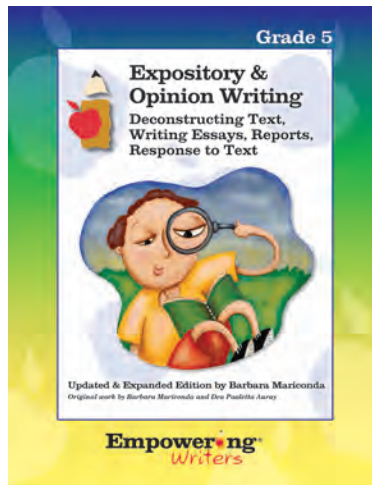




Grade 5
Expository and Opinion Writing
Deconstructing Text, Writing Essays, Reports, Response to Text

Student Pages for Print or Projection

SECTION 1: Recognizing Genre/Organization
Part 3



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FLIGHTLESS BIRDS

introduction

1.) When we think of birds we mostly imagine sleek feathered creatures soaring across the sky. However, while all birds have feathers, not all birds fly. In fact, there are many types of flightless birds in the world. Let's examine the ostrich, the kiwi, and the penguin – three very different flightless birds.

ostrich

2.) The ostrich is the largest of the flightless birds. These feathered giants stand between seven and nine feet tall on their incredibly powerful, long, jointed legs and weigh up to 350 pounds. Ostriches have long skinny necks that allow them to see far across the African plains. They also have incredibly large eyes and sharp vision to help them spot predators from long distances. Ostriches travel in herds and are formidable adversaries in a fight. Their legs deliver a lethal kick and they can outrun most predators at speeds of up to 43 miles per hour. In defending themselves and their young they have been known to defeat even lions in a battle. Contrary to folklore, ostriches do not stick their heads in the sand when trouble arises. They simply hunker down and try to blend in with their environment. These omnivores eat mostly plants, but will also eat a variety of insects and other small creatures when the opportunity arises. Female ostriches lay 7-10 eggs at a time, each large egg weighing 3-5 pounds, 6 inches around and 5 inches in height.

kiwi

3.) In contrast to the ostrich is the national symbol of New Zealand, the kiwi. The *kiwi* is the smallest flightless bird – about the size of a chicken. It stands about 20 inches tall and weighs just over two pounds. The kiwi has unusually distinctive gray feathers that look more like porcupine quills. It also is distinct because it doesn't have a tail. These nocturnal birds have whiskers beside their beaks that help these poorly-sighted birds as they snuffle about for food. Kiwis have an excellent sense of smell that helps them locate insects, fruit, frogs, eels, and crayfish. These omnivorous birds are easily agitated and extremely territorial. Their three-toed feet boast razor sharp claws with which they protect themselves. These bad-tempered, solitary birds nest in underground burrows, and excavate a new burrow every night. They lay very large eggs for such a small bird. Their oblong eggs are almost seven inches long and 3 inches around.



Annotated Page

penguin

4.) The penguin is perhaps the most well-known of the flightless birds. There are 17-20 different penguin species living exclusively in the southern hemisphere. These migratory birds come in many sizes, from the diminutive 16 inch tall Little Blue Penguin, to the four foot tall Emperor Penguin. Penguins are exceedingly good swimmers and divers, perfectly adapted to the frigid waters where they spend most of their time. Their speedy swimming is the characteristic that helps them the most in moving quickly away from predators such as killer whales or leopard seals. In fact the *Gentoo* penguin can swim up to 22 miles per hour! Their black and white tuxedo-style coloration helps camouflage them in the water. Penguin “wings” function as flippers to assist them in swimming. These non-flyers have more feathers than most other birds, and this helps maintain their body heat in the cold climates where they live. All species of penguins eat mostly fish, krill, and crustaceans. Most penguin species live in large colonies, some up to 200,000 birds. Depending on the species, penguin eggs range from about 2 to 5 inches in length. Interestingly, the female Emperor Penguin lays but a single egg and leaves it in the care of her male partner. The male cradles it on top of his webbed feet and covers it with a fold of skin that keeps the egg warm.

5.) These are just three earth-bound bird species that have managed well without the ability to fly. Should you ever visit the African plains, the forests of New Zealand, or the icy coastlines of the far Southern hemisphere, perhaps you’ll be lucky enough to catch sight of one of these unusual flightless birds.

conclusion



Name: _____

FLIGHTLESS BIRDS

When we think of birds we mostly imagine sleek feathered creatures soaring across the sky. However, while all birds have feathers, not all birds fly. In fact, there are many types of flightless birds in the world. Let's examine the ostrich, the kiwi, and the penguin – three very different flightless birds.

The ostrich is the largest of the flightless birds. These feathered giants stand between seven and nine feet tall on their incredibly powerful, long, jointed legs and weigh up to 350 pounds. Ostriches have long skinny necks that allow them to see far across the African plains. They also have incredibly large eyes and sharp vision to help them spot predators from long distances. Ostriches travel in herds and are formidable adversaries in a fight. Their legs deliver a lethal kick and they can outrun most predators at speeds of up to 43 miles per hour. In defending themselves and their young they have been known to defeat even lions in a battle. Contrary to folklore, ostriches do not stick their heads in the sand when trouble arises. They simply hunker down and try to blend in with their environment. These omnivores eat mostly plants, but will also eat a variety of insects and other small creatures when the opportunity arises. Female ostriches lay 7-10 eggs at a time, each large egg weighing 3-5 pounds, 6 inches around and 5 inches in height.

