

In Common: Effective Writing for All Students
Collection of All Student Work Samples, K-12

By The Vermont Writing Collaborative, with Student Achievement Partners and CCSSO

Fourth Grade
On-Demand Informative / Explanatory
Writing Samples

Grade 4, Prompt for Informative/Explanatory Writing

Common Core Standard W.CCR.2

Directions should be read aloud and clarified by the teacher

Water Conservation

Student Directions Day 1

Today, you are going to get ready to write an informative essay to answer this question:

What can you do to save water?

Day 1 *Get ready to write.*

- Watch the video, *Water Conservation Tips*.
- Discuss this question briefly with your class: Why is it important to save water?
- Listen to the article: *Save our Water!* carefully. You may want to take notes for your essay on the article as you read.
- What can you do to save water? Turn and talk to a partner about what you could do. You each have three minutes to explain what you would do and why.
- On a piece of lined paper, write your name and grade, the date, the name of your school and your state, and your teacher's name. You will use this paper tomorrow for writing.

Water Conservation

Student Directions Day 2

Today, you are going to use what you have learned to write an informative essay to answer this question: **What can you do to save water?**

Day 2 *Write!*

- Listen to *Save our Water!* again. Read along as you listen.
- When you have finished, write an informative essay explaining what you can do to save water.
- Your focusing question for this assignment is
 - **What can you do to save water?**
 - Be sure to use facts and examples from the article. Explain how doing these things will save water.

Remember, a good informative essay:

- *Has an introduction*
- *Has a clear focus/topic*
- *Uses specific facts and examples from the text(s) to support the focus and explain your thinking*
- *Groups ideas in paragraphs*
- *Has a conclusion*
- *Uses precise language and linking words to connect ideas*
- *Has correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation*

When you have finished, be sure to check your work and fix any mistakes you find.

We look forward to reading your good writing and thinking!

Grade 4 - Informative/Explanatory Writing Prompt

Teacher Directions

- Use the student prompt as directions for each session. The short video can be found on YouTube: Water conservation tips-How to conserve water at home <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MDLpVHY8LE>. The video is recommended, but is optional.
- Provide each student with a copy of the prompt and the article. The article should be read aloud while students read along silently. The teacher should feel comfortable rereading, explaining or clarifying as needed.
- The article provides information needed to address the prompt and should be read aloud at least twice before writing. Encourage students to refer back to the article while writing and to take notes.
- The prompt should be given in two sessions. Allow approximately 45 minutes for each, but the prompt should not be strictly timed. Students should be given the time needed to write and proofread.
- The writing must be done without help, but students may have access to personal dictionaries, or any other resources to support spelling and mechanics that they are accustomed to using while writing. Provide lined paper from your classroom for writing.
- This will be first draft writing, but encourage students to proofread and correct any errors they find.

Name:

Save Our Water!

Did you know that kids can make a very important difference in saving the earth's water? They can! But first off, why do we even need to save water?

Water is a natural resource that we get from the Earth. Without it, we would not be able to live! Imagine a world with no water at all. You wouldn't be able to drink it, bathe, or swim! Without clean water, plants, animals, birds and ocean life would also be unable to live. Kids can help protect this resource. You make a huge difference simply by starting at home. To get an idea of how much water we could save if we all made a small effort, think about this. What if every person across the nation flushed their toilets one time less every day? Together they could save enough water to fill a lake as large as a mile wide and long and four feet in depth!

Now you know how important it is to help save water. Try some of the ideas below. Start doing your part to change our world!

Some Ways Kids Can Help to Save Water:

- When you wash your hands, don't leave the water running. Wet your hands and turn the water off. Use soap and lather your hands well. Then turn the water on to rinse. Turn off the water and make sure it is off completely. Then dry your hands.
- Do the same when you brush your teeth. Turn the faucet on to get your toothbrush and toothpaste wet. Turn it on again to rinse your mouth and toothbrush. Don't leave the water running while you're brushing.
- Baths use a lot of water (about 37 gallons on average). Take short showers, and use only about 20 gallons of water, instead.
- Do you have plants in your house? When vegetables or other fresh produce are washed, collect that water and use it to water the plants.
- Do you like a drink of cold water now and then? Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator. That way you don't have to run the water to get it cold.
- Put a barrel outdoors to catch rain water. Then use that water for things like watering plants or flushing toilets. You can save hundreds of gallons of water a year!
- In the summertime, it's fun to play under the lawn sprinkler. When you do, make sure it's only when the lawn is being watered.
- Remind the others in your home, and your friends, not to leave any faucet running. Only use what is truly needed!
- Is there a leaky faucet or toilet in the bathroom at school? Be sure to let someone know so that it can be repaired.

Even if you do just one thing each day to contribute to your home's water conservation, you're doing the right thing!

