Grade 5 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Meets

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: 4

The paper demonstrates clear understanding of hibernation and presents accurate information from multiple sources. The main ideas—energy conservation, fat storage, and hibernation habits—are explained with some detail, but reasoning and synthesis remain somewhat surface-level.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content
✓ **Clear and Focused Main Idea:** ○ The introduction directly states the topic and three main sub-points: "Bears hibernate to save energy, they store fat in there [their] bodies, and do they sleep all winter?" This signals clear intent and organization.
✓ **Relevant and Accurate Details:** ○ Facts from *Do Not Disturb* and *A Barn for Bears* are correctly cited, such as "Hibernation is controlled by the part of the brain called the hypothalamus" and "Female bears always have their cubs… in the middle of winter." These show accurate comprehension of scientific concepts.
✓ **Limited Depth of Explanation:** ○ Although each paragraph includes a relevant detail, elaboration is brief ("This part of the brain helps regulate hunger, thirst, and blood pressure") and doesn't connect clearly to how these details prove hibernation's importance.
✓ **Partial Synthesis Across Sources:** ○ The writer references more than one source but treats each as a separate fact. No analysis connects Source 1's biological detail to Source 3's behavioral evidence.

Organization: 4

The structure is logical and easy to follow. Each body paragraph addresses one sub-point from the introduction, though transitions and paragraph variety could improve flow and pacing.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Logical Sequence:** ○ Introduction → three body paragraphs (energy, fat, behavior) → conclusion. The order matches the previewed outline in the opening.
✓ **Transitional Clarity:** ○ Phrases like "The first statement…" and "The next statement…" guide readers but sound formulaic.
✓ **Balanced Paragraphing:** ○ Each section contains roughly equal length and structure, maintaining balance across ideas.
✓ **Conclusion and Closure:** ○ The ending restates main ideas clearly but drifts into conversational tone ("If you were a bear…").

Voice: 4

The tone is enthusiastic and approachable, showing strong engagement with the topic, but the conversational style and direct reader address reduce formality.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice
✓ **Engaging Introduction:** ○ Questions like "Did you ever wonder about how bears hibernate?" effectively draw readers in.
✓ **Enthusiastic but Informal Style:** ○ The writer's personality appears through phrases such as "I am here to teach you all I know," which energizes the writing but breaks the formal register.
✓ **Audience Awareness:** ○ Explanations are accessible for peers, though occasionally too chatty ("I hope you enjoy and learn a lot from my paper").
✓ **Inconsistent Tone:** ○ The shift from academic explanation to personal conversation in the conclusion weakens the professional voice.

Word Choice: 4

The vocabulary shows topic knowledge and some domain-specific terms, but informal or inaccurate word use occasionally reduces precision.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice
✓ **Appropriate Academic Vocabulary:** ○ Words like *hibernation*, *hypothalamus*, *energy*, and *fat* demonstrate subject awareness.
✓ **Misunderstood Terms:** ○ The student misdefines "binge" as "a time or instance of carefree fun," showing confusion about meaning in context.
✓ **Informal Expressions:** ○ Phrases such as "super hard" and "a ton" detract from the scientific tone.
✓ **Missed Opportunities for Precision:** ○ References to "special brown fur" instead of *brown fat* suggest incomplete comprehension of technical language.

Sentence Fluency: 4

Sentences are generally clear and readable with adequate variety. Occasional repetition and awkward phrasing interrupt flow.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Variety of Sentence Types:** ○ Mixes simple and compound sentences effectively ("Bears hibernate to save energy, they store fat…").
✓ **Transitional Flow:** ○ Paragraphs move logically, but repeated sentence starters ("The first statement," "The next statement") cause monotony.
✓ **Readable but Choppy Rhythm:** ○ Some sentences run long or rely heavily on conjunctions without punctuation balance.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Occasional Structural Confusion:** ○ "The fat they build up stores energy and keeps them cozy while the are in slumber" is mostly clear but needs minor grammatical tightening.

Conventions: 4

The paper maintains general control of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. Minor issues with homophones and apostrophes appear but do not impede readability.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions
✓ **Spelling Accuracy:** ○ Frequent misuse of *there* for *their* and occasional missing commas ("Source #1:The brown fat works…") appear.
✓ **Punctuation:** ○ Quotation marks are correctly used but lack spacing consistency.
✓ **Grammar and Agreement:** ○ Sentences are complete and coherent; errors are mechanical rather than structural.
✓ **Apostrophes and Possessives:** ○ The title and phrases like "a bears hibernation" should include possessives ("a bear's hibernation").

Use of Sources: 4

The writer integrates information from at least two sources accurately and uses citations, though integration remains mechanical rather than analytical.

Evidence from Student Work: Use of Sources
✓ **Multiple Source Use:** ○ The essay references Source 1 (hypothalamus, brown fat) and Source 3 (female bears with cubs).
✓ **Accuracy of Evidence:** ○ Details quoted are factual and correctly paraphrased.
✓ **Limited Integration:** ○ Each source appears in its own paragraph rather than combined to show relationships.
✓ **Basic Citation Practice:** ○ Sources are labeled ("Source #1," "Source #3"), but capitalization and spacing vary.