In contrast to the ostrich is the national symbol of New Zealand, the kiwi. The *kiwi* is the smallest flightless bird – about the size of a chicken. It stands about 20 inches tall and weighs just over two pounds. The kiwi has unusually distinctive gray feathers that look more like porcupine quills. It also is distinct because it doesn't have a tail. These nocturnal birds have whiskers beside their beaks that help these poorly-sighted birds as they snuffle about for food. Kiwis have an excellent sense of smell that helps them locate insects, fruit, frogs, eels, and crayfish. These omnivorous birds are easily agitated and extremely territorial. Their three-toed feet boast razor sharp claws with which they protect themselves. These bad-tempered, solitary birds nest in underground burrows, and excavate a new burrow every night. They lay very large eggs for such a small bird. Their oblong eggs are almost seven inches long and 3 inches around.



Student Page

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These are just three earth-bound bird species that have managed well without the ability to fly. Should you ever visit the African plains, the forests of New Zealand, or the icy coastlines of the far Southern hemisphere, perhaps you’ll be lucky enough to catch sight of one of these unusual flightless birds.



Discussion Questions – Birds of Prey and Flightless Birds

You have read two informative texts about very different types of birds, Birds of Prey and Flightless Birds. Select a predatory bird and a flightless bird and write an essay describing what these birds have in common, and how they differ. Be sure to discuss the appearance and characteristics of both birds, citing examples from the text.

1. Fill in the summarizing frameworks, below, for each text:

BIRD OF PREY

Topic: Birds of Prey
 Main Idea #1: owls
 Main Idea #2: hawks
 Main Idea #3: osprey
 Main Idea #4: eagles

FLIGHTLESS BIRDS

Topic: Flightless Birds
 Main Idea #1: ostrich
 Main Idea #2: kiwi
 Main Idea #3: penguin

2. What do you notice about these summarizing frameworks? Each paragraph is about a different kind of bird
3. What are the “givens” in the boxed assignment? Must compare/contrast a predatory and a flightless bird
4. Go back to each text. Based on your main idea “blurbs” in the margins, circle the paragraph describing your chosen predatory bird in yellow and your flightless bird in pink.
5. Read your selected paragraphs. What common information might you use to compare/contrast? size, feathers, habitat, predators/prey/food
6. If you were going to expand the text Birds of Prey what is another main idea you might include: an additional type of bird, endangered birds of prey
7. If you were going to expand the text Flightless Birds, what is another main idea you might include: additional type of bird, endangered or extinct flightless birds

BONUS: Go back to each source and circle all of the ways the authors refer to the birds described in these texts. (word referents)

CIRCLE:

- large and interesting birds • these non-flyers • large-eyed night stalkers • raptors
- these beautiful animals • large white-headed predator • this fearless bird
- earth-bound birds • diurnal hunters • symbol of American courage and freedom



Student Page

Name: _____

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1. Fill in the summarizing frameworks, below, for each text:

BIRD OF PREY

Topic: _____

Main Idea #1: _____

Main Idea #2: _____

Main Idea #3: _____

Main Idea #4: _____

FLIGHTLESS BIRDS

Topic: _____

Main Idea #1: _____

Main Idea #2: _____

Main Idea #3: _____

2. What do you notice about these summarizing frameworks? _____

3. What are the “givens” in the boxed assignment? _____

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BONUS: Go back to each source and circle all of the ways the authors refer to the birds described in these texts. (*word referents*)



Student Page

Name: _____

Comparison Grid

| | PREDATORY BIRD - OWL | FLIGHTLESS BIRD - OSTRICH |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Size/ Appearance | | |
| Habitat | | |
| Predators/ Prey/food | | |



Comparison Grid

| | PREDATORY BIRD - OWL | FLIGHTLESS BIRD - OSTRICH |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Size/ Appearance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variety of sizes • large eyes • sharp talons • concave feathers on face • unique wing feathers for silent flight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • largest birds • large eyes • long, jointed powerful legs • long necks |
| Habitat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African plains |
| Predators/ Prey/food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nocturnal hunters, eat small rodents • quiet and stealthy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • omnivorous - eat mostly plants but sometimes insects or other small creatures • Fast runners, strong kickers |



EXEMPLAR TEXT

Birds are all around us. But there are also some unusual birds that most of us don't see everyday. Two of these would be owls and ostrich. In the texts Birds of Prey and Flightless Birds we learn about a variety of out of the ordinary birds. The owl and ostrich are two of these interesting feathered creatures that share some traits and differ in other ways.

The author points out that while owls are a "well-known example of a bird of prey" they are difficult to spot, since they're nocturnal hunters. In the text we learn that there are many varieties of owls that come in all sizes, "from the tiny Saw Whet Owl to the Great Grey Owl which has a wingspan of over five feet." The author points out that owls have extremely large eyes to assist them in their nightly hunting of small rodents. These forest dweller's feathers help them while hunting. We read about how their arrangement of wing feathers help them to fly silently in order to surprise their prey. In the text, the author describes the Barn Owl's configuration of facial feathers that create a concave bowl that helps owls "channel sound into their ears." While the author doesn't mention any predators, I imagine owls could defend themselves with their sharp talons and beaks.

From the other text I learned ostriches offer a clear contrast to owls. Standing between 7 and 9 feet tall, with long, strong legs and long necks, these flightless birds can run up to 43 miles per hour. These African plain dwellers are omnivorous and spend much of their time scavenging for plants, insects, and sometimes small creatures. I was surprised to read that ostriches are "formidable adversaries in a fight." It was also amazing to read that their "lethal kick" can help them defeat even a lion in battle!

