

## Grade 8 Baseline Annotation – Expository Writing - #811PS

**Prompt:** Life can be full of surprises that have an effect on our lives. Identify a time when you experienced this type of surprise. Write a multiple-paragraph essay to a teacher explaining how the surprise affected your life in either a positive or negative way.

### Content - 2

#### Level 2: Basic

- A. Focus is general throughout the paper; thesis/position may be vague, unmanageable or simplistic
- B. Reason(s) are generally connected; may not adequately support the thesis/position.
- C. Elaboration is sometimes connected but does not adequately support the thesis/reasons; connection may be implied; may confuse reader.
- D. Message is present; may be simplistic, obvious or may require interpretation to make sense.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) may connect elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position in a general way; reader may have to infer the connections.

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Focus: Focus is **general** and **vague** throughout the paper.

Reasons: The reasons are **general** and broad, maintaining **connection** to the thesis, but do not reach the level of adequately **supporting** the thesis (Disneyland, baseball games, missing school).

Elaboration: The elaboration is general and **connected**, but **does not** provide any **support** for the thesis or the reasons (Why any of the details were surprising or made any difference is unclear, might be inferred).

Message: The message is **simplistic** and not clearly present/**requires interpretation to make sense**.

Commentary: The student's use of commentary is basic and simplistic. The commentary **may show the connection between elaboration and reasons**, though it often was used as more of a clarification or statement of why the detail was important to him/her (e.g., "This was another positive experience because it brought my family closer"; "This was a positive experience because it was very fun"). In other instances, the commentary must be **inferred by the reader**.

\***Bold** text in descriptions indicates language from the rubric.

### Organization - 2

#### Level 2: Basic

- A. Introduction may only state main points or restate prompt. **Attempts one or more of the introduction strategies. Does not attempt to engage the reader. Limited sense of direction.**
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are loosely arranged or are outline-like (formulaic); may lack completeness.
- C. Transitions are telling/sequencing connections (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion is limited to summarizing. **Attempts one or more of the conclusion strategies.**

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Introduction: The introduction strategy used is simplistic and low level, simply beginning with an overview about what the surprise is, and then narrowing to the three specific parts of the surprise. The introduction/thesis **does not engage the reader and only gives a vague sense of direction**: "I was going for a baseball tournament, going to Disneyland and missing school". The thesis does not give information about how it was a surprise or what the effect was.

Middle: The body paragraphs are **formulaic and outline like**. The writer is using a basic 5 paragraph essay with 3 points, all stated in the thesis. Each paragraph is its own individual idea, **not cohesively** organized.

Transitions: The transitions between the paragraphs are traditional **telling/sequencing** (e.g., "The first part", "Another part", "Finally,"). Similar transitions are used within paragraphs as well (e.g., "the other reason why [...]" "This was another positive experience [...]").

Conclusion: The student simplistically, and inaccurately, attempts to use a conclusion strategy: echo from the introduction, however, the bulk of the conclusion is limited to a **restatement of the main points** before ending with "[...] made my trip great!"

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<u>Style - 2</u>	<u>Conventions - 2</u>
<p><b>Level 2: Basic</b></p> <p>A. <u>Sentences</u> a cadence that is troublesome for audience/purpose/form due to limited variety of beginnings, structures and lengths.</p> <p>B. <u>Word Choice</u> is limited, does not enhance writing, may show thesaurus overload, and/or mostly uses passive verbs.</p> <p>C. <u>Voice</u> uses tone that is inconsistent with relationship to designated audience.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p>Sentences: The cadence is <b>troublesome for the audience due to limited variety of beginnings, structures and lengths</b>. Many sentences begin with subject verb structure: “It was”, “it took”, “I was”, “I had”, “This was”. Majority of sentences were simple sentences, creating a choppy feel to the essay (e.g. “The best part of the tournament was when we won the whole thing. When we won the tournament they gave our team trophies [sp] and t-shirts.”).</p> <p>Word Choice: The word choice is <b>limited and does not enhance</b> the writing (e.g., great, fun, excited, positive). Student also uses many <b>passive verbs</b> (e.g. “I was”; “I had”; “This was”).</p> <p>Voice: Student uses a <b>tone that is inconsistent with the designated audience</b>. The voice is weakened by the generic word choice and simple sentence structure</p> <p><small>*<b>Bold</b> text in descriptions indicates language from the rubric.</small></p>	<p><b>Level 2: Basic</b> consistently applies lower grade-level usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and/or paragraph expectations; lower grade-level errors do not interfere with meaning and/or readability.</p> <p><b>Level 1: Below Basic</b> inconsistently applies lower grade-level usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and/or paragraph expectations; lower grade-level errors interfere with meaning and/or readability.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p>The student fairly consistently applies lower grade level usage, capitalization, and paragraph expectations. However, there are many misspelled lower level words (e.g. surprise is spelled in a variety of ways throughout paper, “trophys”, “experiance”) as well as errors in lower level punctuation (commas primarily), but the meaning is not lost due to these errors keeping it from dropping into the 1 level. The student makes no attempt at more complicated punctuation. Student does not show competency in grade level conventions.</p> <p><small>*<b>Bold</b> text in descriptions indicates language from the rubric.</small></p>