

*In Common: Effective Writing for All Students*  
**Collection of All Student Work Samples, K-12**

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By The Vermont Writing Collaborative, with Student Achievement Partners and CCSSO

**K–5**

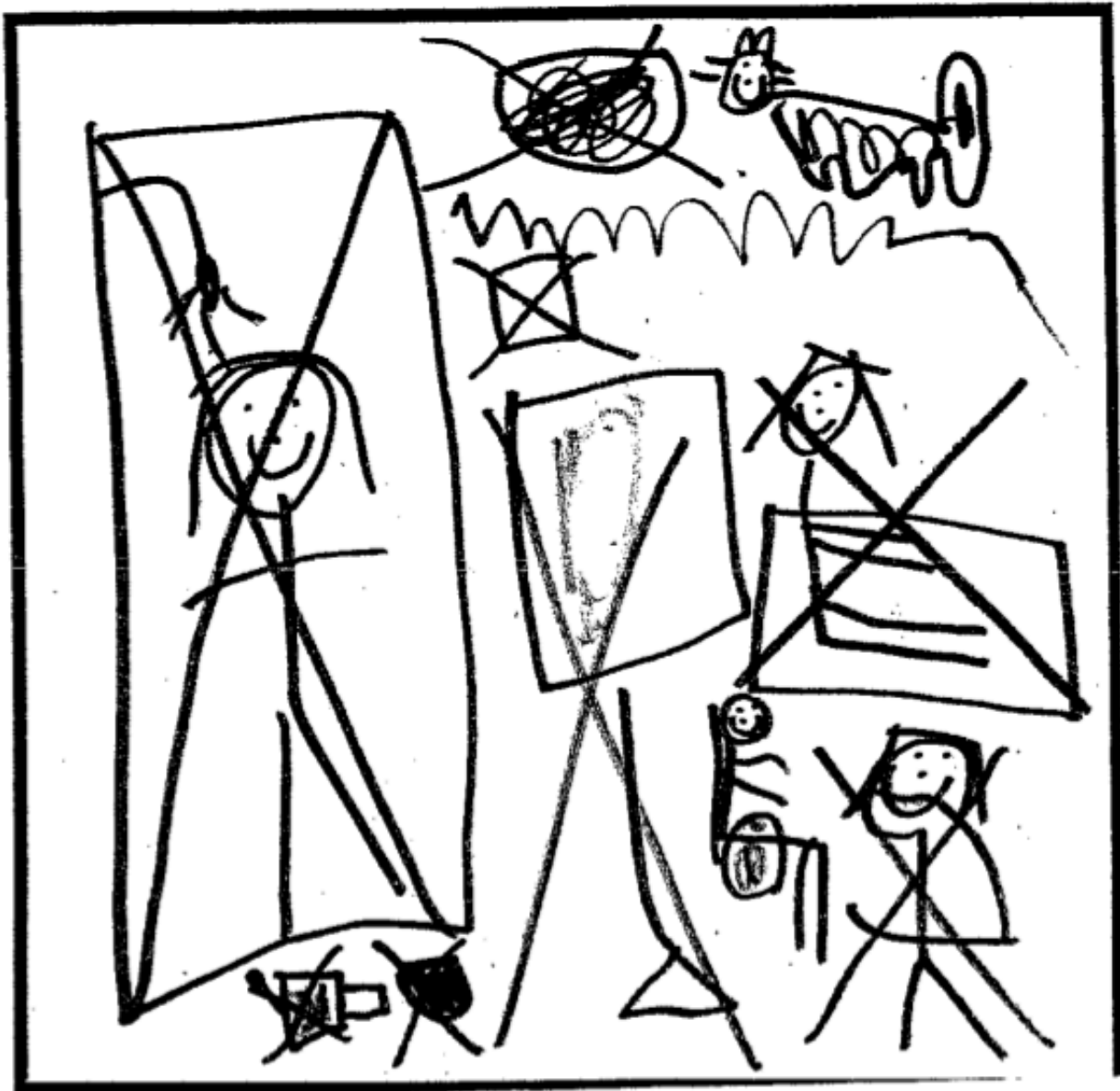
**On-Demand, Informative/Explanatory Samples**

**K-5**  
**On-Demand, Informative/Explanatory Samples**

These pieces were written in response to a uniform text-based prompt (video and Readers' Theater). The text changes at different grades, but the task and prompt remain essentially the same.