So, while owls and ostriches are both types of birds, owls are nocturnal hunters and ostriches are diurnal scavengers. Owls are stealthy flyers, while the flightless ostrich depends on its strong legs to run and to fight. Both are fascinating creatures.



Name: _____

EXEMPLAR TEXT

Birds are all around us. But there are also some unusual birds that most of us don't see everyday. Two of these would be owls and ostrich. In the texts Birds of Prey and Flightless Birds we learn about a variety of out of the ordinary birds. The owl and ostrich are two of these interesting feathered creatures that share some traits and differ in other ways.

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Student Reference Page

SUMMARIZING YOUR INDEPENDENT READING

What are you reading? After reading a story, highlight the important parts by completing the Narrative Writing Summarizing Framework below. If you're reading nonfiction, summarize what you learned from it using the Expository Writing Summarizing Framework.

Narrative Writing Summarizing Framework

Title _____

Author _____

This story is about _____
Main Character

The problem, adventure or experience was that _____

Single significant main event

The problem is solved, adventure/experience concluded when _____

Solution/conclusion

Expository Writing Summarizing Framework

Title _____

Topic _____

Main Idea #1 _____

Main Idea #2 _____

Main Idea #3 _____

etc.: _____



Student Page

Name: _____

IRRELEVANT, EXTRANEIOUS DETAILS IN EXPOSITORY TEXT

Read the expository paragraphs below and identify the **MAIN IDEA** of each. Then, find the detail sentence that does NOT support the **MAIN IDEA** and cross it out.

1. St. Bernards are very large dogs that were originally bred to rescue victims of avalanches in the Italian and Swiss Alps. At dog shows today, these muscle-bound canines display amazing strength in weight-pulling competitions. Beagles and Basset Hounds also participate in dog shows. While huge and powerful, St. Bernards usually have a calm nature. For families with large homes and yards, this gentle giant is often a great choice for a pet.

What is the **MAIN IDEA** of this paragraph?

2. Strap on a pair of snowshoes and you can hike your favorite trail even when during the winter. Snowshoeing is easy to learn and great exercise for people of all ages. Cross country skiing is another popular winter sport. Since snowshoes cost only about \$100 a pair and last for a very long time, it is a less expensive sport than many other snow season sports like skiing or snowboarding. Renting snowshoes on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis is another money-saving option.

What is the **MAIN IDEA** of this paragraph?

BONUS: List word referents for “St. Bernards” and for “Winter.”



Name: _____

IRRELEVANT, EXTRANEOUS DETAILS IN OPINION WRITING

Read the opinion paragraphs below and identify the **MAIN REASON** of each. Then, find the detail sentence that does NOT support the **MAIN REASON** and cross it out.

1. I wish my family could move to the city. The way I see it, cities are exciting places bustling with activity. It's easy to get place-to-place on subways and buses, and fun to hail a taxi cab. I'd love to be able to be close to the sports arenas, museums, shops, and parks that cities like New York offer. We live in the suburbs and there's just not as many interesting things to do there as there is in a city. I also wish my family would take a vacation to Disney World next summer.

What is the **MAIN REASON** of this paragraph?

2. Everybody enjoys a delicious turkey dinner, but I firmly believe that the best part of Thanksgiving Day is watching the Thanksgiving Day Parade on television. In my opinion, there really is nothing quite as exciting as this yearly extravaganza in New York City. Year after year, I love to watch the giant balloons of popular cartoon characters and colorful floats that take my breath away. A fun fact is that the people who march the balloons along the parade route are all volunteers; none are paid for doing this tricky job. I can't think of anything better than eating pumpkin pie after Thanksgiving dinner. Another parade highlight for me is listening to the marching bands from schools across the country and unforgettable musical performances from Broadway stars. Don't you wonder why anybody'd miss it?

What is the **MAIN REASON** of this paragraph?

BONUS: Circle the words and phrases that tell you these are passages from opinion pieces.



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Eating Bugs

Some people in the world eat bugs. There are lots of bugs that can be eaten when there's not a lot of other food around. Bugs have protein which is good for you. They're easier to raise than cows and cheaper. Bugs could end hunger. And you don't feel as bad killing a bug to eat as you do a cow or a chicken.



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Eating Bugs

If people could get used to eating bugs it could solve a lot of problems. I'm going to tell you where insects are eaten, why they're economical, and how they can taste good!

In North America most people think eating bugs is gross, but not in other parts of the world. In Cambodia you can buy fried tarantulas from food carts on the streets. In Thailand you can buy deep fried crickets. In the Outback of Australia you can try big fat roasted witchetty grubs. In the USA you can even try grasshopper tacos or toasted mealworms over ice cream. If people got over feeling yucky about bugs they might find that eating them isn't so bad.

Bugs can be a plentiful, cheap source of food. It doesn't cost as much to raise and feed bugs as it does to feed cows and pigs and chickens. Raising bugs doesn't ruin the land like some crops do. There are over a thousand kinds of bugs that can be made into food.

Bugs can taste good! Some bugs have a lemony, sour taste. Some bugs like witchetty grubs have a crispy outside and a creamy, eggy inside. Some people mix bugs with lots of spices before they're cooked. Bugs can be toasted and served on salad or dessert.

So, now you know some of the places where bugs are on the menu. You know how they are a plentiful, cheap source of food and you know that they can taste good. So, will you try to eat a bug?



