Grade 3 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Exceeds

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: 5

The paper develops a clear main idea with strong supporting details from the sources. The writer expands with explanations and examples, showing good understanding of what astronauts do before and during space travel. Some minor parts could use more elaboration, but overall, ideas are relevant, organized, and engaging.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content
✓ **Clear Focus:** ○ The opening frames the topic with curiosity: *"Have you ever thought about what it's like to be an astronaut?"*
✓ **Rich Development:** ○ Details about school and training add depth: ▪ *"Astronauts go to school for 12 years, then go to college for 4 years, and after that they study for two years or more. That's 18 years in total!"*
✓ **Use of Explanation:** ○ Instead of just listing jobs, the student explains why they matter: ▪ *"Some of the jobs are being a medical person so in case someone gets hurt or sick they can be healed… a pilot who can fly the rocket… a scientist who can study how living things such as plants and animals survive in space."*
✓ **Balance of Fun and Hardship:** ○ The writer contrasts excitement with challenges: ▪ *"Being in space may be fun but is also very dangerous."* This shows nuanced thinking.
✓ **Slight Gaps:** ○ Some explanations (e.g., why exercise tools help) are mentioned but not fully explained: ▪ *"They use big rubber bands and they stretch in them in different ways."*

Organization: 5

The writing has a clear and logical flow, moving from education, to training, to space experience, to a conclusion. Paragraphs are distinct and well-sequenced. Transitions are present, though sometimes repetitive, and the ending provides closure.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Strong Introduction:** ○ The opening question *"Have you ever thought about what it's like to be an astronaut?"* hooks the reader.
✓ **Logical Sequencing:** ○ The paper moves step by step: schooling, training, space flight, conclusion. ○ Example: *"After school, there's training. These pre-astronauts will train for hundreds of hours…"*
✓ **Effective Transitions:** ○ Phrases like *"After school," "Finally, it's time to blast off into space"* show sequencing.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Clear Closure:** o The conclusion ties back to the topic with *"Maybe when you grow up you will be an astronaut, too."* While simple, it offers closure.
✓ **Minor Weakness:** o Some sections (like the job list) read a bit long without smoother transition phrases connecting each job.

Voice: 3

The writer shows enthusiasm and attempts to engage the reader, especially through questions and exclamations. The personality is visible, but at times the tone is uneven — shifting between factual explanation and playful exclamations.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice
✓ **Engaging Opener:** o The direct question *"Have you ever thought about what it's like to be an astronaut?"* pulls in the reader.
✓ **Expressive Tone:** o Exclamations like *"That's 18 years in total! Can you imagine that?"* and *"This is a once in a lifetime event"* show excitement.
✓ **Uneven Energy:** o Some sections are more flat and factual: *"They will learn what it is like to be in the International Space Station (ISS)."*
✓ **Playful but Sometimes Distracting:** o The *"Yay! Yippee!"* section shows voice, but it interrupts the serious tone about astronaut challenges.

Word Choice: 4

The paper uses subject-specific vocabulary and some lively words, but there is also repetition and occasional vague phrasing. Word choice is functional and sometimes engaging, though not yet vivid or precise throughout.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice
✓ **Strong Vocabulary:** o Words like *"International Space Station," "scuba diving lessons," "pilot,"* and *"scientist"* show domain knowledge.
✓ **Descriptive Phrases:** o *"Blast off into space"* and *"once in a lifetime event"* add color.
✓ **Repetition:** o Words like *"fun," "hard,"* and *"weak"* appear multiple times.
✓ **Vague Phrasing:** o *"They stretch in them in different ways"* (about exercise bands) is unclear and could be more precise.

Sentence Fluency: 4

The essay is easy to follow, with mostly complete and correctly structured sentences. There is some variety in length and style, though parts still feel list-like or repetitive. Rhythm is generally smooth but not yet polished.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Varied Sentences:** ○ The student mixes longer descriptive sentences with shorter ones. Example: *"That's 18 years in total! Can you imagine that?"* (short/exclamatory) follows a longer explanation of education requirements.
✓ **Readable Flow:** ○ Sentences connect logically, making the essay understandable.
✓ **List-Like Section:** ○ The astronaut jobs section becomes choppy: *"Some of the jobs are being a medical person… being a fixer… a pilot… a leader… and a scientist…"* The repeated structure reduces rhythm.
✓ **Repetitive Structures:** ○ Many sentences begin with "They will" or "When you are," limiting variety.

Conventions: 4

The student demonstrates partial control of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors are noticeable but do not completely block understanding.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions
✓ **Spelling Errors:** ○ *"mustles"* (muscles), *"wink"* (weak), *"excersize"* (exercise).
✓ **Subject-Verb Agreement:** ○ *"Your head and neck gets puffy"* should be *"get puffy."*
✓ **Run-on Sentences:** ○ Some longer sentences could use commas or breaks, such as: *"Being in space may be fun but is also very dangerous."*
✓ **Capitalization & Punctuation:** ○ Generally correct, with occasional missing commas.

Use of Sources: 4

The essay uses information from both sources and explains it in the student's own words most of the time. No formal citations are provided, but the details clearly come from the readings.

Evidence from Student Work: Use of Sources
✓ **Information from Multiple Sources:** ○ The paper covers training (Source 1) and body changes in space (Source 2). ○ Example: *"Your blood flows up to your head. Your head and neck gets puffy and your legs get small and thin."*
✓ **Mostly Paraphrased:** ○ The student explains ideas in their own words rather than copying.
✓ **No Parenthetical Citations:** ○ Unlike the previous paper, this one does not include (#1) or (#2).
✓ **No Source List:** ○ The essay ends without listing titles or authors.