Grade 5 – Informational Writing Work Sample: Does Not Yet Meet

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: 3

The paper demonstrates basic understanding of hibernation with several accurate references to the sources. However, ideas are inconsistently developed, and much of the writing retells source facts rather than explaining their meaning or connecting them to a clear main idea.

Evidence from Student Work: Ideas and Content
✓ **Clear but Simplistic Main Idea:** ○ The introduction establishes a purpose ("I'm going to be writing about hibernation in my own words") and raises a question ("do bears truly hibernate?"), but the main idea remains narrow and repeated rather than developed into an explanation.
✓ **Use of Accurate Facts from Sources:** ○ The student correctly refers to Source 1 ("a bear in Yellowstone was looking for insects, berries, [and] small rodents") and Source 2 ("five bears were sent in fake dens… scientists watched them on video cameras"). These details show comprehension but are reported without analysis or transitions.
✓ **Lack of Explanation and Synthesis:** ○ The writer strings details together—e.g., "So source number 3 says… the bear fattens up on acorns"—but never explains how these facts connect to the main question. There is no reasoning that links evidence to the claim that bears truly hibernate.
✓ **Weak Conclusion or Insight:** ○ The paper ends abruptly with "So bears do hibernate," which answers the question but provides no summary or concluding thought about *why* or *how* hibernation benefits bears.

Organization: 3

The paper follows a sequential, source-by-source structure but lacks smooth transitions, paragraph unity, and an effective introduction or closure.

Evidence from Student Work: Organization
✓ **Predictable but Choppy Structure:** ○ Each body paragraph begins with "So source number 2 says…" or "So source number 3 says…" This signals order but results in a repetitive, disconnected structure.
✓ **Minimal Transitions:** ○ Frequent repetition of "so" as a transition creates abrupt jumps rather than logical flow between ideas.
✓ **Uneven Paragraph Development:** ○ Paragraphs summarize information from individual sources without combining or extending ideas across them.
✓ **Abrupt Conclusion:** ○ The final line—"So bears do hibernate"—lacks reflection or synthesis and ends the piece suddenly.

Voice: 3

The student's tone is conversational and friendly but inconsistent with the expectations of an informational report. The writer's curiosity is evident, yet the repeated use of first-person narration and rhetorical questions weakens the formal tone.

Evidence from Student Work: Voice
✓ **Engaged but Informal Introduction:** ○ The opening—"So I'm going to be writing about hibernation in my own words"—shows interest but reads like a classroom prompt, not an informational article.
✓ **Audience Awareness:** ○ Rhetorical questions ("But the question is do bears trully hibernate?") draw the reader in but do not maintain academic tone.
✓ **Inconsistent Formality:** ○ Frequent "so" starters and casual phrasing ("they go into ther dens," "they come out looking skinny") reduce the professionalism of the writing.
✓ **Missing Reflective Voice:** ○ There is no personal insight, commentary, or concluding statement that conveys the writer's understanding or stance beyond "So bears do hibernate."

Word Choice: 3

The vocabulary demonstrates some topic understanding but is limited in variety and precision. Frequent spelling errors and misused words reduce clarity.

Evidence from Student Work: Word Choice
✓ **Limited Vocabulary Range:** ○ Repetition of "so," "says," and "source" shows dependency on simple transitions and dialogue phrasing.
✓ **Some Domain-Specific Words:** ○ Mentions of "hibernate," "den," and "vital signs" show awareness of scientific terminology from the sources.
✓ **Frequent Spelling Errors:** ○ Misspellings like "trully," "asleap," "consintrate," and "ther" interrupt readability and lower control.
✓ **Lack of Precision:** ○ Phrases such as "one bear was looking for insects" or "they go into ther dens" could be refined to show more scientific understanding and specificity.

Sentence Fluency: 2

Sentences are mostly complete and readable but repetitive in structure and rhythm. The overuse of "so" to start sentences creates monotony and informal flow.

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Simple, Repetitive Patterns:** ○ Nearly every paragraph begins with "So source number…" which interrupts fluency and creates redundancy.
✓ **Run-ons and Fragments:** ○ Several long sentences could be divided for clarity ("They say th bears always slept in a curled position so source1 and 2 say yes but does source3 say they do hibernate").

Evidence from Student Work: Sentence Fluency
✓ **Readable but Uneven Rhythm:** o Although the writing is clear, sentence length varies inconsistently, causing pacing issues.
✓ **Limited Transitional Control:** o Few compound or complex sentences link ideas smoothly across paragraphs.

Conventions: 2

Frequent spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors interfere with fluency. Grammar control is inconsistent, though meaning is still accessible.

Evidence from Student Work: Conventions
✓ **Spelling Errors:** o Words such as “asleap,” “consintrate,” “trully,” and “ther” are consistently misspelled, showing limited proofreading.
✓ **Capitalization and Punctuation:** o “I’m” and “So im” lack capitalization and apostrophes. Missing commas after introductory words make sentences harder to read.
✓ **Grammar and Agreement Issues:** o Plural and possessive errors (“there dens,” “thier cubs”) appear throughout.
✓ **Readability Despite Errors:** o While mechanical errors are frequent, they rarely obscure overall meaning.

Use of Sources: 3

The paper references all three sources but does so in a surface-level, sequential manner. Source information is summarized rather than synthesized, and quotes lack explanation or analysis.

Evidence from Student Work: Use of Sources
✓ **Coverage of All Sources:** o The essay mentions Source 1 (bear gathering food), Source 2 (scientists monitoring bears in dens), and Source 3 (female bears and cubs).
✓ **Limited Integration:** o Sources are discussed separately (“So source number 2 says…”), rather than blended to build ideas.
✓ **Minimal Commentary:** o Each fact is reported without explanation of significance—no insight into how evidence supports the claim.
✓ **Inconsistent Citation Formatting:** o Source numbers are named but not capitalized consistently (“source1,” “source number 3”).