



## Informative Response

Dear Parents,

In the upcoming weeks, the class will be guided through crafting informative responses. These pieces require fifth graders to summarize and analyze texts, kicking off with captivating introductions. Students will support their points with specific examples, quotes, facts, and details from the text, using precise content language. Additionally, responses may include illustrations with captions or graphs. Transition words will aid in connecting ideas, and each response will conclude with a summary of the main ideas. Mastering this skill is vital as it's frequently assessed by states and reflects your child's reading comprehension and critical thinking skills.

### Ideas for Home Support

As your child practices writing these informative papers at school you might consider practicing at home with the following ideas:

- Organize a writing club with other fifth graders and their parents where each child takes turns sharing their informative responses.
- Have your child create a multimedia presentation summarizing the main points of an informative text they've read. They can use slides, visuals, and oral narration to present their findings.
- Encourage your child to apply the information they've learned from an informative text to a real-world project or activity. For example, they could write a brochure or create a poster sharing information about a historical event or scientific concept they've studied.
- Choose an informative text and create a list of specific details or facts for your child to find while reading. Provide them with a highlighter or sticky notes to mark the evidence in the text. Afterward, discuss how they can use these details to support their writing in an informative response.

Thank you for all your support!

Sincerely,

## Informative Response Rubric 5th Grade

Genre Chart Informative Response	4 Exceeded Goal	3 Accomplished Goal	2 Just Beginning	1 Hasn't Started
<b>Has an engaging introductory paragraph</b>	Has a creative and clear introductory paragraph that addresses the essential question	Introductory paragraph addresses the essential question and is organized	Introductory paragraph does not address the essential question or is not organized	No introductory paragraph
<b>Uses relevant text evidence</b>	Uses meaningful text evidence to support the response	Uses text evidence to support the response	Uses little text evidence with weak support of the response	Does not use text evidence
<b>Develops details of the main idea with quotes, reasons, and connections</b>	Develops the main idea with meaningful details and makes an insightful connection	Develops the main idea with details and a connection	Develops very few details or makes no connection	Does not develop details or connection
<b>Uses transition words and phrases</b>	Uses transition words and phrases to link ideas	Uses transition words	Transition words do not work or there are too few	Does not use transition words
<b>Has a concluding paragraph that uses a restatement</b>	Ending paragraph is creative and makes a restatement about the essential question	Ending sentence makes a restatement about the essential question	Has an ending sentence, but does not restate the essential question	No ending sentence
<b>Correct conventions support the meaning</b>	No errors or minor errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar	A few errors but they do not interfere with meaning	Frequent errors that distract the reader	So many errors that it is hard to read

# How to Become an Astronaut

Famous American astronaut, Sally Ride once said, “If they asked me if I wanted to go into space tomorrow, I’d do it in a heartbeat. On the other hand, if they asked me if I wanted to go into training for three years and then go into space again, I’d probably say no.” What is it about training to go into space that makes it so horrible? It turns out that not only does it take a lot of training, but it is incredibly difficult and competitive to become an astronaut.

## GETTING A CHANCE

According to LinkedIn, “since 1978 over 77,000 people have applied to be astronauts, but only 350 have been chosen.” This means that less than 0.5% of the people who have applied have been chosen. That’s a very competitive process! Most **space agencies**, organizations that study and explore space, hire astronauts in groups called classes. Every several years these agencies open up applications to create a new Astronaut Class. This is a small group of hopeful astronauts that go through training together. This training takes years, but what kinds of things actually happen to be an astronaut? There are some very fascinating requirements and training for aspiring astronauts.

## NOT SO BASIC TRAINING

There is no age requirement or limit to become an astronaut. However, the first step for future astronauts is a rigorous two-year basic training. This training covers fitness, technical skills, languages (especially Russian), and even survival techniques. Only after completing the two years of basic training will prospective astronauts be assigned to a mission. Once they are assigned, they will spend years preparing and training for their specific space mission before finally getting the opportunity to go to space.

## ZERO GRAVITY

One of the most interesting parts of astronaut training is learning to work in zero gravity. Gravity is the force that pulls everything toward the center of the Earth. But once astronauts are in space, they’re outside of Earth’s gravity and experience what’s called zero gravity or weightlessness. There are many unique challenges in zero gravity besides just floating around. That’s why astronauts spend time training to handle and work in zero gravity.



One way they get ready for zero gravity is by training in special airplanes. These airplanes have padded walls, and by flying in certain ways, they can make astronauts feel weightless for up to 30 seconds. However, this type of training can be really tough for astronauts. In fact, 1 out of every 3 astronauts feel sick and vomit on their first ride. This training is so famous that astronauts have given the plane used in training the nickname "Vomit Comet."

## **SWIMMING IN SPACE**

One of the most surprising things about astronaut training is how much swimming they do. Since the feeling of weightlessness in space can be recreated underwater, astronauts spend a lot of time training in giant swimming pools. They even have full-sized models of spacecraft that they sink underwater in these pools for training. As part of their basic training, astronauts have to pass a swim test. They need to swim three 25-meter laps and tread water for 10 minutes. Doesn't sound too hard, right? Well, they have to do all of this while wearing their flight suit, which weighs almost 250 pounds!

Becoming an astronaut is really tough. Not only is it hard to get into the astronaut class in the first place, but once you're in, there are years of tough tasks and challenging skills to learn

### **Essential Question:**

What type of person can become an astronaut? Include text evidence.