- K-5 Prompt: *What can you do to Save Water?*

WVOT US AS WODR MUC  
WODR

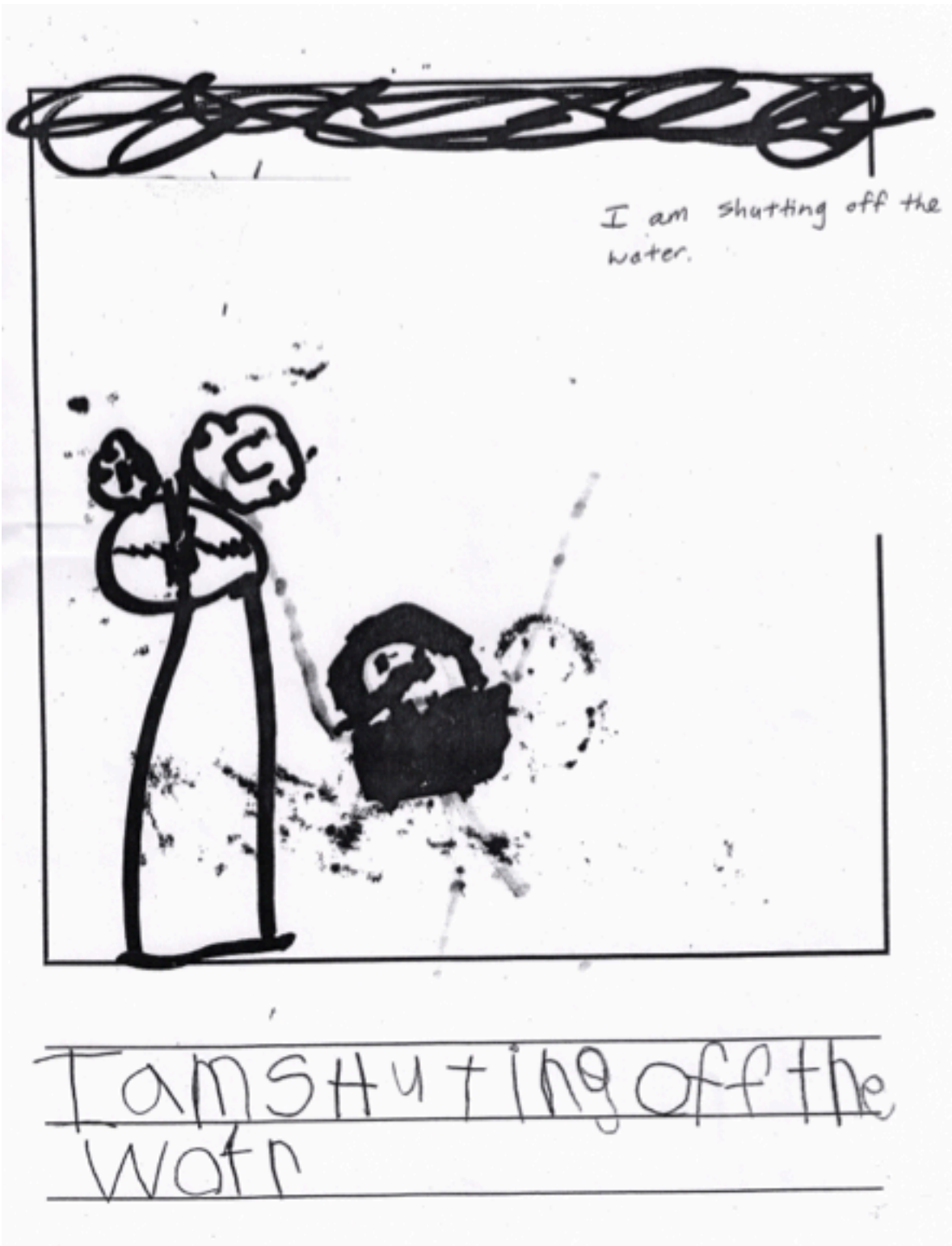


What can you do to save water?

I am taking a  
bath not all full.



I am taking a  
bat not ALL full.





**File Name: I1P Saving Water**

**Informational/Explanatory**

**Grade 1**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Saving Water**

**What can you do to save water?**

we need to save water! To save water do not fill up the tub all the way. if your fawsit is leking turn it of. if we didnt save water we woldent have any.

