

Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics

Name Class Date

Above-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: Expository Writing (Unit 5, pages 272–275)

Assignment: Write a one- to two-page article that will help sixth-grade science students appreciate a creature otherwise likely to repel them.

The Real Web Artists

In the book *Charlotte’s Web*, a pig named Wilbur learns to love Charlotte, a spider who lives in his barn, because she saves him from being turned into bacon. Charlotte rescues Wilbur by spinning messages such as “Terrific!” and “Some Pig!” into her web to convince people that he’s special. The story is fiction, of course. However, even in real life, spiders are more creative than most people realize. Their webs not only catch insects; they are amazing works of art.

Although every spider web is beautiful in its own way, webs vary in shape, depending on the type of spider who made it. For instance, funnel webs look like a delicate bowl, while orb webs appear similar to a many-spoked bicycle wheel. All webs are made from silk created in the spider’s abdominal glands. The silk has incredible strength and elasticity.

To spin one of its incredible webs, a spider first creates a strong thread of silk. Then the spider lets the attached silk get picked up and blown by the wind. Once the silk catches on a surface, such as a branch or rock, the spider starts spinning each part of its web. Most spiders can build a web in an hour or less. When finished, the spider waits in its web for its prey to get caught in the sticky silk. Then, while the insect is stuck, the spider quickly makes another kind of silk to wrap around the prey. The spider’s careful spinning isn’t done yet, however. A spider must repair or rebuild its web every day.

As a species, spiders are so creative that they can build and use their webs in other ways, too. Some spiders weave a web between their own legs and then catch insects by throwing the web on top of them. Others types of spiders cooperate with each other to construct large communal webs. These spiders share the prey they catch.

Of course, no spider could ever be as smart or creative as the imaginary Charlotte was. After all, Charlotte could spell words in her web, and real spiders can’t do that. But with so many ways to catch their prey and such a variety of beautiful, complicated webs, even real spiders might be considered artists.

Summary: *This article discusses the surprising and interesting aspects of spiders’ webs to show why spiders should be appreciated. The evidence presented fits the article’s purpose and flows in a natural, logical order. The piece also includes specific language to support its purpose and maintains an appropriate tone for a sixth-grade audience.*

This piece would probably receive a 4 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 100 if evaluated by the analytic scoring method—35 points for Focus/Organization, 35 points for Elaboration/Support/Style, and 30 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

Opening presents topic in an engaging way.

Uses specific facts to support the main idea and precise language to explain unfamiliar terms

Effective transitions link ideas and descriptions.

Order of ideas follows naturally throughout the writing.

Ending ties to opening to provide closure and to reinforce the main idea.