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE TO THE PREVIOUS EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Insects on the Menu?

What would you do if you found a bug on your burger? Or an insect in your eggs? You'd probably send the food back and demand a refund! But, this bug-aversion may be on the brink of becoming a thing of the past. Scientists and chefs alike are beginning to see the benefits of cooking and eating many of the over 1,000 types of edible insects in the world. Not only can they be creatively prepared, but they can provide a much-needed healthy source of protein in our diets. Perhaps most importantly, insects can be farmed inexpensively as a way to end world hunger.

Many groups of native people have long enjoyed insects as a part of their diets, and now some big city restaurants are learning from them! Indigenous people such as the Aborigines in Australia dig large 2 inch long white grubs from the roots of the witchetty bush and slow roast them on hot coals. Crusty on the outside and creamy on the inside, these tasty nuggets are said to be like a combination of fried chicken and soft boiled eggs. Another Aboriginal delicacy is the honey ant. People harvest them from their nests with long sticks, then bite off the ants' honey-filled bellies for an all-natural sweet treat. In Cambodia deep-fried crunchy tarantulas are sold from snack carts on city streets where children and adults alike break off each of the eight crispy legs and happily munch before devouring the soft body. Now, restaurants the world over are beginning to offer dishes such as fresh smooth guacamole topped with crispy fried grasshoppers, or savory silkworm soup. One popular California restaurant offers "Singapore style Scorpions." When prepared creatively, insects can be just as flavorful as traditional food.

(continued)



Student Page

The fact is, edible insects are a healthy source of protein and other nutrients. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, just a three and a half ounce serving of grasshoppers can deliver up to 28 grams of protein! Compare this to an egg, which provides just 6 grams. Grasshoppers also offer healthy unsaturated fat and small amounts of iron. Ants, beetles, and caterpillars boast similar benefits. Compare this to many commercially prepared foods and you'll see that, from a health standpoint, bugs have a lot to offer!

Most importantly, in a world where tens of thousands of people die each day from starvation and related illnesses, insects could be the answer. Insects can be farmed in ways that do not deplete the environment the way over planting and the use of fertilizers and pesticides can. Bugs reproduce quickly and have short life cycles, and they don't require the investment in feed, pastureland, and care that cattle, sheep, hogs, and chickens do. Insects can survive drought and other adverse conditions better than their tasty four legged and feathered livestock can. And, for those who would find it difficult to actually kill a cow in order to eat it, killing an insect is a little easier. And they don't need to be fenced, caged, or confined. So, we can feed the world's hungry in a humane and economical way.

Without a doubt, creatively preparing insects can become not only a dining adventure, but a healthy alternative to some of the fat-filled, artificially flavored foods we eat. Learning from the eating habits of indigenous people might be the key to solving world hunger by getting used to the idea of using insects as food.



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Eating Bugs

Version 1

Some people in the world eat bugs. There are lots of bugs that can be eaten when there's not a lot of other food around. Bugs have protein which is good for you. They're easier to raise than cows and cheaper. Bugs could end hunger. And you don't feel as bad killing a bug to eat as you do a cow or a chicken.

*disorganized!
random, general details*

(continued)



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

introduction

Version 2

Eating Bugs

1.) If people could get used to eating bugs it could solve a lot of problems. I'm going to tell you where insects are eaten, why they're economical, and how they can taste good!

2.) In North America most people think eating bugs is gross, but not in other parts of the world. In Cambodia you can buy fried tarantulas from food carts on the streets. In Thailand you can buy deep fried crickets. In the Outback of Australia you can try big fat roasted witchetty grubs. In the USA you can even try grasshopper tacos and Raising bugs doesn't ruin the land like some crops do. There are over a thousand kinds of bugs that can be made into food.

3.) Bugs can taste good! Some bugs have a lemony, sour taste. Some bugs like witchetty grubs have a crispy outside and a creamy, egggy inside. Some people mix bugs with lots of spices before they're cooked. Bugs can be toasted and served on salad or dessert.

4.) So, now you know some of the places where bugs are on the menu. You know how they are a plentiful, cheap source of food and you know that they can taste good. So, will you try to eat a bug?



EATING BUGS

READ AND COMPARE TO THE PREVIOUS EXPOSITORY TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

introduction

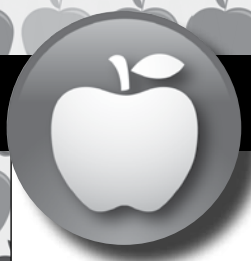
Version 3

Insects on the Menu?

1.) What would you do if you found a bug on your burger? Or an insect in your eggs? You'd probably send the food back and demand a refund! But, this bug-aversion may be on the brink of becoming a thing of the past. Scientists and chefs alike are beginning to see the benefits of cooking and eating many of the over 1,000 types of edible insects in the world. Not only can they be creatively prepared, but they can provide a much-needed healthy source of protein in our diets. Perhaps most importantly, insects can be farmed inexpensively as a way to end world hunger.

ways to prepare

2.) Many groups of native people have long enjoyed insects as a part of their diets, and now some big city restaurants are learning from them! Indigenous people such as the Aborigines in Australia dig large 2 inch long white grubs from the roots of the witchetty bush and slow roast them on hot coals. Crusty on the outside and creamy on the inside, these tasty nuggets are said to be like a combination of fried chicken and soft boiled eggs. Another Aboriginal delicacy is the honey ant. People harvest them from their nests with long sticks, then bite off the ants' honey-filled bellies for an all-natural sweet treat. In Cambodia deep-fried crunchy tarantulas are sold from snack carts on city streets where children and adults alike break off each of the eight crispy legs and happily munch before devouring the soft body. Now, restaurants the world over are beginning to offer dishes such as fresh smooth guacamole topped with crispy fried grasshoppers, or savory silkworm soup. One popular California restaurant offers "Singapore style Scorpions." When prepared creatively, insects can be just as flavorful as traditional food.