**File Name: I2P Water is Important**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 2**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Water is Important**

Water is important You should help save water. And I am going to tell you how. 1 way is TuRN OFF The SINK AFTER YOu BRuSH Your TEETH! Another way is ONLY FILL YOuR BATHTuB UP HALF WAY! Also water is important so you should TAKE A SHORT SHOWer. Also WHEN YOU WASH YOUR HANDS DON'T LEAVE THE WATER RUNNING! These are the ways why you should help save water



**File Name: I3P Water Use**

**Informational/Explanatory**

**Grade 3**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Water Use**

What can I do to save water? Lots of people waste gallons of water a day. Some people don't even have 5-2 gallons of water a day. We need water to drink, wash clothes, bath, and much more so we need to save water. One good way to save water is leave buckets outside to fill up with rain. Take quick showers. Bathes take at least 37 gallons of water. Remind people to turn off the water when not in use. Lots of people wait for the water from their sink to get hot and cold. If you put a bucket in your sink when the bucket is full you can use that water for lots of things. When it's winter take buckets of snow and melt it then you have buckets of water to use. When it's summer if you have a squirt gun use water from a toy that has water in it. If there's anything leaking water make sure to get it fixed right away. Don't buy water in a plastic container because plastic pollutes the earth. Please Save Water.

**Informational/Explanatory****Grade 4****On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt****Conserving Water**

Conserving water is a great way to help the earth. Without our water, plants, humans, and animals, would not be able to live. We need to save water because we will eventually run out of it. Then we will have to use and drink saltwater. It is extremely expensive to filter salt water. This why we need save water. What can you do to save water?

One way you can save water is by getting a rain barrel. Rain barrels collect water so that you can water your plants with recycled water. Recycled water is better for plants because it is more naturail. Recycled water also have good nutrients.

Another way you can save water is by getting an airrating facet and shower head. These items use less water but make it feels the same because of more pressure. One more way you can save water is when you go in the sprinkelers in the summer, make sure it is in a spot where it is watering the lawn.

One ways my family saves water is by turning off the water when you brush your teeth. Water is the most important natural resorce of all with out water, we would die. If we ran out of water, as I said, we would die. So if you think dieing is bad, try to conserve water as best you can.

**Grade 5, Prompt for Informative/Explanatory Writing**

**File Name: ISP Saving Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 5**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Saving Water**

Did you know that you can save your homes water by just by doing things each day? You can put a bucket outside to catch rainwater or use wipes to wash tables instead of water. There are many ways to save water, you can do things outside and inside to help save water. Here are some ideas.

There are many things to do inside your house to help save water. You can change your toilet, facet, and shower head to low flow. Also, you can take small, short showers instead of baths. you can turn off the facet when brushing your teeth and when lathering soap in your hands. When waiting for water to warm up save the water and reuse. over all there are alot of things you can do inside to save your homes water.

There are many things to do outside your house to help save water. First you can go to an automated carwash or use a waterless car wash. When you do a car wash at home you waste more water. Also you can dump out your water bottle on plants and grass insted of dumping it down the drain. Reuse water outside as much as possible. You can also put a bucket of water outside to catch rainwater and use for watering plants or grass. Over all there are alot of ways to save water outside of your house.

There are many ways to save your homes water outside and inside. Kids and adults can make a big difference to save water. Imagine if everyone in the cantry

turned of the facet when brushing thier teeth, we could save enogh water to refill a lake! Over all it is important to save water inside and outside your house.

**File Name: IKFP Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Kindergarten, Fall**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

**Water**

I WOT US AS WODR MUC WODR

**Names what he/she is  
writing about**

In this Kindergarten piece, written in the fall, the student uses a combination of drawing and writing to inform the reader about a topic explored through a Reader’s Theatre presentation and a short video. The topic of the student piece (*“I WOT US AS WODR MUC WODR”*) is stated in writing. The repeated word (*“WODR”*) is not an unusual error at this grade level and could be revised if the piece went through the full writing process. **The drawing** that accompanies the original text **supplies** detailed **information** on how to save water. The illustrations show the student saving water in many ways, such as taking shorter showers and saving excess water for pets and plants. Kindergarteners may use phonetic spelling, drawing, and dictation to express their thoughts in writing. This student’s piece clearly draws on the sources provided to inform the reader about the topic. This developmentally appropriate “combination writing” provides a valuable foundation for the thought process that underlies this text type and can be built upon in later years.

**File Name: IKSP Saving Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Kindergarten, Spring**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

**Saving Water**

*What can you do to save water?*

I am taking a baf Not all faLL.

