

## Grade 6 Baseline Annotation – Expository Writing - #611CB

**Prompt:** Each of us has a favorite book, sport, item, or activity. Think about one of your favorites. Write a multiple paragraph essay to a teacher explaining why the book, sport, item, or activity is your favorite.

### Content - 3

#### Level 3: Proficient

- A. Focus is maintained and consistent throughout the paper centered on a manageable thesis/position.
- B. Reason(s) are relevant and support the thesis/position.
- C. Elaboration is meaningful, relevant and specific; uses details/examples/ facts/anecdotes to support thesis/reasons; explains reasons.
- D. Message is present, interesting or important; goes beyond the obvious although may be anticipated.
- E. Commentary (8th-HS) connects elaboration, reason(s), and thesis/position.

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**Focus:** The student **maintains focus** throughout the paper, **centering** and building on **the thesis**. The student does take liberty with the idea of “favorite activity” and turns it into a favorite “tradition/place”, but then maintains the focus on it.

**Reasons:** The reasons are **relevant** and **support the thesis**. Each paragraph follows the student through the activities and sights of his/her favorite place, leading the reader to an understanding of why it is a favorite place/tradition.

**Elaboration:** The student uses **relevant and supporting examples/details/anecdotes**. The elaboration is not as significant or precise as necessary to reach a level 4, the details support the thesis (e.g. “pushing our way through about 3 foot long sea grass...”; descriptions of the seagulls, picking up sand dollars and flying kites, “I also love the beachy smell of salt water and sand. The cold wind hitting my face”).

**Message:** The message is **interesting, going beyond** just a description of a tradition: becoming a running commentary to others outside his/her family who travel to this favorite destination. (e.g., “And make sure not to park too close to a flock of seagulls. Especially if you have bread”; “If you go too late, then the seagulls might beat you to all of the shells”).

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

### Organization - 3

#### Level 3: Proficient

- A. Introduction presents thesis/position. Effectively uses one or more of the introduction strategies. Engages the reader. Gives a sense of direction.
- B. Middle reasons/elaboration are arranged in a unified, cohesive and/or logical pattern to develop the thesis/position; has a sense of completeness.
- C. Transitions show, signal, or maintain connections (between/within-paragraphs).
- D. Conclusion provides a strong wrap up that effectively connects to the thesis and body of paper, more than a summary. Effectively uses at least one or more of the conclusion strategies.

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**Introduction:** The introduction uses **an introduction strategy** (history/definition) to present the thesis in context: the student opens with a general definition of tradition and then narrows it to the specific tradition important to her and her family, which **engages the reader and gives a clear sense of direction**.

**Middle:** The paragraphs are not arranged in a first idea, next idea way; they are chronologically ordered, following the writer in her experiences at the beach in a **cohesive pattern to show the thesis**: student starts with description of where they stay; moves on to the general sights and activities at the beach, to specific activities done by the student’s family; ends with a more personal reflection of what sights and smells the student enjoys.

**Transitions:** The student transitions in a way that is not formulaic, but instead shows the **connection** and chronological movement from one paragraph to another, from one idea to the next (e.g., “Each time we go”; “Once you get to the beach”; “My favorite thing to do there”).

**Conclusion:** The **conclusion strategy** the student uses is echoing the definition and idea of traditions brought up in the introduction (“Long standing traditions, like this, can affect a family through generations”). The student also gives a glimpse of the future, and how the tradition of going to Ocean Shores will not stop when she is grown up (I plan on continuing the Ocean Shores tradition with my future family”). Through the echo and future prediction, the student provides a **wrap up and connects the body of the paper to the thesis**.

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### Style - 3

#### Level 3: Proficient

- A. Sentences create an appropriate cadence for a designated audience/purpose/form through a variety of beginnings, structures and lengths.
- B. Word Choice is specific, precise and persuasive/compelling; strengthens writing, and shows use of active verbs.
- C. Voice uses tone that is appropriate for designated audience. Writing conveys the person behind the words.

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**Sentence:** The student creates an **appropriate cadence for the designated audience and purpose through a variety of beginnings, structures, and lengths of sentences.** (e.g., “There is an actual lighthouse at the top that you can climb up to and not matter which way you turn, you can see beach”; “It is very nice there and makes the beach even more fun!”). Many sentences are stylistically written, sometimes breaking convention rules for emphasis.

**Word Choice:** The student’s word choice is **precise** in areas and **strengthens the writing** (e.g. “soggy, muddy road”; “flock of seagulls”; “loopdy loops”), although in other areas the student relies on vague and general words (e.g., “it is very nice there and makes the beach even more fun!”; “the back way is kind of scary”). The student uses numerous **active verbs** throughout the essay as well (e.g., “skuttling across the bumpy sand”; “honking away at each other”; “push our way through”).

**Voice:** The tone is **appropriate for the designated audience**; through the tone, word choice, and descriptions, the reader gains insights into the excitement the writer feels for the beach, as well as the calming influence the beach has on the student (e.g., “The cold wind hitting my face. Seagulls honking away at each other. Helpless little crabs [...] The feeling that nobody can bother you no matter how hard they try”).

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### Conventions - 3

**Level 4: Advanced** intentionally applies usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and paragraphs to enhance meaning; **may break rules for style purposes**; demonstrates good command of conventions.

**Level 3: Proficient** lower grade level expectations must have been met. **Accurately applies grade-level usage**, spelling, punctuation and paragraph expectations; **errors do not interfere with meaning and/or readability**; has **competent use of conventions**.

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**The student accurately applies grade-level punctuation** (e.g., “[...] go very early in the morning, like at 6 or 7 o’clock, and go down to the water to pick up sand dollars”), **spelling, usage, and paragraph expectations**. Spelling mistakes are rare and only occur when student attempts less common words (e.g., skuttling”, “loopdy loops”). The student occasionally **breaks rules for style purposes** (use of fragments to create emphasis: “The cold wind hitting my face. Seagulls honking away at each other. Helpless little crabs scuttling across the bumpy sand. The feeling that nobody can bother you no matter how hard they try”), which could have pushed the paper into a L4 for conventions; however, the variety and density of grade level conventions is not high enough to show good command of conventions, instead they show a **competent use of conventions**

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