Annotated Page

healthy

3.) The fact is, edible insects are a healthy source of protein and other nutrients. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, just a three and a half ounce serving of grasshoppers can deliver up to 28 grams of protein! Compare this to an egg, which provides just 6 grams. Grasshoppers also offer healthy unsaturated fat and small amounts of iron. Ants, beetles, and caterpillars boast similar benefits. Compare this to many commercially prepared foods and you'll see that, from a health standpoint, bugs have a lot to offer!

world hunger

4.) Most importantly, in a world where tens of thousands of people die each day from starvation and related illnesses, insects could be the answer. Insects can be farmed in ways that do not deplete the environment the way over planting and the use of fertilizers and pesticides can. Bugs reproduce quickly and have short life cycles, and they don't require the investment in feed, pastureland, and care that cattle, sheep, hogs, and chickens do. Insects can survive drought and other adverse conditions better than their tasty four legged and feathered livestock can. And, for those who would find it difficult to actually kill a cow in order to eat it, killing an insect is a little easier. And they don't need to be fenced, caged, or confined. So, we can feed the world's hungry in a humane and economical way.

5.) Without a doubt, ²creatively preparing insects can become not only ³a dining adventure, but a healthy alternative to some of the fat-filled, artificially flavored foods we eat. Learning from the eating habits of indigenous people ⁴might be the key to solving world hunger by getting used to the idea of using insects as food. conclusion



TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Taking the Bus

Some kids walk to school. Some get rides from their mom or dad. Some kids walk to school or ride bikes. But the best way to get to school is to take the bus. The bus is fun cause you get to ride around and see stuff. It's fun to sit with your friends and talk before school starts. Plus you see kids from other grades. It's even fun to hang around at the bus stop with your friends. It's like a great big carpool that saves gas. That's why I like riding the bus to school.

(continued)



TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Taking the Bus

There are many ways to get to school but taking the bus is the best way. It's fun to ride around town and to spend time with your friends. It's also a way to save gas.

The reason I know all the back roads in my town is because I ride the school bus. From the time I was in kindergarten I'd enjoy sitting by the window and looking out. I'd love seeing where kids lived and where the traffic was heavy. It was fun going through the center of town and see all the stores there. When we have a substitute bus driver I get a kick out of pointing out the route. If I had my license I think I'd know how to pick up every kid on the bus!

Another reason I like taking the bus is because I get to see my friends before school. It's a blast hanging out at the bus stop, trading baseball cards. On the bus I like seeing kids in all different grades and getting to know them. We laugh when we see something funny out the window and tell jokes and funny stories as we ride. I know more kids than the kids who walk or get a ride and that is the best part.

The last reason I like taking the bus is because it is good for the environment and it saves time. I feel good thinking that if the 30 kids on the bus got rides in cars, that would mean 30 more cars on the road. What a waste of gas! What a lot of fumes! Not to mention that all those parents would be wasting time and wearing out their cars.

So, what do you think? Isn't riding the school bus the best way to get to school? You get to know your town, spend time with friends, and produce less pollution.



TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE TO THE PREVIOUS OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Taking the Bus

A crowd of kids from Mulberry School gather on the corner of my street at 7:45 each morning and I'm one of them! I know some kids like to have their parents drive them to school, or they walk, but, from my point of view, there's nothing like gathering at the bus stop, spotting the big yellow vehicle in the distance, and when it rumbles to a stop, climbing up the steps with all your friends. Riding the bus everyday has taught me to know my way around town, allows me to spend time before school with my friends, and it also is a plus for the environment!

Since I've been riding the bus, I know the streets of Mulberry like the back of my hand! Even as a five-year-old kindergartener who could barely see out the bus window, I enjoyed peering out as we drove from stop to stop. I loved to quiz myself at each corner: Would we turn left or right? It was fun to memorize the names of all the streets and learn how to get from one end of town to the other. When I'm driving around in the car with my mom I relish the idea of showing her short-cuts and naming streets she doesn't know. "Bobby," she says, "I think if you could get your driver's license as a fifth grader you could become the best bus driver in town!" That makes me feel proud!

Waiting for and riding the bus is a great time to socialize. I rush to the bus stop every morning and look forward to the minutes my fellow riders and I spend joking and laughing. It's the best way to work off some energy before



Student Page

the school day even begins so we don't get in trouble! The best part is when Carlos, Jack, and I trade baseball cards and argue about which team is the best. I also appreciate getting to know the younger kids and reassuring them when they're scared or nervous. It's so much more fun than sitting in the back of your mom's car having her ask you about your homework!

Besides all the fun, I think riding the bus is probably the best way I can protect the environment. If all thirty kids on who ride the bus decided to come to school by car, think of all the extra traffic and exhaust that would produce. I value the idea that I'm taking public transportation - it's even better than carpooling! Not only that, but it seems to me it eliminates extra cars on the road that cause traffic back-ups. As cars sit in traffic they produce even more pollution. I'm grateful to be able to do my part in reducing emissions. It makes me feel very responsible!