Adapted from *Water Conservation for Kids*

TheWaterPage.com

<http://www.thewaterpage.com/water-conservation-kids.htm>

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File Name: I4P Conserving Water

Informative/Explanatory

Grade 4

On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt

Conserving Water

Conserving water is a great way to help the earth. Without our water, plants, humans, and animals, would not be able to live. We need to save water because we will eventually run out of it. Then we will have to use and drink saltwater. It is extremely expensive to filter salt water. This why we need save water. What can you do to save water?

Introduces the topic by clearly explaining

the importance of water and posing a focusing question

One way you can save water is by getting a rain barrel. Rain barrels collect water so that you can water your plants with recycled water. Recycled water is better for plants because it is more natural. Recycled water also have good nutrients.

Links ideas within categories of information using words and phrases

Another way you can save water is by getting an airrating facet and shower head. These items use less water but make it feels the same because of more pressure. One more way you can save water is when you go in the sprinklers in the summer, make sure it is in a spot where it is watering the lawn.

Develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples related to the topic

One ways my family saves water is by turning off the water when you brush your teeth. Water is the most important natural resource of all with out water, we would die. If we ran out of water, as I said, we would die. So if you think dieing is bad, try to conserve water as best you can.

Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic

Provides a concluding section related to the explanation presented

This fourth-grade piece begins with an introduction that provides important context by explaining the importance of water to living things and the danger of running out. The focus of the piece is clearly established with a question: *"What can you do to save water?"*

Related information is organized into well-developed paragraphs. The second paragraph, for example, is about the benefits of collecting water in rain barrels. This idea is elaborated upon with concrete details from the source (*"you can water your plants"*) and explanation (*"recycled water is better for plants because it is more naturail"*). Linking words and phrases (*"one way"*, *"so"*, *"because"*, *"also"*) knit together the related ideas in this paragraph.

Throughout the piece, precise words (*"eventuly"*, *"extremly"*, *"pressure"*) and domain-specific vocabulary (*"nutrients"*, *"airrating"*, *"conserve"*, *"natural resorce"*) convey ideas effectively.

Although worded a bit clumsily, the conclusion presents a logical and connected sequence of thought that leads the reader back to the focus of the piece (water is important; without it we would die; therefore, you should *"try to conserve water as best you can"*).

File Name: I4P Conserving Water

Informational/Explanatory

Grade 4

Revised and Edited for Student Use

Conserving Water

Conserving water is a great way to help the Earth. Plants, humans, and animals would not be able to live without our water. We need to save water because we will eventually run out of it. Then we will have to use and drink salt water. It is extremely expensive to filter salt water. This is why we need save water. What can you do to save water?

One way you can save water is by getting a rain barrel. Rain barrels collect water so that you can water your plants with recycled water. Recycled water is better for plants because it is more natural. Recycled water also has good nutrients.

Another way you can save water is by getting an aerating faucet and showerhead. These items use less water but make it feel the same because they have more pressure. One more way you can save water is to make sure sprinklers are placed where they are watering the lawn in the summer.

One way my family saves water is by turning off the water when we brush our teeth. Water is the most important natural resource of all. Without water, we would die. If we ran out of water, as I said, we would die. So if you think dying is bad, try to conserve water as best you can.

File Name: I4P Conserving Water

Informational/Explanatory**Grade 4****On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt****Conserving Water**

Conserving water is a great way to help the earth. Without our water, plants, humans, and animals, would not be able to live. We need to save water because we will eventually run out of it. Then we will have to use and drink saltwater. It is extremely expensive to filter salt water. This why we need save water. What can you do to save water?

One way you can save water is by getting a rain barrel. Rain barrels collect water so that you can water your plants with recycled water. Recycled water is better for plants because it is more naturail. Recycled water also have good nutrients.

Another way you can save water is by getting an airrating facet and shower head. These items use less water but make it feels the same because of more pressure. One more way you can save water is when you go in the sprinkelers in the summer, make sure it is in a spot where it is watering the lawn.

One ways my family saves water is by turning off the water when you brush your teeth. Water is the most important natural resorce of all with out water, we would die. If we ran out of water, as I said, we would die. So if you think dieing is bad, try to conserve water as best you can.

Grade 5, Prompt for Informative/Explanatory Writing

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What can you do to save water?

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- What can you do to save water? Turn and talk to a partner about what you could do. You each have three minutes to explain what you would do and why.
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Student Directions Day 2

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to answer this question: **What can you do to save water?**

Day 2 *Write!*

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- Your focusing question for this assignment is
 - **What can you do to save water?**
 - Be sure to use facts and examples from the article. Explain how doing these things will save water.

Remember, a good informative essay:

- *Has an effective introduction*
- *Has a clear focus/topic*
- *Uses specific facts, statistics, and examples from the text(s) to support the focus and explain your thinking*
- *Groups ideas in paragraphs*
- *Has a satisfying conclusion*
- *Uses precise language and linking words to connect ideas*
- *Has correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation*

When you have finished, be sure to check your work and fix any mistakes you find.

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