I amsHuting off the wotr

I am filing the bucit up Not too Hiy

Although this piece would have been stronger had the student named the topic herself, the question posed clearly introduces the topic.

**Supplies some information  
about the topic**

In this Kindergarten piece, written in the spring, the topic (*What can you do to save water?*) is made clear by the question the teacher has posed, and the student uses words and pictures to supply some information about the topic. Although the information is personalized (“*I am...*”), the student has clearly drawn three specific details from the sources provided to inform the reader about how she will save water. Both words and illustrations show a solid understanding of the content

**File Name: I1P Saving Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 1**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

### **Saving Water**

**What can you do to save water?**

we need to save water! To save water do not fill up the tub all the way. if your fawsit

is leking turn it of. if we didnt save water we woldent have any.

**Names a  
topic**

**Provides some  
sense of closure**

**Supplies some facts  
about the topic**

In this first-grade on-demand informative/explanatory piece, the student clearly states a topic (“*we need to save water!*”) and supplies two facts about the topic drawn from the Reader’s Theatre on water conservation that the students read together. The piece ends with a reflective concluding sentence about why it is important to save water, information given in the short video that accompanies the prompt.

**File Name: I2P Water is Important**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 2**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

**Water is Important**

Water is important You should help save water. And I am going to tell you how. 1 way is TuRN OFF The SINK AFTER YOu BRuSH Your TEETH! Another way is ONLY FILL YOuR BATHTuB UP HALF WAY! Also water is important so you should TAKE A SHORT SHOWer. Also WHEN YOU WASH YOUR HANDS DON'T LEAVE THE WATER RUNNING! These are the ways why you should help save water

**Introduces the topic and states a focus for the piece**

**Uses facts to develop points**

**Uses linking words and phrases to connect ideas**

**Provides a concluding statement that restates the focus**

This second-grade informative/explanatory paragraph begins with an introductory sentence and then states the focus of the piece (*"You should help save water. And I am going to tell you how."*). Four facts, from provided sources, develop the piece and are linked to each other and to the main idea by transitional words and phrases (*"1 way", "Another way", "also"*). The piece concludes by restating the focus (*"These are the ways why you should help save water"*). At this grade level, sentences may be a bit "clunky," particularly as students experiment with unfamiliar academic constructions. If this were an instructional piece, *"These are the ways why..."* could be revised during the writing process.



**File Name: I3P Water Use**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 3**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

### **Water Use**

What can I do to save water? Lots of people waste gallons of water a day. Some people don't even have 5-2 gallons of water a day. We need water to drink, wash clothes, bath, and much more so we need to save water. One good way to save is to leave buckets outside to fill up with rain. Take quick showers. Bathes take at least 5 gallons of water. Remind people to turn off the water when not in use. Lots of people wait for the water from the sink to get hot and cold. If you put a bucket in your bathtub when the bucket is full you can use that water for lots of things. When it's winter you can fill buckets of snow and melt it then you have buckets of water to use. When it's summer you have a squirt gun use water from a toy that has water in it. If there's anything leaking water make sure to get it fixed right away. Don't buy water in a plastic container because plastic pollutes the earth. Please Save Water.

**Introduces the topic with a question and some context about why it might be important to save water**

**Develops the topic with facts and details**

**Uses linking words and phrases to connect ideas**

**Organizes related information into paragraphs, related information is grouped together and organized into an introduction, body, and conclusion.**

**Provides a concluding statement**

This third-grade piece introduces the topic with a question and some context, explaining why we need to save water. Although still a bit “list-y,” the piece uses facts from the source (“*bathes take at least 37 gallons of water*”) and conveys ideas and information clearly, sometimes adding context or elaboration to clarify or to develop points. For example, rather than just instructing the reader to put a bucket in the sink, the writer explains that people often waste water waiting for it to get hot or cold and that, if saved, this water could be used “*for lots of things.*” Linking words and phrases (“*so*”, “*one good way*”, “*if*”, “*when*”) connect ideas within the piece. The conclusion, in the form of a request for action, is appropriate to purpose and audience. The slight digression toward the end (“*Don’t buy water in a plastic container*”) could be addressed through revision if this piece were taken to a final draft.

Although both the introduction and conclusion urge us to save water, this is an informative/explanatory piece. The purpose of the writing is to explain how we can save water, not to try to convince us to do so. This topic is developed with facts and details about things we can do to save water, rather than with the reasons why we should do so. Effective pieces often combine elements from more than one genre.