So, when the alarm clock goes off, I hop out of bed, get myself ready, and head out the door with a smile. Becoming an expert navigator, spending time with friends old and new, and helping the environment make taking the bus a favorite part of my day! I think every kid should try it!



TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Version 1

Taking the Bus

Some kids walk to school. Some get rides from their mom or dad. Some kids walk to school or ride bikes. But the best way to get to school is to take the bus. The bus is fun cause you get to ride around and see stuff. It's fun to sit with your friends and talk before school starts. Plus you see kids from other grades. It's even fun to hang around at the bus stop with your friends. It's like a great big carpool that saves gas. That's why I like riding the bus to school.

disorganized!
random, general details

(continued)



Annotated Page

TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE THE FOLLOWING OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

Version 2

introduction

Taking the Bus

1.) There are many ways to get to school but taking the bus is the best way. It's fun to ride around town and to spend time with your friends. It's also a way to save gas.

2.) The reason I know all the back roads in my town is because I ride the school bus. From the time I was in kindergarten I'd enjoy sitting by the window and looking out. I'd love seeing where kids lived and where the traffic was heavy. It was fun going through the center of town and see all the stores there. When we have a substitute bus driver I get a kick out of pointing out the route. If I had my license I think I'd know how to pick up every kid on the bus!

3.) Another reason I like taking the bus is because I get to see my friends before school. It's a blast hanging out at the bus stop, trading baseball cards. On the bus I like seeing kids in all different grades and getting to know them. We laugh when we see something funny out the window and tell jokes and funny stories as we ride. I know more kids than the kids who walk or get a ride and that is the best part.

4.) The last reason I like taking the bus is because it is good for the environment and it saves time. I feel good thinking that if the 30 kids on the bus got rides in cars, that would mean 30 more cars on the road. What a waste of gas! What a lot of fumes! Not to mention that all those parents would be wasting time and wearing out their cars.

5.) So, what do you think? Isn't riding the school bus the best way to get to school? You get to know your town, spend time with friends, and produce less pollution.

conclusion

well organized
but general listing details



TAKING THE BUS

READ AND COMPARE TO THE PREVIOUS OPINION TEXTS. WHICH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE, AND WHY?

introduction

Taking the Bus

version 3

1.) A crowd of kids from Mulberry School gather on the corner of my street at 7:45 each morning and I'm one of them! I know some kids like to have their parents drive them to school, or they walk, but, from my point of view, there's nothing like gathering at the bus stop, spotting the big yellow vehicle in the distance, and when it rumbles to a stop, climbing up the steps with all your friends. Riding the bus everyday has taught me to know my way around town, allows me to spend time before school with my friends, and it also is a plus for the environment!

2.) Since I've been riding the bus, I know the streets of Mulberry like the back of my hand! Even as a five-year-old kindergartener who could barely see out the bus window, I enjoyed peering out as we drove from stop to stop. I loved to quiz myself at each corner: Would we turn left or right? It was fun to memorize the names of all the streets and learn how to get from one end of town to the other. When I'm driving around in the car with my mom I relish the idea of showing her short-cuts and naming streets she doesn't know. "Bobby," she says, "I think if you could get your driver's license as a fifth grader you could become the best bus driver in town!" That makes me feel proud!

3.) Waiting for and riding the bus is a great time to socialize. I rush to the bus stop every morning and look forward to the minutes my fellow riders and I spend joking and laughing. It's the best way to work off some energy before the school day even begins so we don't get in trouble! The best part is when

get to know town

socialize



Annotated Page

Carlos, Jack, and I trade baseball cards and argue about which team is the best. I also appreciate getting to know the younger kids and reassuring them when they're scared or nervous. It's so much more fun that sitting in the back of your mom's car having her ask you about your homework!

4.) Besides all the fun, I think riding the bus is probably the best way I can protect the environment. If all thirty kids on who ride the bus decided to come to school by car, think of all the extra traffic and exhaust that would produce. I value the idea that I'm taking public transportation - it's even better than carpooling! Not only that, but it seems to me it eliminates extra cars on the road that cause traffic back-ups. As cars sit in traffic they produce even more pollution. I'm grateful to be able to do my part in reducing emissions. It makes me feel very responsible!

5.) So, when the alarm clock goes off, I hop out of bed, get myself ready, and head out the door with a smile. Becoming an expert navigator, spending time with friends³ old and new, and helping the environment⁴ make taking the bus a favorite part of my day! I think every kid should try it!

conclusion

Cut and Paste Activities

(Sample Reconstruction)



Creatures of the Amazon (*expository*)

Surrounded by the largest, densest rain forest on the planet, the winding Amazon River is home to an astonishing variety of life that can be found nowhere else on earth. The electric eel, the vampire fish and the pink dolphin are three weird and wonderful examples.

Don't get too close to the electric eel! It'll zap you with electricity! These unique creatures of the Amazon can generate electric shocks of up to 600 volts. They use their electrical power to stun enemies and kill prey. The shock of a large electric eel is not strong enough to kill a horse, but certainly able to knock it right off its feet. Electric eels are almost blind and they live in murky waters. Their shocking power is their only defense against predators. They can zap their prey from a distance of up to 10 feet. These snake-like stunners can grow to more than 8 feet in length.

