

Grade 4 – Personal Narrative Writing Work Sample: Approaching

Task: Your class is studying about insects and ant colonies. You are given two articles about ants and ant colonies. Read the sources carefully so you can write a story about shrinking to the size of an ant, falling into a hole in the ground, and becoming part of an ant colony. When writing your story, find ways to use information and details from the sources to improve your story about becoming part of an ant colony.

Scores, Justification of Student Evidence, and Suggested Areas of Student Improvement

Ideas and Content: 4

The student's writing demonstrates adequate development of ideas but lacks some descriptive details and character emotions that would enhance the story.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content	
✓ Writer's Purpose and Main Ideas Are Clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The story follows a logical sequence of events:○ The character wakes up in a strange environment.○ They follow an ant into the colony.○ They explore different rooms.○ They realize how the colony functions.○ They escape with the help of a soldier ant.<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Example: <i>"I started to wonder around until I heard foot steps. It sounded like six or seven people walking in a big group altogether."</i>○ This creates curiosity and sets up the ant encounter.
✓ The Writer Develops a Situation and Events for the Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The main character interacts with the ant colony and explores different chambers.○ Example: <i>"When the queen ant layed eggs the other ants take the eggs to the room I was in at the beggining."</i>○ The character discovers how the colony functions—a key part of the narrative.
✓ Some Specific Details Describe Characters and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The student includes some scientific details from the sources (e.g., the queen lays eggs, the colony has different rooms, ants grow fungus).○ Example: <i>"I started run again but this time in a room filled with fungest."</i>○ This shows awareness of how ants farm fungus, a concept from the source material.

Organization: 4

The student's writing is well-structured and follows a logical sequence of events, but some transitions and paragraph breaks could be improved for smoother readability.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization	
✓ The Writing Is Easy to Follow; the Sequence of Events Works Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The story follows a clear structure:○ Beginning: The character wakes up and realizes they are tiny.○ Middle: They explore the ant colony, encountering different rooms.○ End: They figure out the ant colony's organization and escape.○ Example: <i>"I started to wonder around until I heard foot steps. It sounded like six or seven people walking in a big group altogether."</i>○ The progression from curiosity → discovery → action makes sense.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization	
✓ The Beginning Introduces the Setting Clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The introduction quickly establishes the setting and conflict. ○ Example: <i>"I woke up next to a tree. When I looked up the tree was gigantic and the grass was like bambo sticks."</i> ○ The comparison to bamboo helps set the scene for the character's small size.
✓ The Ending Provides Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The story wraps up logically, with the main character escaping the colony. ○ Example: <i>"I started to run but I ran into a soldier ant but the good thing is he brought me out of the colony."</i> ○ This provides a clear resolution.
✓ Transition Words Are Used to Connect Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student uses some transition words, like <i>"then," "after a while," "well,"</i> to guide the reader.
✓ Paragraph Breaks Help Organize the Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The story is broken into sections, making it easier to follow.

Voice: 4

The student's writing has an engaging and personal voice, but could benefit from stronger emotions, humor, or unique phrasing to make it even more lively.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice	
✓ The Writing Helps the Reader Enjoy the Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The main character's curiosity and excitement make the story fun to read. ○ Example: <i>"Then it hit me. The first room I was in had eggs and the second one had fungest. It had all made scence to me now."</i> ○ The phrase <i>"Then it hit me"</i> shows a moment of realization, making the character feel more real.
✓ Parts of the Story Are Lively and Exciting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The story feels personal and includes moments of curiosity, panic, and discovery. ○ Example: <i>"I started to panict and ran to a room filled with eggs but not the ones you boil or scramble the ones that hatch into little ants!"</i> ○ This clarification about the eggs adds a playful and conversational tone.
✓ The Writer Seems Interested in the Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student clearly enjoyed learning about ants and included details about their behavior. ○ Example: <i>"When the queen ant layed eggs the other ants take the eggs to the room I was in at the beggining and the ant I was on when I entered the colony must have been looking for food instead of me."</i> ○ The explanation of how the ant colony works is based on scientific knowledge.

Word Choice: 4

The student's writing uses clear and effective words, but could benefit from more precise and sensory-rich language to make the story more vivid.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice	
✓ Words Get the Message Across Clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student's word choice is effective and allows the story to be understood. ○ Example: <i>"I woke up next to a tree. When I looked up the tree was gigantic and the grass was like bambo sticks."</i> ○ Using "gigantic" and comparing grass to bamboo sticks helps the reader visualize the setting.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice	
✓	Some Descriptive and Scientific Words Are Used <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student includes specific words related to the ant colony. ○ Example: <i>"Then it hit me. The first room I was in had eggs and the secound one had fungest."</i> ○ Using "fungenst" (intended to be "fungus") shows an understanding of ant colony structures.
✓	Some Varied Word Choices Make the Writing More Interesting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: <i>"It had all made scence to me now."</i> ○ The phrase "then it hit me" adds personality and makes the realization moment stronger.

Sentence Fluency: 3

The student's writing has a mix of sentence structures, but some sentences feel choppy or awkward, and run-ons affect fluency.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency	
✓	Some Sentences Flow Smoothly and Are Easy to Read Aloud <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: <i>"I woke up next to a tree. When I looked up the tree was gigantic and the grass was like bambo sticks."</i> ○ The sentence structure makes it easy to read, and the comparison to bamboo sticks is effective.
✓	Some Sentences Begin in Different Ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student does not always start with "I", which adds variety. ○ Example: <i>"Then it hit me. The first room I was in had eggs and the second one had fungest."</i> ○ The phrase "Then it hit me" effectively signals a realization.
✓	Sentence Length Varies in Some Places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: <i>"Lukily it was harmless and this one was laying eggs."</i> ○ This mixes a short and longer phrase, making it more engaging.

Conventions: 3

The student's writing demonstrates progress toward meeting grade-level expectations in conventions, but spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors require significant editing.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions	
✓	Most Sentences Contain or End with Correct Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student mostly uses periods and commas correctly, but some are missing or misplaced. ○ Example: <i>"I started to wounder around until I heard foot steps."</i> ○ A comma after "around" would make this smoother (<i>"I started to wonder around, until I heard footsteps."</i>).
✓	Capitalization and Spelling Is Mostly Correct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student capitalizes the first word of sentences and proper nouns (e.g., <i>"I woke up next to a tree."</i>).
✓	Grammar Mistakes Affect Clarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some sentences contain incorrect verb tense or missing words, making them confusing.
✓	Comma Misuse and Run-On Sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some commas are missing or used incorrectly, making sentences harder to follow.