Grade 3 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Meets

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: 4

The paper clearly explains what astronauts do and how they prepare, using information from the sources. The main idea is consistent, and details support it, but some points could be developed more fully. The writing shows understanding but doesn't yet provide the depth, elaboration, or original insight that would raise it higher.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content
✓ **Clear Main Idea:** ○ The piece begins with a strong introduction: *"Being an astronaut sounds exciting, but it takes a lot of work and training."* This frames the article well.
✓ **Relevant Supporting Details:** ○ The writer uses accurate details from the sources, such as *"They practice first aid, do science experiments, and even take scuba diving classes"* (source #1) and *"Their hearts and bones get weaker because they don't have to work as hard in space"* (source #2).
✓ **Sufficient but Limited Development:** ○ While the examples are relevant, some ideas are listed rather than fully explained. ○ For instance, *"They also learn how to fix thing's and how to fly space vehicles"* is accurate but could be expanded with why those skills matter.
✓ **Some Original Thinking:** ○ The conclusion adds a personal reflection: *"I think it would be amazing to become an astronaut one day!"* ○ That gives the writing a personal spark, though most of the content is straight from the sources.

Organization: 4

The writing has a clear beginning, middle, and end. The introduction sets up the topic, and the conclusion provides closure. Transitions are simple but functional, and the order of ideas makes sense. However, some sections feel list-like, and transitions could be smoother to help the ideas flow more naturally.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Clear Structure:** ○ The introduction starts with: *"Being an astronaut sounds exciting, but it takes a lot of work and training."* This frames the article well.
✓ **Logical Order:** ○ The paper moves from training to physical changes to conclusion. For example: *"Astronauts train for hundreds of hours…"* (training), followed by *"When astronauts go into space, their bodys change."* (effects in space).
✓ **Basic Transitions:** ○ Words like *"also"* and *"even though it can be hard"* show attempts at transition, but most sections still read as a series of separate chunks.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Closure Provided:** ○ The ending wraps up with excitement about astronauts: *"Even though it can be hard, being an astronaut is one of the most exciting jobs."* This gives the piece a sense of completeness.

Voice: 3

The writing shows some enthusiasm, especially in the conclusion, but much of the piece feels factual and closely tied to the sources. The student's personality and unique perspective are only lightly present.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice
✓ **Personal Touch at the End:** ○ The student concludes with *"I think it would be amazing to become an astronaut one day!"* This shows authentic excitement and personal connection.
✓ **Mostly Informational Tone:** ○ The bulk of the paper is straightforward fact-reporting: *"Their hearts and bones get weaker because they don't have to work as hard in space."* While accurate, it doesn't carry a distinct student "voice."
✓ **Reader Engagement:** ○ The opening *"Being an astronaut sounds exciting, but it takes a lot of work and training"* hints at a conversational tone, but the middle sections lose that energy and sound more like copied textbook information.

Word Choice: 4

The student uses clear, accurate vocabulary related to astronauts and space. Some vivid verbs and descriptive phrases add interest, but the language is mostly straightforward and sometimes repetitive. Word choice supports meaning but does not always create strong imagery or variety.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice
✓ **Domain-Specific Vocabulary:** ○ Words like *"International Space Station," "scuba diving," "exercise tools,"* and *"space vehicles"* show the writer is using appropriate academic terms.
✓ **Some Strong Verbs:** ○ Phrases like *"float around in space"* and *"move and strech their muscles while floating"* add action and clarity.
✓ **Repetition and Simplicity:** ○ Words like *"strong," "exciting,"* and *"hard"* appear multiple times without much variation. ○ For example: *"They must be smart, strong, and ready for anything"* and *"To stay strong, astronauts use special exercise tools."*
✓ **Limited Figurative Language:** ○ The paper is mostly factual, with little use of simile, metaphor, or imagery to make ideas come alive.

Sentence Fluency: 4

The writing is mostly readable, but many sentences begin the same way and follow a similar pattern. Some sections feel list-like, and the rhythm is uneven. While there are no confusing fragments, the flow could be smoother with more variety.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Repetitive Openings:** o Several sentences start with "They" or "Astronauts," such as: *"They practice first aid, do science experiments, and even take scuba diving classes.* o *They also learn how to fix thing's and how to fly space vehicles."*
✓ **List-Like Rhythm:** o The training section reads like a series of items strung together without much variation in length or style.
✓ **Readable but Uneven:** o While the sentences are clear, the lack of varied structure causes the reader to slow down or re-read in places. o For example, *"Astronauts train for hundreds of hours. They learn how to live and work on the International Space Station."*

Conventions: 4

The writing demonstrates control of grade-level conventions. There are some errors in spelling and punctuation, but they do not interfere with understanding.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions
✓ **Spelling Errors Present:** o *"bodys"* instead of *"bodies"* and *"strech"* instead of *"stretch."*
✓ **Minor Apostrophe Mistake:** o *"thing's"* should be *"things."*
✓ **Generally Correct Grammar and Punctuation:** o Sentences are complete and capitalized correctly, and periods are used appropriately. Dialogue is not present, but sentence structure is solid.

Use of Sources: 4

The student uses accurate information from both sources and cites them in parentheses. The information is mostly paraphrased, with a few direct lifts, but it shows understanding.

Evidence from Student Work: Use of Sources
✓ **Citations Provided:** o The writer references sources directly: *"They learn how to live and work on the International Space Station (#1)"* and *"At first, they can feel dizzy and sick (#2)."*
✓ **Information from Several Sources:** o Training details come from Source #1, and body changes from Source #2.
✓ **Paraphrasing with Some Direct Phrasing:** o Most details are put into the student's own words, though some are close to the original wording.