Grade 3 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Not Yet Meeting

Task: Your class has been learning about different types of jobs. You find two sources about the life of an astronaut and the type of training that astronauts receive in order to do their job.

Read the sources carefully so you can **write an informational article** about being an astronaut. Using more than one source, develop a main idea about being an astronaut and find ways to use information and details from the sources to support your main idea.

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

Ideas and Content: 2

The paper shows some attempt to discuss astronauts, but the ideas are unclear, loosely connected, and only partly relevant. Many sentences drift away from the prompt, and details from the sources are largely missing or inaccurate.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Ideas and Content
✓ **Unclear Main Idea:** ○ The opening *"THE job of a astrnot is like, floating in a tin can out in a place wehr there is no gravity"* sets up a metaphor but doesn't clearly explain astronauts' work. ✓ **Off-Topic Sections:** ○ Mentions *"meders and as-troys"* and *"astrology"* — confusing and not aligned with the sources. ✓ **Lack of Supporting Details:** ○ Few facts from the sources are used. ○ For example, *"some timse astrnots try to stop meders"* is not in the provided texts. ✓ **Minimal Development:** ○ Statements are vague: *"being a astrnot is hard work, thats my apinyon."*	➢ **Clarify the Main Idea:** ○ Start with a clear statement: *"Astronauts are people who travel to space to study and explore."*
✓ **Off-Topic Sections:** ○ Mentions *"meders and as-troys"* and *"astrology"* — confusing and not aligned with the sources.	➢
✓ **Lack of Supporting Details:** ○ Few facts from the sources are used. ○ For example, *"some timse astrnots try to stop meders"* is not in the provided texts.	➢ **Add Source Details:** ○ Use facts from the texts about astronaut training, space gyms, or body changes instead of unrelated ideas like "astrology."
✓ **Minimal Development:** ○ Statements are vague: *"being a astrnot is hard work, thats my apinyon."*	➢ **Explain More Fully:** ○ Instead of just saying *"hard work,"* describe why (e.g., training, long hours, or health problems).

Organization: 2

The piece has fragments of structure but lacks clear sequencing or transitions. The flow is confusing and difficult to follow.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Organization
✓ **No Clear Beginning-Middle-End:** ○ Ideas jump from being scared to personal opinion to scientists and robots without logical order.	➢ **Use Clear Paragraphs:** ➢ Start with an introduction about astronauts, then training, then challenges, then a conclusion.
✓ **Weak Transitions:** ○ No linking sentences connect ideas; instead, they shift abruptly: *"THIS is beause, I like wringing because, that's my favrot thing to do."*	➢ **Add Transitions:** ➢ Use words like *"First, next, finally"* to show order.
✓ **No Conclusion:** ○ The writing stops without returning to the main point.	➢ **Write a Closing Sentence:** ➢ End with something like *"Astronauts work hard, but they learn amazing things in space."*

Voice: 2

The student's personality shows in opinion statements, but the tone is uneven and distracts from the purpose.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Voice
✓ **Personal Opinions Present:** ○ *"Being a astrnot is hard work, thats my apinyon."*	➢ **Use Personal Voice Within Topic:** ➢ Instead of "that's my opinion," explain how *you* would feel in space: *"I think floating would feel scary at first but exciting too."*
✓ **Unclear Purpose:** ○ The focus shifts to personal writing preferences: *"I like wringing because, thats my favrot thing to do."* This is off-task.	➢ **Stay Focused on the Topic:** ➢ Save personal likes (writing) for a different essay. Focus this piece on astronauts.
✓ **Some Attempt at Metaphor:** ○ *"Floating in a tin can"* shows creativity but isn't developed.	➢ **Develop Creative Ideas:** ➢ Expand metaphors like "floating in a tin can" by explaining how lonely or strange it would feel.

Word Choice: 2

Word choice is often confusing or incorrect. Attempts at descriptive language exist, but vague or misspelled words weaken clarity.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Word Choice
✓ **Confusing Words:** ○ *"meders and as-troys"* (likely meteors and asteroids), *"astrology"* instead of *astronomy.*	➢ **Check Vocabulary:** ➢ Use the sources' words like *"gravity," "exercise," "space station"* for accuracy.
✓ **Attempt at Imagery:** ○ *"Floating in a tin can"* is vivid but not explained.	➢ **Be More Descriptive:** ➢ Instead of "stop meders," describe: *"Astronauts study meteors to learn how they move in space."*
✓ **Vague/Incorrect Phrasing:** ○ *"stop meders," "sinusitis can see the moon"* show misuse of words.	➢ **Use Accurate Terms:** ➢ Replace "astrology" with "astronomy," and "sinusitis" with "scientists."

