

4th Grade Informational Responses

Prompt: How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Ants!
By Student A

Ants are one of the worlds most important insects. Ants help our ecosystem in many ways. Ants dig up sixteen billion tons of soil each year. They dig tunnels under the ground, so water and air can seep through the tunnels. This helps plants and animals so they can get water and food. This also helps the plants and animals so they can survive. When the ant colony grows bigger the worker ants dig more tunnels and more chambers for the ants in their colony. These tiny creatures bring important nutrients to the soil so other plants can grow. Leafcutter ants bring leaves to the next. Then they make a paste that grows fungus. The ants use fungus as their food. The leftover fungus becomes nutrients for the soil. When ants make their homes, they bring up dirt that recycles nutrients, this helps plants grow. Seeds are important to an ecosystem because they grow food for animals. Seed also help us because, the food that they grow will help us survive. Like Mimi Jorling said in A Little About Ants, “Ants may seem to be running around but they are actually doing something much more”. Ants transport seeds to different places all around the world so new beautiful plants can grow. Hopefully now you understand that the next time your about to destroy a anthill, think about what the ants have done for you all this time. They add nutrients to the soil, they dig tunnels that let air and water seep through the soil, and they transfer seeds into the humus so plants can grow.

Student clearly introduces topic; attempts a lead/hook but it doesn't include any additional insight.

Topic is developed with details from the text as well as elaboration from the student to connect ideas and establish meaning of how the information supports the topic. Student also uses a quote from the text to support ideas.

Related information is clearly grouped in sections of the paragraph.

While the student has used some linking words to connect ideas, they do not link from one category/detail to another.

Student uses precise language and vocabulary extracted from anchor texts to explain topic.

Conclusion is well-developed reminding reader of the topic and supporting details with additional context to leave impact on reader.

Anchor Text: *Journeys, The Life and Times of the Ant*, by Charles Micucci (Lesson 14)

JSD Informative/Explanatory Rubric Evaluation:

Introduce topic (W.4.2a)	Grouping Information (W.4.2a)	Topic development (W.4.2b)	Linked Ideas (W.4.2c)	Domain-Specific Vocabulary (W.4.2d)	Related Conclusion (W.4.2e)	Language Conventions (L.4.2)
3	4	4	2	4	4	4

4th Grade Informational Responses

Prompt: How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Ants
By Student B

Ants have been around for a long, long time. They are one of Earth’s most important and helpful creatures to their ecosystem. Did you know that ants are actually stronger than elephants! These special insects dig over sixteen billion tons of soil each year! When they build tunnels in the soil they bring air and water into the tunnels they build. Air and water is also important for plants and animals in the soil. Like Mimi Jorling said, “One thing these important insects do to help their ecosystem is keep the soil healthy.” These hard working insects bring important nutrients into the soil so new plants can grow for other critters in the ecosystem. Leafcutter ants bring leaves to their nest, as they bring up dirt, they recycle nutrients. Seeds are also important to an environment because they grow food for other critters. The uneaten food breaks down into smaller pieces which soon turns into nutrients for others in the soil. These tiny bugs transport seeds so new beautiful plants can grow in the soil. Ants are very important creatures and don’t deserve their amazing home to be destroyed. Hopefully the next time you see an anthill you’ll think again and won’t destroy their lovely home because they are earth’s most important and helpful creatures to their ecosystem by bringing air and water into the soil and adding nutrients for other critters in the ground.

Introduction includes additional insight and a clear statement to introduce topic that matches the prompt.

The topic has been developed with facts and details from the anchor text, including a quote that is elaborated on by the student.

Information is grouped in sections but is not clearly defined by the use of linking words to transition and connect the different ideas.

Few linking words.

Student uses precise language and vocabulary from the text resources, but the repeated use of less formal language (critters) detracts from informative tone.

Conclusion has been well-developed. It is clearly related to the topic and provides additional informational context.

Anchor Text: *Journeys, The Life and Times of the Ant*, by Charles Micucci (Lesson 14)

JSD Informative/Explanatory Rubric Evaluation:

Introduce topic (W.4.2a)	Grouping Information (W.4.2a)	Topic development (W.4.2b)	Linking Words (W.4.2c)	Domain Specific Vocabulary (W.4.2d)	Related Conclusion (W.4.2e)	Language Conventions (L.4.2)
4	3	4	2	3	4	4

4th Grade Informational Responses

Prompt: How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Student C

Ants help out ecosystem by helping people, plants, and animals. Ants help by digging tunnels under the ground. This helps because it provides water and air for the roots of plants. The text states, “As ants bring up dirt, they recycle nutrients that help plants grow.” Ants also harvest seeds that fall out of their mandibles. This helps because more new plants can grow.

Another way ants help is by helping people. Ants help people by building trails. They build these trails to plants for harvesting food, then the ant trails turn into animal trails, and then those trails eventually turn into human trails. The text states, “Some ant trails are so well preserved that larger animals such as deer and even people may use them.”

