



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Electricity

Understanding Electricity



Claim and Focus

The essay makes a clear, arguable claim about the texts (“The three articles are very helpful and use explanations, examples and descriptions to help accomplish their purpose”). The writing maintains a balance of the sources and the student’s own writing by describing and connecting each text to the claim. While focused, the essay could advance to the next level if the writing more thoroughly addressed the demands of the prompt in both the introduction and conclusion.



Analysis and Evidence

Appropriate evidence is cited for each source. While some summary is present, it is balanced with analysis (“This article also asks questions to help the reader understand how short circuits work”). Evidence is adequately referenced and explained to clarify how the text works to achieve the author’s goals (“The purpose is to describe different materials used for creating electricity”).



Organization

The structure makes the writing clear and easy to follow, with transitions that help to connect ideas (“next,” “to sum up”). While an introduction and conclusion are present, the essay could benefit from a conclusion that goes beyond a restatement of the introduction (“To sum up, each article used examples, descriptions and explanations for the purpose of explaining how electricity works in interesting ways”).



Language and Style

The essay uses mostly correct, varied sentence structure and generally uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (“short circuits,” “conductors,” and “electricity”). An established, formal style is maintained throughout, and while some errors are present (“its the smallest article”), they do not interfere with meaning.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

Electricity



Understanding Electricity

Electricity is important to understand. The three articles are very helpful and use explanations, examples and descriptions to help accomplish their purpose. The purpose is to inform the reader all about electricity and how it works.

In the first source, the article "Energy Story" uses questions that new readers might have about electricity, like "But what is electricity? Where does it come from? How does it work?" So it states the most common questions and answers them for us so we don't have any questions by the time we finish reading the article. It also states simple easy to remember facts that aren't too complex, but basic knowledge for others learning about electricity. The beginning of "Energy Story" explains how much human beings depend on electricity. The article even gave an example of how much humans rely on electricity by saying that we can take a walk around our school, house or apartment and write down all of the devices and machines that use electricity.

Next in the article "Short Circuit" the purpose is to read an article about short circuits and to show what they do and how they work. This article also asks questions to help the reader understand how short circuits work. In "Short Circuit" the text encourages the reader to perform their own example of the flow of electricity. An example of this is when the text gives directions to the reader such "Attach on the end of the clip lead to one of the battery terminals." Additionally, the passage then adds on to this by explaining what each part of the example meant and shows more common real life examples of electrical flow. It also describes how the examples from the beginning of the passage connect to real life devices. This lets readers see how short circuits play a part in electricity.



The third and final article is called "Conducting Solutions" and it's the smallest article of the three but gives the best examples in my opinion. The article is about how good of conductors some solutions are. For example, it says "Pure water contains very few ions, so it does not conduct electricity very well. When table salt is dissolved in water, the solution conducts very well, because the solution contains ions." The purpose is to describe different materials used for creating electricity and how these materials conduct electricity and if they do not conduct electricity. This passage is one big description of the author's purpose and helps readers understand electricity.

To sum up, each article used examples, descriptions and explanations for the purpose of explaining how electricity works in interesting ways.