

Scoring Key: Grade 4

Informational Performance Task

Focus Standards

Grade 4: W.4.2b, d; W.4.4; W.4.5; W.4.8; W.4.9; L.4.3

4-Point Informational Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–5)

SCORE	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT	NS
EVIDENCE/ELABORATION	<p>The response provides thorough elaboration of the support/evidence for the controlling/main idea that includes the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific clear citations or attribution to source material effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose effective, appropriate style enhances content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the controlling/main idea that includes the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise and more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general adequate use of citations or attribution to source material adequate use of some elaborative techniques* vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the controlling/main idea that includes uneven or limited use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied weak use of citations or attribution to source material weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the controlling/main idea that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence (facts and details) from the source material is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the controlling/main idea

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E A	3	<p>The preponderance of evidence for this informational article falls under a score of 3. The student uses an adequate amount of evidence that generally supports the controlling idea that animals adapt to survive (“... sleeping nests are built on raised “platforms” to keep them dry in case of flooding.” and “... Now the cactus can store water for months and the owl has a nice home high up in the cactus.”). The citations in this piece are very clear (“... in my smarter balance packet in source #2 on page nine . . .” and “. . . on page 5, source #1 it says . . .”), and there is adequate elaboration of ideas (“Some animals build and live in different places depending on how they have adapted to the climate and terrain. Take the wombat for example, The wombat has adapted by digging huge tunnels that can be 100 feet long.” and “The owl has adapted by making nests in a cactus so it can have water.”). It should be noted that this student chose to include elaboration preceding the evidence, at the start of each paragraph, which differs from most examples viewed in this collection. The vocabulary used in this article is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose (“survived,” “habitat,” “adapted,” “climate,” “terrain,” “tunnels,” “nests,” “cactus,” “biom,” “creatures,” “environment”), and there is a generally appropriate style through the use of a warm, yet informative, tone (“In conclusion, animals are wonderful, magnificent creatures that have been able to adjust and adapt to their own unique environment . . .”).</p>
Sample Grade 4 E/E B	2	<p>This informational article demonstrates writing consistent with a score of 2 on the rubric, primarily because of its uneven use of source material and minimal use of elaborative techniques. The evidence that the student cites is limited and weakly integrated, in part because the controlling idea is vague (“Animals make several different kinds of homes to adapt to their habitats”) and drifts in focus halfway through the paper (“Termites can build 20-foot-high mounds out of dirt and their own saliva . . .”). The student attempts to cite sources, but the attributions are unclear (“I got this evidence from source 1. ‘It’s a cold (Hot, Dry, Dark) Cruel World’ and source #2 ‘Animal Architects.’”). The student does not elaborate on the evidence provided, so the burden is on the reader to make sense of how the evidence connects to the main idea. Vocabulary is generally appropriate in this piece (“habitat,” “adapt,” “mounds,” “dams,” “lodges”), but the style is weak because of the student’s limited attempt at engaging the audience (“All in all I think all animals and insects have incredible homes that are unique and interesting.”).</p> <p>This response provides minimal elaboration of the evidence for the controlling idea, including uneven or limited use of source material, and earns a score of 2.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E C	1	<p>This response includes minimal evidence in support of a weak controlling idea (“Every animal do different things . . .”). The student identifies ways that animals keep themselves warm (“Penguins have bluber to keep them warm”). Source citations are absent, but the student does attempt to elaborate through source summary (“if that is not a nuff all of the Penguin cuddle to gether.”). The vocabulary is uneven, with some words that are appropriate to the task (“substance,” “bluber”) and others that are more limited because they lack specificity (“winter,” “blood,” “warm”). There is little or no evidence of appropriate style.</p> <p>Because the response provides minimal elaboration of the support and minimal evidence for the controlling/main idea, and includes little or no use of source material, it earns a score of 1 for Evidence and Elaboration.</p>
Sample Grade 4 E/E D	2	<p>The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 2 for this article because of the simplistic language, the uneven use of evidence, and the minimal use of elaborative techniques. The student attempts to integrate evidence from sources; however, this evidence is vague and doesn’t adequately support the controlling idea that animals have extraordinary, unique homes that they build to survive. Instead, it reiterates the parallel between human and animal home building (“Homes protect us from weather and keep us safe and comfortable. Animals are no exeption.”). The student attempts to cite one source (“in scource #2 it understandably and clearly states . . .”), but the sourcing of other quotations is confusing due to the break in paragraphs. The student does not elaborate or explain the selected evidence, and therefore scores a 1 on that element of the rubric. The vocabulary used in the article is limited (“survive,” “habitat”), and attempts at style are weak and disconnected (“Most animals have extraordinary, unique home that they spent time building in order to survive in their habitat”).</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E E	3	The response uses adequate evidence from sources to support the controlling idea that animals build unique homes in order to survive. The evidence used is relevant to the main idea (“Wombats dig underground burrows that can be 100 feet long.”; “Bald eagles build massive nests . . .”; “In addition to their lodges, beavers build dams.”). The student cites sources clearly (“I got this information on page #9, from Source 2”) and elaborates each idea adequately (“The nest fits the Bald eagle because, It’s a big nest for a big bird”; “The dams are just right for the environment because it keeps the beavers away from predators”). The student repeats vocabulary from the sources to elaborate on ideas (“That is where a wombat lives, in a burrow.”; “The nest fits the Bald eagle . . .”; “dams are just right for the environment . . .”), so the vocabulary is generally appropriate. The student’s invitational style matches the purpose of the piece for use in a school science fair (“do you know some of them?”; “when you’re outside look at all of the unique animal homes you see”). This sample is a 3 because it demonstrates adequate evidence and elaboration, as well as general vocabulary.

