

Student Sample # **811HB**
Grade 8 Baseline Expository

Grade 8 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.

1 The bitter cold nipped at my fingertips as we shuffled into the family car to go
2 Christmas shopping. As we neared the shopping center, we turned off the main road;
3 several unusual turns later, we pulled into the Everett Animal Shelter – definitely not
4 where we expected to go...Over six years ago, on that winter day, we picked out 2 furry
5 balls of joy who I still love to this day. They have taught me responsibility, and they are
6 always there to make me feel happy.

7
8 Being responsible for living animals has led to a drastic improvement in my
9 personal responsibility. It is my job to care for them daily, kitty litter and all. Though
10 trudging downstairs into the cold confines of the basement may not be desirable to me, I
11 know that they appreciate all that I do to take care of them. When I come down the stairs
12 in the morning they are always happy to see me, greeting me with purrs and furry rubs on
13 my legs. Furthermore, Cats may not be quite the same as human children, but they are
14 still a wonderful example of having someone dependent on you. Cats depend on you for
15 love and for you to provide the essential means for life; later on in life, those skills will
16 be incredibly important when I have a family of my own to take care of. Hands on
17 learning is the most affective way to gain skills in responsibility.

18
19 Not only does caring for a living creature teach responsibility, but my cats
20 constantly make me happy. If I am going through a rough patch in life, my friendly balls
21 of fur will always be waiting for me. When my Dad was in the hospital and we would
22 come home late at night, my cats would curl up next to me in bed, as if they knew that
23 something was wrong. Their humorous attitudes are always pleasant and they emanate
24 wise, soulful personalities. They do not judge like people do and they are grateful for

25 anything I give, even if it is just a quick scratch behind the ear. I know that my pets will
26 always care about and for me no matter what mistakes I make in life.

27

28 The surprise of our christmas cats definitely affected my life in a positive way.
29 Being responsible for cats teaches real life responsibility for living beings and I know that
30 I will always have a supportive friend at my side. That one winter morning 6 years ago
31 has made all the difference in my life.