Ants don’t only help plants and people, they also help animals too. Although it may be sad for you and me, ants are also feeders too. Ants are food to quit a few creatures. These are woodpeckers, horned lizards, ant lions, (a type of insect), and armadillos. But there’s one more, the text states, “The biggest homewrecker of them all, the giant ant eater.” As you may be able to tell, ants are mazing little insects.

By Student C

Introduction clearly introduces the topic and addresses the prompt.

The topic has been developed using details and information from anchor text. Student has included textual citations, but has not included an explanation of their relevance.

Related information is grouped in paragraphs.

Ideas have been linked with words and phrases.

Student has used domain-specific vocabulary from the text and precise language.

Conclusion provides closure to writing, but does not relate the information back to the topic.

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JSD Informative/Explanatory Rubric Evaluation:

Introduce topic (W.4.2a)	Grouping Information (W.4.2a)	Topic development (W.4.2b)	Linking Words (W.4.2c)	Domain Specific Vocabulary (W.4.2d)	Related Conclusion (W.4.2e)	Language Conventions (L.4.2)
3	3	3	3	3	2	3

4th Grade Informational Responses

Prompt: How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Ants
By Student D

Ants have been on this earth for one hundred million years! Air and water is in the soil. These tiny creatures dig up to 16 billion tons of soil each year. Ants dig more tunnels for the eggs and colony, only if the colony gets bigger. Colonies let's water and air into the soil to help plants and animals in the soil. When ants get seeds and they add nutrients back into the soil by throwing out the seeds. Leaf cutter ants bring leaves to the nest and turns the leaves into fungus. The fungus is gooey and grows. When the tiny creatures are digging that bring up dirt that they do not need. When ants eat they throw out the food they don't need or did not eat and that helps the plants grow. These tiny people move seeds to help plants and trees grow. Seeds are important to an ecosystem because they grow food for animals and for us to eat. Now do you want to step on a Ant hill when they help us add nutrients into the soil and when they dig tunnels that allows water and air to flow threwh the soil and move seeds to new places so plants can blossom?

Introductory statement does not clearly introduce the topic.

Student includes facts and details that develop the topic.

Information has not been clearly grouped to communicate information in coherent organization to the reader in support of the prompt.

Ideas are not linked together.

Student has attempted to use domain-specific vocabulary. Some lack of precision in language.

Concluding statement reminds reader of several details addressed in body, but is unclear that it relates to the topic as introduced by the reader.

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2	2	3	1	2	2	3

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Prompt: How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Ants are helpful to an ecosystem. They provide nutrients to the soil. These few paragraphs will tell you why and how they do that.

In the paragraph in “A Little about Ants” it says “When they bring food particles to their nests, they add nutrients to soil because they don’t eat everything they bring. Their leftovers stay in the soil and break down into nutrients for other creatures living in the soil.” Also in the “Life and Times of the Ant” it says “Leaf cutter ants harvest leaves and take them to the nest. In the process they thin jungle overgrowth and return mulch from the crushed leaves to the soil.”

By constantly digging through soil they create spaces. Soil needs space for air and water. Without it other creatures that live in soil would no longer survive.

By Student E

Introduction is clear but limits scope of details to nutrients, even though they also provide information to support another way that ants help an ecosystem.

Body of student writing has attempted to group information into paragraphs but the second paragraph is unclear of its main idea.

One linking word is used to indicate an additional idea, but not to connect details.

The student has quoted the text extensively, but has not included any elaboration or interpretation of what the text says or how it supports the topic of the writing.

Domain specific vocabulary has been attempted, but students has not used it to inform and explain the topic, especially as much is included in direct citations.

No conclusion has been attempted.

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JSD Informative/Explanatory Rubric Evaluation:

Introduce topic (W.4.2a)	Grouping Information (W.4.2a)	Topic development (W.4.2b)	Linking Words (W.4.2c)	Domain Specific Vocabulary (W.4.2d)	Related Conclusion (W.4.2e)	Language Conventions (L.4.2)
3	2	2	2	3	1	4

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How are ants important and helpful to their ecosystem?

Ants can help plants grow. They push into pump chambers that releases nutrients in the ground.

They also would smash the leaves and chop them into a damp paste.

Then fungus grows on the paste the haves it then eat it.

Now do you think ants are cool if you do don't crash them.

By Student F

Student attempts an introductory statement, but it does not clearly relate to the prompt.

The topic has not been developed; no clear connection or explanation of how their details and facts connect to the topic.

Student has employed some linking words to indicate additional information and sequence, but the linking words do not connect from one category of information to another.

Little evidence of precise language.

Concluding statement is weak; does not relate to topic.

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JSD Informative/Explanatory Rubric Evaluation:

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2	1	1	2	1	2	1