6th grade informational text
Prompt: Ballooning

Did you know that it took two people 19 days 21 hours and 43 min to go around the world in a hot air balloon? They had to have the right equipment to do it. They were also lucky to have good weather. However it may sound cool it is really dangerous. Some times people die from riding in hot air balloons.

First, There is a jet stream called the Swiss Alps. It is at an altitude of 9114 meters. It flows from west to east. This is perfect for going around the world. This speeds up the process a lot more than doing it the traditional way. The traditional way would have taken as twice as long as the regular way.

Second, the balloons have a lot of new technology to them. They also have a lot of parts to them. The helium cell provides the main lift for the balloon. The external layer keeps all of the heat inside so that when there up high and the temperature drops the gear inside was protected. The things inside of the balloon are pretty important for it to fly.

Lastly, it is very dangerous. Once a person named Fosset actually hit the ground when he was fling around the world. This means that there was something wrong with his balloon. This could be a big safety concern for people that go around the world on hot air balloons. They could easily get hurt.

In conclusion, there are things you could do to make your trip in an hot air balloon faster. Balloons also have a lot of new technology in them. Finally if you make one mistake on a balloon it could be very bad. Hot air Balloons are very interesting. You should consider to ride in one.

This informational sample from a sixth grader does not address the topic, and does not sustain a reasonable, consistent focus on the writing prompt. There are transitions present, but no real attempt to cover the material adequately. Conventions are adequate throughout and there are no patterns of errors that distract the reader.
6th-grade informational text
Prompt: Ballooning

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Emma

Around the world in 14 days. Two adventurers footed in to history. Air craft's and differences and how they work.

Around the world in 14 days. After five failed attempts Steve Fossett made the world record. He was the first person to fly a balloon around the world. 58 years old millionare adventure finally succeeded. He ended is record at 14 day flight on July 2, 2002 in a really dusty riverbed. No more long-distance balloon trips he assures us, in fact he says that his balloon flights had been the most dangerous thing he's ever done.

On March 19, 1999 the balloon boys. Two adventures footed in to history and exploration's last great records. Bertrand Piccard, 41, of Switzerland and Brian Jones, 51, of the United Kingdom, became the first pilots to ever fly a balloon nonstop around the world. Blowing at speeds up to 322 Km/h (200mph), the jet stream carried the balloon 46,759 kilometers (29,056 miles) in 19 day 21 hours and 47 minutes.

Air craft's work in so many interesting ways. They can go by motors or by the air it's self. Air can and is really powerful. Technology is so powerful to it could do anything in the universe. That is two of the resources that air crafts use. Air crafts could even go be both.

The United Kingdom record is traveling around the world in 14 days. First pilots ever to fly around the world 19 days 21 hours and 47 minutes. Air crafts work in different ways.

Student had several errors throughout the text that took away from the overall intent which is also unclear from beginning to end.
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Have you ever wondered how far a balloon can travel in a balloon? There are three balloons that have traveled all around the world. One of which was in the same balloon. The next paragraph is going to be about the

Student showed strong focus throughout the paper along with appropriate transitions throughout. Student also showed good command of mechanics and supported evidence throughout their essay to supplement their take on the information derived from the text.
6th-grade informational text

Prompt: Ballooning

Brinkley

Have you ever seen a hot air balloon floating around outside? It seems flying it around the world non-stop wouldn’t be hard. Surprisingly, 3 balloons shattered the world record and did just that! The first record took place in 1979 with Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones, who call themselves the Balloon Boys. The second record took place in 2002 with Steve Fossett. They both traveled the world and faced many hard ships as well.

To start off the two adventurers, Brian Jones and Bertrand Piccard flew into history on March 19, 1979. The Balloon Boys became the first pilots to fly a hot air balloon around the world non-stop. They started their adventure with their balloon, the Breitling Orbiter 3, on a windy day. They found wind currents at an altitude of almost 9,114 meters or 30,000 feet above Earth’s surface. At the speeds up to 322 km/h or 200 mph, the current carried the balloon 46,754 kilometers or 29,084 miles. In 19 days, 21 hours, and 47 minutes, the Balloon Boys crossed the times line in New Zealand.

Next, the 58 year old millionaire, Steve Fossett, finally achieved a world record. Here’s how he flew a 14-day flight in a balloon. His balloon ended his flight on July 2, 2002. He landed in the two-billion dollar balloon named Spirit of Freedom, the almost flew 19,500 miles around the southern Hemisphere. He passed 117 degrees east longitude while his balloon began coming down where he started so he crossed the finish line.

Last, you might think that it might have been easy for him to fly a balloon around the world. Instead, they faced many challenges. On the Balloon Boys’ trip, they faced temperature down to -4°C. At a point, one of them had to reach out and chop off the ice on the cables, which would freeze, the balloon while Steve Fossett tried to make the world record, he almost died. In 1998, his fourth try almost failed.

Statement of purpose/Focus and Organization: 3
Evidence/Elaboration: 2
Conventions: 2

Clear focus in the introduction with fairly adequate central idea.

Student gave evidence, but mostly copied it into the essay. There isn’t much elaboration of evidence shown.

Good use of transitions throughout.
Student had a clear focus, but did not elaborate on the evidence used to drive ideas in the essay. Rather, it was copied virtually word-for-word with no elaboration of the ideas. Mechanics were adequate and the focus of the essay was consistent.
6th-grade informational text
Prompt: Ballooning

Have you ever flown in a hot air balloon? Imagine flying around the whole world in a hot air balloon. There would be many difficulties with weather and other hardships. Many people have tried getting around the world. The fastest anyone has everyone so that they can get the world record.