Watch out for the vampire fish. With silver scales and large, dark eyes, the vampire fish is easy to recognize. This remarkable river monster has two huge, sharp fangs growing from its lower jaw. The vampire fish can grow to a length of 3 feet with terrifying 6 inch fangs! Payara is another name for the vampire fish. It has been described as "Count Dracula in fish form." Despite its name, the fierce fish does not suck blood. But a vampire fish does eat piranha. The vampire fish is commonly found in the fast-moving waters of the Amazon. Quick and aggressive, this sabre-toothed brute often leaps from the water. Reeling in a vampire fish is the dream of many daring fishermen.

Meet the legendary pink dolphin of the Amazon. Scientists are not sure why these appealing animals are pink, but they come in a variety of rosy tones. River dwelling dolphins are very different from the more familiar dolphins that swim in the oceans. Pink dolphins have longer snouts, smaller dorsal fins and sharper teeth than the saltwater species. Amazingly, pink dolphins blush, growing deeper in color when they are surprised or excited. Friendly and smart, pink dolphins will approach a boat and seem curious about people. Air-breathing mammals, they often pop their pink heads out of the water and jump gracefully into the air. In Amazon folklore, the pink dolphin is called Boto. Legend says that Boto turns from human to dolphin and back again whenever it pleases. There are four other species of River Dolphins, but all are close to extinction. Today, pink dolphins are very, very rare.

Life abounds in the mysterious Amazon. It is hard to believe, but scientists say that countless species have yet to be discovered there. For now, we can only imagine the unknown creatures who share the river with the beautiful pink dolphin, the fearsome vampire fish and the awesome electric eel. For sure, the possibilities are exciting!



Cut and Paste Activities

(Sample Reconstruction)

The Galapagos Islands *(opinion)*

Some people dream of seeing the great cities of Europe, but I think the ultimate adventure would be going to the Galapagos Islands. This chain of volcanic islands in the Pacific is home to not only the legendary Giant Galapagos Tortoise but the most extraordinary birds and marine animals in the world.

What could be better than watching the unique birds of the Galapagos? Some of the most interesting birds you could ever imagine live in the Galapagos, including the one with bright blue feet. Wouldn't you love to see this clumsy bird dance on its big blue feet? It would also be great to get a look at the unique penguins of the Galapagos. They are the smallest penguin species on earth. The Frigatebird would be equally fun to spot. This large black bird has a hooked beak and is said to look like a pirate – and act like one too, as it snatches food away from other seabirds in flight. From the beach, you might see a gorgeous pink Galapagos Flamingo hunting for shrimp. Also on the shore, you have a chance of spotting a Great Blue Heron, the largest of the Heron species.

Seeing a Giant Galapagos Tortoise would certainly be an unforgettable experience! Resist the urge to touch or try to ride the giant creatures. The massive shells of the Giant Galapagos Tortoise are surprisingly sensitive and the last thing you'd want to do is hurt one. The gentle Giant Galapagos Tortoise ambles along at a top speed of about 0.18 miles per hour. It is the largest, most long-lived tortoise in the world, weighing up to 500 pounds and living for more than 150 years! In my opinion, protecting these amazing reptiles is one of the most important environmental issues today. Who wouldn't be saddened to learn that the days when there were 15 subspecies of giant Galapagos tortoises are over? Today, 11 are extinct and there is concern about the future of the remaining subspecies of these large, gentle tortoises.

The Galapagos still have thriving populations of sea lions, marine iguanas and sea turtles. Nowhere else of earth would you meet sea lions, marine iguanas and sea turtles that have no fear of people. You can get right in the water and swim with the sea lions! You will surely agree that the baby sea lions are really cute. Everybody thinks the marine iguanas look exactly like little dragons. Amazingly, these captivating iguanas exhale sea water and it comes out looking like steam. If you get really lucky, you might also see a sea turtle lumber out of the water and lay her eggs on the beach.

Where else on earth but the Galapagos could you possibly see such an array of extraordinary animals? If you're like me, you dream of seeing not only the renowned Giant Galapagos Tortoise, but the captivating birds and the fearless, friendly marine wildlife of these mesmerizing islands. Without a doubt, the Galapagos Islands are one-of-a-kind and visiting them would be the most fascinating experience in the world. Let's plan our trip!



Creatures of the Amazon

Introduction:

Surrounded by the largest, densest rain forest on the planet, the winding Amazon River is home to an astonishing variety of life that can be found nowhere else on earth. The electric eel, the vampire fish and the pink dolphin are three weird and wonderful examples.

Main Idea #1:

Don't get too close to the electric eel.

Main Idea #2:

Watch out for the vampire fish.

Main Idea #3:

Meet the legendary pink dolphin of the Amazon.

Conclusion:

Life abounds in the mysterious Amazon. It is hard to believe, but scientists say that countless species have yet to be discovered there. For now, we can only imagine the unknown creatures who share the river with the beautiful pink dolphin, the fearsome vampire fish and the awesome electric eel. For sure, the possibilities are exciting!



Detail Sentences

Creatures of the Amazon

It'll zap you with electricity!

These unique animals of the Amazon can generate electric shocks of up to 600 volts.

They use their electrical power to stun enemies and kill prey.

Electric eels are almost blind and they live in murky waters.

They can zap their prey from a distance of up to 10 feet.

Their shocking power is their only defense against predators.

These snake-like stunners can grow to more than 8 feet in length.

They can generate electricity because they have special cells called electrocytes in their bodies.

The shock of a large electric eel is not strong enough to kill a horse, but certainly able to knock it right off its feet.

The vampire fish has two huge, sharp fangs growing from its lower jaw.

