

Grade 5

**Opinion - Autumn the Best Time of Year
Feedback for Improvement of Writing**

Summarizing Framework

Topic: Autumn - my favorite

Main Reason#1: changes in nature

Main Reason #2: animals prepare

Main Reason #3: weather changes

What worked:

- **Organization:** This piece includes an introduction, three main reasons and a conclusion. The student clearly understands the organization and author's purpose of informational/opinion writing.
- **Main Ideas:** There are three main reasons, however, the nature of the main reasons is overlapping. See the prescriptive lessons below for additional commentary.
- **Elaboration:** There is some evidence of the detail generating questions. In paragraph two the author writes, "The leaves change slowly to red, orange, and yellow. This gives people the chance to gaze at this beautiful scenery for a little over two months." There are additional sentences that are descriptive in nature, however they are extraneous from the main reason. In some instances, the descriptive detail does not go on to include "Why is it important?" so it reads like a description for the sake of description.
- **Sentence Variety/Word Choice:** The student uses interesting sentences. For example, "Therefore autumn offers us a large assortment of positive changes." Another example, "Thus animals once again are ready for survival!"

Feedback with Prescriptive Lesson:

CHOOSE a Focus Skill: One skill that will make the biggest difference

Organization is the first skill that students need because without an organizational structure, the entire piece is a random collection of details. Then, move to **broad yet distinct main ideas/reasons**. This is often harder to notice when evaluating student work. Sometimes it appears that the details are overly general, when in fact the main ideas/reasons are problematic. Once these two skills are solid, **elaboration** through the use of the detail generating questions comes next.

Broad Yet Distinct Main Ideas/Reasons: This piece of writing displayed some overlapping of main reasons. This student would benefit from a deep dive into this skill. When looking at the details that support each main reason, the reader can easily see that there are details that could fit into any one of these main reasons. For example, in the first main reason paragraph the author writes, "Many birds except for crows fly south where it's a bit warmer in early October." This detail could easily fit into the paragraph all about how animals prepare. Another example of the overlapping nature of the main reasons is in main reason three where the student writes, "The days get darker and darker as the earth rotates further and further away from the sun." This detail is really about changes in nature. Because of this overlapping nature, the reader is left to wonder what this piece is really all about.

All lessons in this section need to be taught with an emphasis on Lesson 3 Pick, List, Choose. The importance of choosing broad yet distinct main ideas/reasons affects every other part of the writing. Once you've established a number of main ideas/reasons through the pick, list, choose process, then it's imperative that you look at those that could potentially overlap and make sure students choose main ideas/reasons that are distinct from one another.

Main Ideas/Reasons Don't Overlap Them

This student obviously understands the structure of informational/opinion writing but needs direct instruction in choosing main ideas/reasons that are distinct. The fact that there is some powerful word choice, interesting description, and sentence variety is overshadowed by the overlapping nature of the main ideas/reasons.

Autumn

By Olivia

Everybody knows that the season we are in is autumn. My favorite part about autumn is that nature gradually changes, animals prepare for hibernation, and weather slowly alters. In addition the movement of the earth is in itself a miracle!

Autumn, otherwise known as fall has crisp cold air that people quickly need to adapt to. Many birds except for crows fly south where it's a bit warmer in early October. Crows fly south around late November. The leaves change slowly to red, orange, and yellow. This gives people the chance to gaze at this beautiful scenery for a little over two months. The smell of Pumpkin Pie makes my mouth drip when my taste buds start to water. Therefore autumn offers us a large assortment of positive changes.

Next, Red Foxes cross forests at dark gathering food to get prepared for hibernation. Squirrels chatter with other squirrels while collecting mouthful's of nuts. Migration and hibernation are two different things. Hibernation is when animals most mammals go to sleep for the whole winter! Migration is when you fly south. Mainly birds and butterflies fly south. Butterflies fly to Mexico for migration. Thus animals once again are ready for survival!

Finally, crackling dry dead fallen leaves break when kids play outside while it's still warm. The days get darker and darker as the earth rotates further and further away from the sun. Skies get a darker shade until the end of November strikes again and becomes colder and colder as the beginning of winter approaches. Everything and everyone is experiencing the various changes that are occurring prior to a white, frigid winter.

In conclusion, it's fascinating to observe the changes in nature. Animal observation in preparation for the next season shows their intelligence in the preparation for hibernation. I enjoy experiencing the natural changes happening around the earth during autumn and the fact that it continually repeats yearly demonstrates that the earth is in sync with our natural environment. and automatically shares in this amazing process.