his/her work to his/her personal Common Errors Log. (There is a “Common Errors” chart on the wall in the classroom to help remind students to check for those all too common errors. For example, they look to see which “there, their, they’re” to use or which “your, you’re” is correct. Each student also has an “Editing Sheet” that was handed out at the beginning of the year. This sheet contains common editing cues such as capitalization information and end punctuation notes. Students are asked to add errors that are specific to that individual on the sheet for reference. Next year, a ”Personal Spelling List” will also be created and utilized.)

New Skill:

- Find articles where information or quotes have been cited in the article. Discuss the elements of punctuation, capitalization, and how the author gave credit to his/her source. Discuss why it is important to give the author credit for his/her work (plagiarism).

- Have the student go back to his/her resources and practice citing the resource (author, magazine, newspaper, encyclopedia, and on-line resources). Discuss where the student might have put direct quotes in his/her informational writing.

- Inform the student that in his/her next informational or persuasive writing that direct quotes will be a new requirement.

- Find samples of bibliographies. Discuss the elements in each example. Discuss why it is important to give the author credit when the student uses the author’s work.

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- Provide a typed sample copy for the student to use to go back and create a bibliography of his/her own resources. Have the student note the required information needed, correct capitalization, and punctuation. Provide feedback and have the student edit as needed.
- Have the student make a final copy of his/her bibliography and attach to his/her informational writing.
- Inform the student that in his/her next informational or persuasive writing that a bibliography will be a new requirement.

Commentary provided to the student (verbal or written)

As I read through your piece, I saw that your voice was strong and your style was engaging. You presented the material in a personal way while remaining focused on the purpose to inform. Your concern regarding the Siberian tiger was evident as stated both in your opening and your closing. (Examples: “To help save these gorgeous animals, we must first learn about them,” and “We as people need to do more to help save these precious animals.”) Your work demonstrates that your research was thorough enough that you were able to easily incorporate the facts into a relaxed style of writing. (“Not everything in this tiger’s life is about hunting. The cubs should get some attention to, you know. A female Siberian tiger usually has a litter of two to three cubs. Poor things, they are born blind.”)

The organization of your piece makes it easy and enjoyable for the reader. Your subtopics were clearly announced in topic sentences at the beginning of each paragraph.

You address the reader directly making the tone of your paper conversational. (Examples: “As you may have noticed,”…”you want to find a Siberian tiger, look at the stripes…,” and “Where can we find these gorgeous animals?”)

Good writers use a variety of sentence types to engage the reader, add interest, and communicate important information. You used simple, compound, and complex sentences, and functional fragments. In addition, your use of the comma was done appropriately most of the time. There was one compound sentence that needed a second comma (“If you are near a big group of tigers, and you want to find a Siberian…”). In one instance, a semi-colon would have been effective punctuation to keep from having a run-on sentence and to keep from interrupting the flow of the writing. (You better watch out if you’re near one of these animals; even though they only do it for defense reasons, they do sometimes attack humans.)

Your piece would have been strengthened if you had told why the cubs have a serious risk of dying. This is a question that your readers might have. (“These cubs, after birth, have a serious risk of dying. Some still live, though.”)

Check for “common errors” such as “The cubs should have some attention, too.” And “These cubs’ baby years…” (plural possessive form to denote their baby years). (Note: A “Common Errors” chart is posted in the classroom for students to use during editing.)

It sounds like your research affected you personally as concern and wonder are evident in your piece. As persuasive writing is coming up in the next unit, you already seem to have a feel for some persuasive elements. (Persuasive Essay was discussed in a conference with this student so that she would understand perspective and its connection to persuasion.)

The closing was very effective as you were reflective on how the research impacted you. You seem compelled to want to tell others so they, too, can be informed and help out.