With silver scales and large, dark eyes, the vampire fish is easy to recognize.

Detail Sentences



The vampire fish can grow to a length of 3 feet with terrifying 6 inch fangs.

Payara is another name for the vampire fish.

But a vampire fish does eat piranha!

The vampire fish is commonly found in the fast-moving waters of the Amazon.

Despite its name, the fierce fish does not suck blood.

It has been described as “Count Dracula in fish form.”

Reeling in a vampire fish is the dream of many daring fishermen.

Quick and aggressive, the sabre-toothed brute often leaps from the water.

River dwelling dolphins are very different from the more familiar dolphins that swim in the ocean.

Pink dolphins have longer snouts, smaller dorsal fins and sharper teeth than the saltwater species.

Scientists are not sure why these appealing animals are pink, but they come in a variety of rosy tones.



Detail Sentences

Friendly and smart, pink dolphins will approach a boat and seem curious about people.

Today, pink dolphins are very, very rare.

There are 4 other species of River Dolphins, but all are close to extinction.

Amazingly, pink dolphins blush, growing deeper in color when they are surprised or excited.

In Amazon folklore, the pink dolphin is called Boto.

Legend says that Boto turns from human to dolphin and back again whenever it pleases.

Air-breathing mammals, they often pop their pink heads out of the water and jump gracefully into the air.

(continued)



The Galapagos Islands

Introduction:

Some people dream of seeing the great cities of Europe, but I think the ultimate adventure would be going to the Galapagos Islands. This chain of volcanic islands in the Pacific is home to not only the legendary Giant Galapagos Tortoise but the most extraordinary birds and marine animals in the world.

Main Reason #1:

What could be better than watching the unique birds of the Galapagos?

Main Reason #2:

Seeing a Giant Galapagos Tortoise would certainly be an unforgettable experience!

Main Reason #3:

The Galapagos still have thriving populations of sea lions, marine iguanas and sea turtles.

Conclusion:

Where else on earth but the Galapagos could you possibly see such an array of extraordinary animals? If you're like me, you dream of seeing not only the renowned Giant Galapagos Tortoise, but the captivating birds and the fearless, friendly marine wildlife of these mesmerizing islands. Without a doubt, the Galapagos Islands are one-of-a-kind and visiting them would be the most fascinating experience in the world. Let's plan our trip!



Detail Sentences

The Galapagos Islands

Some of the most interesting birds you could ever imagine live in the Galapagos, including one with big, blue feet.

It is the largest, most long-lived tortoise in the world, weighing up to 500 pounds and living for more than 150 years.

Nowhere else of earth would you meet sea lions, marine iguanas and sea turtles who have no fear of people.

Wouldn't you love to see this clumsy bird dance on its big, blue feet?

The gentle Giant Galapagos Tortoise ambles along at a top speed of about 0.18 miles per hour.

You can get right in the water and swim with the sea lions.

It would also be great to see the unique penguins of the Galapagos.

In my opinion, protecting these amazing reptiles is one of the most important environmental issues today.

You'll surely agree that the baby sea lions are really cute.

They are the smallest penguin species on earth.

Detail Sentences



The massive shells of the Giant Galapagos Tortoise are surprisingly sensitive and the last thing you'd want to do is hurt one.

Who wouldn't be saddened to learn that the days when there were 15 subspecies of Giant Galapagos Tortoises are over?

Everybody thinks the marine iguanas look exactly like little dragons.

The Frigatebird would be equally fun to spot.

Resist the urge to touch or try to ride the giant creatures!

Amazingly, these captivating iguanas exhale sea water and it comes out looking like steam.

This large black bird has a hooked beak and is said to look like a pirate – and act like one too, as it snatches food away from other seabirds in flight.

From the beach, you might see a gorgeous pink Galapagos Flamingo hunting for shrimp.

If you get really lucky, you might see a sea turtle lumber out of the water and lay her eggs on the beach.

Also on the shore, you have a chance of spotting a Great Blue Heron, the largest of all Heron species.

Today, 11 types of giant tortoises are extinct and there is concern about the future of the remaining tortoises.



BE A TEXT DETECTIVE!

FIND THE EVIDENCE

Creatures of the Amazon

- Electric eels have a unique way of protecting themselves.
- An electric eel's eyesight does little to help it.
- The vampire fish's fangs are impressive.
- The vampire fish is a nimble creature.
- The pink dolphin is as friendly as the vampire fish is aggressive.
- It's not easy to spot a pink dolphin.
- Your hair dryer runs on 200 volts, and the electric eel is more shocking than that!

REMEMBER: YOU DON'T NEED TO READ THE SOURCE TEXT BEGINNING TO END! USE MAIN IDEAS TO DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION AND THEN SKIM AND SCAN. POST YOUR EVIDENCE BESIDE EACH STATEMENT.



BE A TEXT DETECTIVE!

FIND THE EVIDENCE

THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

- Galapagos is a bird watcher's paradise!
- It wouldn't be difficult to beat a Giant Galapagos Tortoise in a race.
- If you got a Giant Galapagos Tortoise as a child, it would likely outlive you.
- If you enjoy swimming and wildlife, Galapagos is the place for you.
- Galapagos is a place that can feel like a fairytale or fantasy land.

REMEMBER: YOU DON'T NEED TO READ THE SOURCE TEXT BEGINNING TO END! USE MAIN IDEAS TO DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION AND THEN SKIM AND SCAN. POST YOUR EVIDENCE BESIDE EACH STATEMENT.