**File Name: I4P Conserving Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 4**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

### **Conserving Water**

Conserving water is a great way to help the earth. Without our water, plants, humans, and animals, would not be able to live. We need to save water because we will eventually run out of it. Then we will have to use and drink saltwater. It is extremely expensive to filter salt water. This why we need save water. What can you do to save water?

**Introduces the topic by clearly explaining**

the importance of water and posing a focusing question

One way you can save water is by getting a rain barrel. Rain barrels collect water so that you can water your plants with recycled water. Recycled water is better for plants because it is more natural. Recycled water also have good nutrients.

**Links ideas within categories of information using words and phrases**

Another way you can save water is by getting an airrating facet and shower head. These items use less water but make it feels the same because of more pressure. One more way you can save water is when you go in the sprinklers in the summer, make sure it is in a spot where it is watering the lawn.

**Develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, and examples related to the topic**

One ways my family saves water is by turning off the water when you brush your teeth. Water is the most important natural resource of all with out water, we would die. If we ran out of water, as I said, we would die. So if you think dieing is bad, try to conserve water as best you can.

**Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic**

**Provides a concluding section related to the explanation presented**

This fourth-grade piece begins with an introduction that provides important context by explaining the importance of water to living things and the danger of running out. The focus of the piece is clearly established with a question: *“What can you do to save water?”*

Related information is organized into well-developed paragraphs. The second paragraph, for example, is about the benefits of collecting water in rain barrels. This idea is elaborated upon with concrete details from the source (*“you can water your plants”*) and explanation (*“recycled water is better for plants because it is more natural”*). Linking words and phrases (*“one way”, “so”, “because”, “also”*) knit together the related ideas in this paragraph.

Throughout the piece, precise words (*“eventually”, “extremely”, “pressure”*) and domain-specific vocabulary (*“nutrients”, “airrating”, “conserve”, “natural resource”*) convey ideas effectively.

Although worded a bit clumsily, the conclusion presents a logical and connected sequence of thought that leads the reader back to the focus of the piece (water is important; without it we would die; therefore, you should *“try to conserve water as best you can”*).

**File Name: ISP Saving Water**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 5**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

### **Saving Water**

Did you know that you can save your homes water by just by doing things each day? You can put a bucket outside to cath rainwater or use wipes to wash tables instead of water. There are many ways to save water, you can do things outside and inside to help save water. Here are some ideas.

**Introduces the topic clearly**

**Provides a general observation and focus**

There are many things to do inside your house to help save water. You can change your toilet, facet, and shower head to low flow. Also, you can take small, short showers instead of baths. you can turn off the facet when brushing your teeth and when lathering soap in your hands. When waiting for water to warm up save the water and reuse. over all there are alot of things you can do inside to save your homes water.

**Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic**

There are many things to do outside your house to help save water. First you can go to an automated carwash or use a waterless car wash. When you do a car wash at home you waste more water. Also you can dump out your water bottle on plants and grass insted of dumping it down the drain. Reuse water outside as much as possible. You can also put a bucket of water outside to catch rainwater and use for watering plants or grass. Over all there are alot of ways to save water outside of your house.

**Develops the topic with facts, concrete details, and other**

**information and examples related to the topic**

**Links ideas within categories of information using words and phrases**

There are many ways to save your homes water outside and inside. Kids and adults can make a big difference to save water. Imagine if everyone in the cantry

**Provides a concluding section related**

**to the explanation presented**

turned of the facet when brushing thier teeth, we could save enogh water to refill a lake! Over all it is important to save water inside and outside your house.

This fifth-grade piece introduces the topic clearly by providing a general observation and focus. The writer shows a developing awareness of purpose and audience, beginning with a question (*“Did you know...?”*) and concluding with a precise and striking image (*“we could save enogh water to refill a lake!”*) that serves to encourage the reader to take action. The clear sentence structure and familiar vocabulary is appropriate for a general audience.

The piece is well-organized. Facts and concrete details from the source have been regrouped logically into two broad categories: things you can do inside to save water and things you can do outside. Linking words and phrases (*“also”, “instead of”, “when”, “first”, “overall”*) show the relationship between ideas and allow the writer to smoothly elaborate using examples and concrete details. The structure of the essay (introduction, body, conclusion), as well as the structure within each paragraph (topic sentence, details, concluding sentence), create cohesion and make the thinking in the piece easy to follow.