

Explanatory Prompt

Explanatory writing answers questions about *how*. This kind of writing helps readers understand a idea or concept such as overpopulation. The aim is to make the reader understand, **not** to tell a story or give an opinion.

Writing Prompt

In 1597, Sir Frances Bacon wrote: “Knowledge is power.” Inform readers about overpopulation. Use information from *Poppy* and “Moose on the Move” to explain overpopulation and possible solutions. Give readers specific information from “6.5 Billion and Counting!” and the overpopulation video to help them understand overpopulation and the challenges that go with it.

Think about the following as you plan, write, and revise:

- Begin with a definition of overpopulation: Overpopulation is a situation in which there are more people (or mice) for the available resources such as energy, water, food, and space.
- Explain overpopulation using Poppy’s family as an example. Give details from Lungwort’s speech and then explain Lungwort’s proposed solution.
- Explain how the overpopulation problem in “Moose on the Move” is solved.
- Conclude by giving information from “6.5 Billion and Counting!” and the overpopulation video to help readers understand overpopulation.

Use the checklist that follows to help you in plan, write, and revise your response.

1. **Have I clearly introduced my explanation?**
2. **Have I organized my information logically?**
3. **Have I used facts, details, examples, and experiences to develop my explanation?**
4. **Have I used words related to my topic, overpopulation?**
5. **Have I used linking words to connect ideas in my writing (e.g. *also, another, and, more, but, for example, and because*)?**
6. **Have I written a clear conclusion that gives further information on overpopulation, and have I summarized my information?**
7. **Have I checked my spelling, grammar, and handwriting to make sure my readers will be able to understand my writing?**

Use the back of this page for writing down and organizing your ideas.

Appendix 6a1

Remember the steps in the writing process:

Brainstorming: Brainstorming is thinking about the topic or theme of the writing. Brainstorming is asking questions such as:

- What details will I give from the excerpt from *Poppy* and “Moose on the Move” to help readers understand overpopulation through examples?
- What information will I give from “6.5 Billion and Counting!” and the overpopulation video to inform readers about overpopulation?

Drafting: Drafting is getting ideas down on paper, trying to organize as the writer is drafting. Drafting is asking questions such as:

- How will I start my writing to get my reader to want to read my information?
- What details, examples, and/or explanations should I write to help my reader understand overpopulation?
- How shall I end my writing?

Revising: Revising, the real work of writing, begins when the writer makes sure that the writing has everything it should have, that it will appeal to the reader (audience) and tell or prove what it is supposed to (accomplish the purpose). Revising is asking questions such as:

- Will my reader (audience) understand my explanation?
- Is my explanation clear and connected to the topic?
- Have I given important and relevant details and evidence to support my explanation?
- Is my writing well-organized with a beginning, middle, and end?
- Have I used precise words and linking words such as *also*, *another*, *and*, *more*, *but*, *for example*, and *because*?

Proofreading and Editing: Proofreading and editing mean making sure that the audience can read and understand the words and the point. Proofreading and editing involve asking questions such as:

- Have I checked and corrected my spelling, punctuation, and capitalization to help my audience understand what I have written?
- Have I read my work to a friend or to myself to make sure it sounds good?
- Have I looked my writing over to make sure that it is neat and it invites my audience to read it?

Appendix 6b

DRAFT 5-point Common Core Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric Grade 4 (6-2-10) (For on-demand writing.)

CC Anchor Standards	5 Exceeds the Standard	4 Meets the Standard	3 Generally Meets the Standard	2 Partially Meets the Standard	1 Minimally Meets the Standard
<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>Appendix 6c1</p>	<p>2. The response is an informative/explanatory text that effectively examines a topic and conveys ideas and information quite clearly.</p> <p>a. The response skillfully introduces a topic clearly, capably groups related information in paragraphs and sections (organization), and includes well-crafted formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. The response develops the topic especially well with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. The response skillfully links ideas within and across categories of information using precise, appropriate, and varied words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>). (transitions)</p>	<p>2. The response is an informative/explanatory text that examines a topic and conveys ideas and information clearly.</p> <p>a. The response introduces a topic clearly, groups related information in paragraphs and sections (organization), and includes formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. The response develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. The response links ideas within and across categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>). (transitions)</p>	<p>2. The response is an informative/explanatory text that in general examines a topic acceptably and conveys ideas and information relatively clearly.</p> <p>a. The response in general introduces a topic clearly, groups related information in paragraphs and sections (organization) reasonably well, and includes formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. The response for the most part satisfactorily develops the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. The response links ideas within and across categories of information in a generally successful manner, typically using appropriate words and phrases-(e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>). (transitions)</p>	<p>2. The response is an informative/explanatory text that somewhat acceptably examines a topic and conveys ideas and information.</p> <p>a. The response introduces a topic somewhat clearly, groups mostly related information in paragraphs and sections (organization), and includes some formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia that might be useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. The response partially develops the topic with some facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. The response links ideas within and across categories of information in a partially successful manner, sometimes using connecting words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>) with limited success. (transitions)</p>	<p>2. The response is an informative/explanatory text that minimally examines a topic and lacks clarity in conveying ideas and information.</p> <p>a. The response minimally introduces the topic, lacks clarity, and groups related information illogically (organization), neglecting formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia that might be useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. The response weakly develops the topic with few if any facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.</p> <p>c. The response rarely links ideas within and across categories of information and uses few if any connecting words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>). (transitions)</p>

<p>4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, and organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Conventions</p>	<p>d. The response uses exceptionally precise language and well-chosen domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (word choice)</p> <p>e. The response provides a well-crafted concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>4. The response, for the most part, provides especially clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>	<p>d. The response uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (word choice)</p> <p>e. The response provides a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>4. The response, for the most part, successfully provides clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>	<p>d. The response uses generally effective precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (word choice)</p> <p>e. The response provides a generally effective concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>4. The response, for the most part, satisfactorily provides clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are basically appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>	<p>d. The response usually uses somewhat satisfactory precise language and some domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (word choice)</p> <p>e. The response provides a partially effective concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>4. The response provides partially clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are somewhat appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>	<p>d. The response uses little or no precise language or domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (word choice)</p> <p>e. The response provides an ineffective or no concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>4. The response provides unclear writing that lacks coherence and in which the development and organization are inappropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</p>
	<p>Tight control over language use and mastery of writing conventions contribute to the effect of the response.</p>	<p>The language is well controlled, and occasional lapses in writing conventions are hardly noticeable.</p>	<p>Lapses in writing conventions and usage are not distracting.</p>	<p>Incomplete mastery of writing conventions and usage interferes with meaning some of the time.</p>	<p>Lack of control over writing conventions may make the writing difficult to understand.</p>

(See the checklist of standard English conventions and usage from Common Core Language Standards for this grade level.) (pg. 2 of 4th) Condition codes that will result in a score of 0 for each trait: 6. Off-topic. 7. Illegible or written in a language other than English. 8. Blank. 9. Insufficient to rate.

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Appendix 6c2