Sentence Fluency: 2

The sentences are often choppy, incomplete, or awkwardly structured. While there are glimpses of rhythm, errors and abrupt shifts make the piece difficult to read smoothly.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Incomplete/Run-on Sentences:** ○ *"Sometims astrnots are scared sometimes there not being a astrnot is hard work, thats my apinyon."* combines several ideas without correct structure.	➢ **Fix Run-ons:** ➢ Break long sentences into two: *"Sometimes astronauts are scared. Other times they are not. Being an astronaut is hard work."*
✓ **Abrupt Transitions:** ○ Sentences jump without flow, e.g., *"THIS is beause, I like wringing because ,thats my favrot thing to do."*	➢ **Smooth Transitions:** ➢ Use words like *"also," "because,"* or *"so"* to connect ideas.
✓ **Uneven Rhythm:** ○ The piece lacks varied sentence types; most are short, with occasional run-ons.	➢ **Add Variety:** ➢ Mix short and long sentences: *"Astronauts float in space. This makes it hard to move, but also exciting."*

Conventions: 1

Frequent spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors overwhelm the piece and often make meaning unclear.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Conventions
✓ **Spelling Errors:** ○ *"astrnot" (astronaut), "wehr" (where), "wringing" (writing), "favrot" (favorite), "meders" (meteors), "sinusitis" (scientists).*	➢ **Fix Spelling Carefully:** ➢ Use a word wall or dictionary for tricky words like "astronaut," "meteors," "scientists."
✓ **Grammar Errors:** ○ *"sometimes there not"* instead of *"sometimes they're not."*	➢ **Check Grammar:** ➢ Say the sentence out loud to catch mistakes like "there" vs. "they're."
✓ **Punctuation Issues:** ○ Missing capitals and commas, e.g., *"thats my apinyon .you may have a diffront a pinyon."*	➢ **Capitalization & Punctuation:** ➢ Always capitalize "I" and the first word in a sentence. Put a space after periods.
✓ **Overall Impact:** ○ Errors are so frequent that the reader struggles to follow the meaning.	➢

Use of Sources: 1

The writing shows little evidence of using the provided sources. Most details are inaccurate, off-topic, or not tied to the source texts.

Evidence from Student Work: Use of Sources	Student Recommendations for Improvement: Use of Sources
✓ **Missing Source Content:** ○ No mention of training, exercise bands, or body changes in space. ✓ Inaccurate Information: ✓ *"astrnots try to stop meders and as-troys"* is not supported by the sources.	➢ **Go Back to the Sources:** ➢ Use facts like how astronauts train with scuba diving, or how their bodies change in space.
✓ **No Citations:** ○ No (#1) or (#2) references or list of sources.	➢ **Add Citations:** ➢ After each fact, show where it came from (#1 or #2).
✓ **Misuse of Vocabulary:** ○ Words like "astrology" show confusion with the content.	➢ **Stay Accurate:** ➢ Replace off-topic ideas (like "astrology") with correct science terms from the sources.

Suggestions for Teaching Strategies to Support the Student Sample:

The following contain suggestions for teaching strategies and do not encompass a complete list of possible strategies.

Ideas and Content:

Main Idea + Detail Chart:

- Teach students to identify the main idea of a text and list 3 supporting details to keep writing focused.

Fact vs. Opinion Practice:

- Model how to separate factual statements (from sources) and opinions, so students learn to ground writing in evidence.

Source Highlighting:

- Have students highlight details from the astronaut sources and practice weaving them into their own sentences.

Organization:

Sequencing Strips:

- Give students strips of facts from the astronaut texts and have them arrange in logical order.

Paragraph Frames:

- Provide sentence starters for intro, body, and conclusion to guide structure.

Transition Word Anchor Chart:

- Post a chart with transitions for time and cause/effect to encourage smoother connections.

Voice:

On-Topic Voice Practice:

- Teach students to insert their voice by reacting to facts (e.g., “That would be amazing!”) instead of drifting off-topic.

Metaphor Expansion Exercise:

- Practice taking a short metaphor and stretching it into a fuller description.

Audience Awareness Activity:

- Have students practice writing as if explaining astronauts to younger kids — keeps focus clear and engaging.

Suggestions for Teaching Strategies to Support the Student Sample:

The following contain suggestions for teaching strategies and do not encompass a complete list of possible strategies.

Word Choice:

Word Wall of Key Terms:

- Post accurate science words from the astronaut texts.

Confused Word Correction:

- Practice replacing incorrect terms (astrology → astronomy).

Imagery Stretch:

- Encourage students to take a vivid phrase ("floating in a tin can") and add sensory detail to strengthen meaning.

Sentence Fluency:

Sentence Surgery:

- Give students run-on sentences from the essay to cut apart and rewrite correctly.

Sentence Variety Practice:

- Challenge students to write three sentences about astronauts: one short, one medium, one long.

Transition Builders:

- Provide connectors (e.g., "so," "because") and have students insert them between short sentences to improve flow.

Conventions:

High-Frequency Word Practice:

- Focus on correctly spelling common words (astronaut, space, scientist).

Mini-Lesson on There/Their/They're:

- Practice correcting misused homophones.

Daily Edit Warm-Up:

- Give students short error-filled sentences from the essay to edit as a class.

Use of Sources:

Source Scavenger Hunt:

- Have students highlight three facts from each source, then use them in writing.

Paraphrasing Practice:

- Teach students how to restate facts from the text in their own words.

Cite While Writing:

- Model adding (#1) or (#2) after sentences to connect information to its source.