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E F	4	This informational article is a clear example of a response earning a score of 4. The evidence cited is specific and strongly supports the topic sentences in each paragraph (for example, “Climates affect animals and where they live as well. Ice fish live in extremely cold environments. In order to survive, ice fish keep ice crystals from forming with a special substance in their blood. (Source 1)”). The evidence is cited clearly and is integrated effectively (“This is important because ‘plants and animals work together in an ecosystem to survive.’ (Source 3)”). The student elaborates on the cited evidence by providing thorough explanation and creative expression (“It’s important for beavers to be able to come and go without being seen by predators because they might eat them if they can see them. Lodges keep beavers safe. If you had predators after you, wouldn’t you want to have a lodge to keep you safe also?”). The vocabulary used is clearly appropriate for the article’s audience and purpose (“structures,” “protect,” “predators,” “lodges,” “safe,” “climates,” “environments,” “survive,” “provide,” “shelter”), and the style enhances the points made by the author (“Just like the oak tree and the reef I depend on plants for food and for shelter”).

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E G	3	This informational article represents a score of 3, though on the lower end of the scale. The student generally integrates adequate evidence (“Termites build twent-foot-high mounds out of dirt . . .”), although the evidence cited in the second paragraph (“Each enviornment creates different challengs for animals to live there . . .”), while relevant, is too general to fully develop the main idea. More evidence would make this piece stronger. Citations are clear (“I found this information on page 3-4 of my smart balanced packet of article 1”), but the elaborative techniques are uneven and limited (“I don’t know about how, but I think how small those termites are and how big their structures are.” and “The different places where animals live make it easy or hard to survive.”). The student uses vocabulary that is general and appropriate to the topic (“climates,” “adapted,” “animal architects,” “burrow,” “nest”), and the style is appropriate to the task (“If you can go out into the woods, look around you, you will see many animals different masterpeices made by natures animal architects.”). This article represents a score of 3, in spite of the uneven elaboration, because the preponderance of evidence remains at level 3.

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 4 E/E H	2	This informational article provides cursory elaboration of the evidence from the sources, primarily through source summary, and earns a score of 2. While the student draws on some evidence, it is limited and weakly integrated (“First, penguins have thick layers of skin called blubber. Penguins use their blubber to cuddle and share warm body temperatures.”) and fails to use any citations or attributions to source material. The elaboration attempts are generally details summarized from sources (“On the optimistic side plants have roots that expand to get water underground.”). The vocabulary use in this article is adequate (“creatures,” “survive,” “environments,” “sea,” “forest,” “blubber,” “temperatures,” “desert,” “roots,” “mounds”), but there is little evidence of appropriate style (“Did you know termites build 20 feet mounds of dirt and saliva.”).