First, weather would be a problem for air balloons. Winds can blow very fast higher up in elevation. It could blow it off track or worse. The balloons have to take wind and storms and even ice. If you fly into a colder climate, ice might freeze on your balloon. You would have to ship it off or it could cause problems.

In the text “Around the World in 80 Days,” it says, “his balloon was torn by lightning and plummeted 24,000 feet into the Coral Sea of Australia. These balloons can be very dangerous when going through bad weather.

Second, other difficulties besides weather is challenges. In the text “Balloon Boys” it states, “Still the trip was no picnic, the pilots lived on freeze-dried food rations and barely slept. If they fell asleep while riding, the balloon could crash or fall to the ground, and even kill the pilot.”

In the article “Balloon Boys” it also says, “Since 1961, more than 20 attempts to circle the globe in a balloon have failed. Some of these times is probably because the balloon got damaged and couldn’t fly anymore.”

Many people have attempted to set the world record. In the article “Balloon Boys” the author states that 2 men traveled around the world in 80 days, 24 hours, and 42 minutes. But in 1852, an explorer traveled around the globe in 14 days. He beat the world record. He had tried many other times and failed. The pilots and explorers made amazing world records.

In conclusion, these pilots have flown all around the world. With many challenges of weather and other things, these pilots are amazing. They have completed goals and set world records.

The focus of the paper was not consistent, but elaboration of evidence was strong and present throughout. Mechanics were sufficient throughout. Transitions were present, but ideas became scattered as the essay progressed due to a lack of central idea in the introduction.

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Introduction has an unclear focus and central idea. Several ideas are entertained, but not one is the clear central idea.

Transitions are present and there is plenty of elaboration of ideas present.
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Prompt: Ballooning

**Kate**

Hot air ballooning is probably not the most popular activity, but for Steve Fossett, Bertrand Piccard, and Brian Jones, it was a huge part of their life for a short period of time. Even though they each had a similar goal, it was a different trek for each man. Those flights were similar and different in three ways: their balloon size, their flight location, and their records that were set.

The first reason that the flights were similar and different is the balloon size. The balloon cabin must be functional for each pilot. Steve Fossett, who flew alone, had a balloon cabin about the size of a closet, as mentioned in an article titled, "Around the World in 14 days!" However, Brian Jones and Bertrand Piccard, who flew together, had a cabin equipped with not only bunk and toilet, but with desks, fax, and satellite phones. Both cabins provided everything the pilots needed, and was a temporary home.

The second reason the flights were similar and different is the flight location. Both flights had very different routes. In fact, the routes were in entirely different hemispheres! In an article by Michael Cannell it explains that Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones started from Aireau-d'Oex in the Swiss Alps, and ended in Mauritania in Africa. But in the article called "Around the World in 14 days" it mentions that Steve Fossett's flight started in Durham Downs cattle ranch in Queensland, Australia and crossed the finish line over open ocean, but later landed on land in Australia. Even though the locations are very different, that doesn't matter; What matters is the victory and satisfaction of finishing at the end.

The final reason the flights are similar and different is the records the pilots set. In the article titled, "Around the World in 14 days", it says "Steve Fossett was the first person to fly a balloon alone around the world." His record wasn't very different from the record Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones achieved. In the article by Michael Cannell it says, "Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones, became the first pilots to ever fly a balloon nonstop around the world." They worked their hardest but the records set were proof that it was worth it.

In conclusion, both flights were similar and different because of the balloon size, the flight route, and the records set. These men are great examples of working their absolute hardest and never giving up. Hot air ballooning can be dangerous and hard but in the end, all these men felt was relief and pure joy.

This student grasps the concept of a clear introduction, effective use of evidence and displays and understanding of how to synthesize the ideas into new meaning-making and elaboration thereof.

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- Clear and concise introduction, including a central idea shared with information given in the first sentences. Note that the wrong usage of “their” is present, but it does not detract from the central idea.

- Each body paragraph elaborates on the central idea from the introduction. Excellent elaboration of ideas and transitions are used throughout.

- Conclusion restates the ideas brought up in the introduction effectively.
Have you ever wanted to ride in a hot air balloon? Most people probably think that it would be a fun, relaxing trip, but it turns out it's not that easy. People have flown around the world in hot air balloons before, but it's no game.

Steve Fossett, an adventurer-millionaire, was one of the first people to fly solo around the world in a hot air balloon. According to the article, “Around the World in 80 Days,” it took him 114 days and was his 6th attempt. He was 58 years old and finished the trip on July 2, 2002. His hot air balloon, the Spirit of Creation, was gigantic! He fell tall and he fell wide. Steve Fossett took off in western Australia and flew almost 19,500 miles. He landed his balloon in Queensland, Australia, on the edge of “some of the most isolated outback in Australia,” according to the article.

He says that he won’t take anymore long-distance balloon trips, though he set a world record. He almost died on his 4th trip in 1998, when he almost died because his balloon was hit by lightning, destroyed, and fell about 2000 feet into the Coral Sea near Australia. He even says that balloon trips have been the most dangerous things in his life.

Two other balloonists, Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones, were the first pilots to fly a balloon around the world non-stop. They took off on March 1, 1999, in Chateau d’Oex in the Swiss Alps. Bertrand Piccard was 41 and from Switzerland and Brian Jones was 51, and from the United Kingdom. Their balloon, Breitling Orbiter 3, had bunks, toilet, desks, fax, and satellite phones, according to the article. “Balloon Bum.” They landed on March 19, 1999, and their...
This student understands the conventions and transitions to make a reader-friendly essay while elaborating on the information to synthesize and make new meaning with the text.