# Grade 5 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Exceeds

**Task**: Your class is studying about different animal habitats and behavior. You are given three sources about animal behavior and hibernation.

*Read the sources carefully to **write an informational article** about hibernation. Using more than one source, develop a main idea about hibernation. Choose the most important information from the sources to support your main idea.*

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

### Ideas and Content: 6

The paper demonstrates a deep understanding of hibernation and develops a clear, insightful main idea with rich, relevant evidence. The writing shows synthesis across multiple sources and includes reasoning that explains how details support the larger concept of survival.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Ideas and Content |
|---|
| ✓ **Clear and Purposeful Main Idea:**<br>o The introduction defines hibernation as "a tool that some lucky members of the animal kingdom use to avoid the long harsh months of winter," setting a precise and engaging focus. Every paragraph connects back to this central idea of hibernation as a survival strategy. |
| ✓ **Depth and Relevance of Supporting Details:**<br>o The writer uses accurate and purposeful evidence from the sources—such as bears' preparation ("a bear fattens up on acorns and other high-fat foods") and protection ("safe for winter, cozy and warm beneath the blanket of snow"). These details illustrate understanding of both the biological and environmental aspects of hibernation. |
| ✓ **Synthesis and Analysis of Ideas:**<br>o Information is combined thoughtfully from multiple sources and analyzed beyond simple retelling. For instance, the writer explains that "hibernating also takes away the possibility of starvation during the winter months, for cubs," connecting scientific data to survival reasoning. |
| ✓ **Focus and Insight:**<br>o The conclusion ties all ideas together, emphasizing how hibernation benefits animals through protection, warmth, and energy conservation ("hibernation is truly a very important aspect for some animals' livelihoods"). This closure reinforces insight and unity. |

### Organization: 5

The essay follows a logical structure with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Transitions and sequencing make the piece cohesive, though some sections could be divided for improved pacing.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Organization |
|---|
| ✓ **Clear Structural Framework:**<br>o The essay begins with a strong introduction, follows with logically ordered body paragraphs (preparation → survival benefits → threats), and closes with synthesis. |
| ✓ **Effective Transitions:**<br>o Transitional phrases such as "Now," "Coming back to grizzlies," and "It is now crystal clear" create flow and signal idea shifts effectively. |

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Organization |
|---|
| ✓ **Paragraph Balance and Pacing:**<br>o The long section describing bear cub protection could be divided for smoother reading. While ideas connect well, extended sentences make pacing uneven in parts. |
| ✓ **Concluding Cohesion:**<br>o The final paragraph reinforces the paper's focus and unifies the discussion of hibernation's benefits, though transitions between ideas could be slightly smoother. |

### Voice: 5

The writer's tone is confident, engaging, and enthusiastic while remaining appropriate for an informational piece. The voice is distinctive and lively but occasionally slips into conversational phrasing.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Voice |
|---|
| ✓ **Engaging Tone:**<br>o Expressions such as "snoozing in a cozy cave" and "snuggled away in their dens" invite readers into the subject. |
| ✓ **Confidence and Ownership:**<br>o Statements like "Without a shadow of a doubt…" show conviction and curiosity about science. |
| ✓ **Audience Awareness:**<br>o The writing explains complex ideas clearly and with enthusiasm suited for peers or general readers. |
| ✓ **Occasional Inconsistency:**<br>o Some phrases ("Well, that is exactly what happens…") slightly disrupt the professional tone expected in academic writing. |

### Word Choice: 6

Word choice is precise, vivid, and purposeful. Vocabulary demonstrates academic command and effective imagery.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Word Choice |
|---|
| ✓ **Precision and Accuracy:**<br>o Uses specific, correct terms such as "starvation," "predators," "instinctual ability," and "hibernating mammals." |
| ✓ **Figurative and Descriptive Language:**<br>o Phrases like "beneath the blanket of snow" and "vast amounts of food" create imagery while supporting accuracy. |
| ✓ **Vocabulary Variety:**<br>o The writer avoids repetition by choosing strong verbs and descriptive modifiers throughout. |
| ✓ **Purposeful Academic Word Use:**<br>o Scientific vocabulary is woven in naturally, showing full comprehension of source material. |

### Sentence Fluency: 5

Sentences read naturally with varied structure and rhythm. A few are overly long, but overall pacing supports clarity and engagement.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Sentence Fluency |
|---|
| ✓ **Variety of Structures:**<br>o The essay includes both complex and compound sentences ("Since this seemingly unreachable amount of food…"). |
| ✓ **Smooth Flow:**<br>o Sentences connect logically, creating rhythm without abrupt stops. |
| ✓ **Pacing and Readability:**<br>o Long descriptive sentences convey depth but can tire the reader when unbroken. |
| ✓ **Transitional Cohesion:**<br>o Sentence beginnings often vary, though some start repetitively ("Now," "Coming back to…"). |

### Conventions: 5

The writing demonstrates strong control of grammar, capitalization, and punctuation, with only minor errors in comma placement and sentence length.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Conventions |
|---|
| ✓ **Grammar Control:**<br>o Sentences are complete and well-structured with correct subject-verb agreement. |
| ✓ **Punctuation Accuracy:**<br>o Quotation marks, capitalization, and periods are used correctly, though commas occasionally appear where unnecessary. |
| ✓ **Spelling and Usage:**<br>o Complex words ("hibernation," "instinctual") are spelled correctly throughout. |
| ✓ **Sentence Boundaries:**<br>o One or two comma splices suggest areas for mechanical review but do not obscure meaning. |

### Use of Sources: 6

The essay integrates information seamlessly from all three sources, showing synthesis, accuracy, and relevance. The use of quotations and paraphrasing supports the main idea effectively.

| Evidence from Student Work:<br>Use of Sources |
|---|
| ✓ **Source Accuracy:**<br>o Details about fattening on acorns (Source 3), salmon and snow dens (Source 1), and Dr. Vaughan's bear research (Source 3) are factual and used correctly. |
| ✓ **Purposeful Integration:**<br>o The writer embeds quotes naturally ("'She stopped to catch a mouse with one swat of her paw…'") followed by interpretation that connects to survival. |
| ✓ **Synthesis Across Texts:**<br>o Evidence from multiple sources builds layered understanding—energy storage, protection, reproduction, and safety all linked under the theme of survival. |
| ✓ **Citation Consistency:**<br>o Citations appear regularly, though capitalization ("source 1") should be standardized to "Source 1." |