In this third grade sample, the student does not introduce the topic or create an organizational structure that lists the reasons, but does state their opinion. The writer provides reasons for their opinion, but none are supported by evidence from the text—the supporting reasons are solely student experience. Although the writer uses the linking word because, no other linking words and phrases are used. The concluding statement provides a sufficient sense of closure to the piece. There is inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
In this third grade sample, the student introduces the topic and states an opinion. The writer attempted to create an organizational structure, yet many reasons are not grouped well. The writer provided text-based reasons to support their opinion. The student used a variety of linking words throughout the sample. The concluding statement provides a sufficient sense of closure to the piece. The writer demonstrates an adequate command of conventions.
3rd Grade: Opinion Writing
Prompt: Cats or Dogs?

In this third grade sample, the student states an opinion, but does not introduce the topic. The writer attempted to create an organizational structure, yet many reasons are not grouped well. The writer provided some text-based reasons to support their opinion, as well as, provided some personal experiences. The student used linking words and phrases. The concluding statement provides a sufficient sense of closure to the piece. The writer demonstrates an inadequate command of conventions including errors in spelling and punctuation.
I will be doing a paragraph on how I think dogs are a better pets then cats. First dogs are more active then cats so I think that means dogs are more fun to play with and I think cats are more lazy. I also think dogs are smarter because they can lead the blind and help the police and the fire men. Dogs will also sleep with you and run and play fetch. Finally its really fun to take dogs on walks and hikes. I think dogs are the best pet you can.

In this third grade sample, the student introduces the topic and states an opinion. The writer provided some text-based reasons to support their opinion, as well as, provided some personal experiences. The writer did not attempt to create an organizational structure to list their reasons. The student used a variety of linking words throughout the sample. The writer provides a concluding statement, however, it seems incomplete. The student demonstrates an adequate use of spelling and capitalization, but not punctuation.
3rd Grade: Opinion Writing
Prompt: Cats or Dogs?

David

My paragraph is on cats and dogs. Cats are good if you need company. They also have great eyesight and hearing. They’re excellent climbers. They also have great hunting skills with those sharp curved razor claws cavemen prized them for their hunting abilities. They’re also fast runners and swim well. But dogs are great at guarding homes, and they also have great hunting abilities. They help the blind. They also help police men and fire fighters. They are more fun to play fetch with, and they are great for company.

In this third grade sample, the writer does not attend to the prompt. The student does not clearly introduce the topic or state an opinion. The student provided reasons, however, those reasons were not linked to a clear opinion or in an organizational structure. The writer used one linking word. A variety of linking words would have improved reader’s interest. The student did not provide a concluding statement or section. The writer demonstrated an inadequate use of conventions in capitalization, however, it may be from a lack of typing knowledge. The student shows adequate conventions in punctuation and spelling.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus and Organization</th>
<th>Evidence &amp; Elaboration</th>
<th>Conventions</th>
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Mira

If I had a dog
it would be great to have a dog because you can train them to sit, come and stay.

But cats can scratch you and it can really hurt. Also dogs are smarter and stronger but cats aren’t that strong. Also dogs help the blind and deaf and they even help the police! Some dogs are born to herd sheep and cows, some are born to hunt. That is why I like dogs so much!!
Faith

If you had to choose between a cat or a dog, what would you choose? I would choose a dog. I like dogs as a pet better than cats as a pet because they serve people who have special needs. There are a lot of different breeds of dogs that you can choose from when you’re getting a dog. They can have cute puppies to sell and get money. Dogs have interesting senses, let me tell you, why dogs are better pets than cats as pets.

First, they serve people who have special needs. From my reading I know, dogs feed people around that are blind. Did you know dogs help people who are deaf? They also help people in wheel chairs. And they comfort people who are in the hospital. For example, I saw a person with a dog leading her around because she was blind.

Next, they are a lot of different kinds of dogs. To choose from when you’re getting a dog. I have found that there are 500 different types of dogs. The mixed breeds are called mutts. Do you know that the smallest type of breed is the chihuahua. And the biggest breed is the english mastiff. For instance, when my friend picked out a dog there were tons of kinds of dogs to pick from.

Then, dogs can have cute puppies and sell them and get money. The author says they usually have six to 10 puppies at a time.
In this third grade sample, the student clearly states an opinion, while providing a well written introduction in the form of a paragraph. The writer provided copious text-based reasons to support their opinion which were created in a very well organized structure that listed their reasons in a logical manner. The student used a variety of linking words and phrases to connect their opinion with reasons. The writer provided a well written concluding paragraph reiterating their main reasons. The student does not demonstrate adequate command in conventions for spelling, capitalization, or punctuation.
In this third grade sample, the writer does not attend to the prompt prior to the concluding paragraph. The student states their opinion and provides various text-based reasons. The writer attempted to create an organizational structure to list their reasons, however, not all groupings are logical. The student provides a variety of linking words and phrases throughout the sample. The writer provides a concluding paragraph. The writer does not demonstrate an adequate command in conventions in punctuation, capitalization, or spelling.