## Informative Response Engaging Beginning Models

Quote

**The article, "How to Become an Astronaut", stated, that "over 77,000 people have applied to be astronauts, but only 350 have been chosen."** That means that it is incredibly competitive. For a person to become an astronaut they would have to be hard working and very determined because the process is very difficult.

Question

**Would you be able to withstand a profession that requires many years of rigorous training, before you can do what you are trained for?** The article "How to Become an Astronaut" outlined the process of applying and training to be an astronaut. They train for years before they get to do any space travel. I learned that a person who wants to become an astronaut has to be hard working and very determined.

Fact

**Apparently not many people can withstand the rigors of becoming an astronaut. Only .05% of those that apply are actually accepted into the program.** The article "How to Become an Astronaut" outlined the process of applying and training to be an astronaut and I learned that a person who wants to become an astronaut has to be hard working and very determined.

### Annotations

**Engaging question about the topic is red and bolded**

Statement that answers the essential question is green

Title of the article is green quotations

## **Informative Response Model**

### How to Become an Astronaut

The article, "How to Become an Astronaut", stated that "over 77,000 people have applied to be astronauts, but only 350 have been chosen." That means that it is incredibly competitive. For a person to become an astronaut they would have to be hard working and very determined because the process is very difficult.

There are several reasons why a person would have to be hardworking and determined to become an astronaut. First of all, they have to be so determined to be an astronaut that they are willing to fight through the odds. If only "0.5% of people who have applied" are chosen," they have to ignore that reality and prepare in every possible way. If they are lucky enough to get accepted, they have to work hard and endure fitness tests, language lessons, technical skills and even become a survivalist. Those are just the things they do to qualify. They have to pass the 2 years of basic training to officially get into the program. If that is not hard enough, they have to be determined and hard working to survive the next phase.

Once they pass basic training and are in the program, they begin to train for zero gravity experiences. They have to figure out how to live in an environment where everything floats! They work in special aircraft where they experience weightlessness for 30 seconds at a time. Most vomit after that experience. What, talk about determined! Another way they get used to zero gravity is by doing a lot of swimming. They are submerged in a spacecraft and they have to pass swimming tests. Imagine having to endure a swim test that requires you to tread water for 10 minutes in a space suit that weighs 250 pounds. Not everyone is suited for the training an astronaut has to endure.

I cannot imagine enduring the training of an astronaut. One time I had to swim for a few minutes in my clothes and I almost sank. I would never survive astronaut training. Only those who are determined and hard working can be successful. Thankfully there are enough people with those personality traits that we can have a space program.

## Informative Response Model Annotated

### How to Become an Astronaut

The article, "How to Become an Astronaut", stated that "over 77,000 people have applied to be astronauts, but only 350 have been chosen." That means that it is incredibly competitive. For a person to become an astronaut they would have to be hard working and very determined because the process is very difficult.

There are several reasons why a person would have to be **hardworking and determined to become an astronaut**. First of all, they have to be so determined to be an astronaut that they are willing to fight through the odds. If only "**0.5% of people who have applied**" are **chosen,**" they have to ignore that reality and prepare in every possible way. If they are lucky enough to get accepted, they have to **work hard and endure fitness tests, language lessons, technical skills and even become a survivalist**. Those are just the things they do to qualify. They have to **pass the 2 years of basic training to officially get into the program**. If that is not hard enough, they have to be determined and hard working to survive the next phase.

Once they pass basic training and are in the program, they **begin to train for zero gravity experiences**. They have to figure out how to **live in an environment where everything floats!** They **work in special aircraft where they experience weightlessness** for 30 seconds at a time. **Most vomit** after that experience. **\*What,** talk about determined! Another way they get used to zero gravity is by doing a lot of **swimming**. They are **submerged in a spacecraft**. They swim **\*for hours** to pass swimming tests. Imagine having to endure a swim test that requires you to **tread water for 10 minutes in a space suit that weighs 250 pounds**. Not everyone is suited for the training an astronaut has to endure.

I cannot imagine enduring the training of an astronaut. One time I had to swim for a few minutes in my clothes and I almost sank. I would never survive astronaut training. Only

those who are determined and hard working can be successful. Thankfully there are enough people with those personality traits that we can have a space program.

### Annotations

**Engaging strategy is in bolded red**

**Text evidence, facts, quotes and reasons are in bolded green**

Addressing the essential question is in green

**Connections are underlined in bolded green**

Concluding restatement is in red

**Name of the article is in bolded black**

**\*Edits related to the Writing Warm-Up are in black with an asterisk**

## The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!

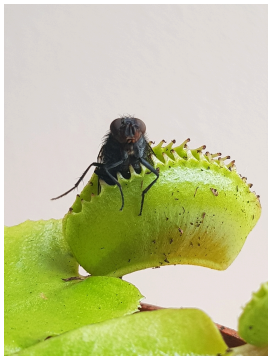
Have you ever heard of a plant that eats insects? It might sound like something from a science fiction story, but it's real! Let's learn about the incredible Venus Flytrap, a fascinating plant that catches its own food.

### Habitat and Appearance

The Venus Flytrap is a special kind of plant that lives in wetlands in North and South Carolina in the United States. This is a great habitat for Venus flytraps to live because they have the perfect weather and soil. Venus Flytraps like warm, humid summers and mild winters, which is just what North and South Carolina have. The soil there is sandy and doesn't have a lot of nutrients, which might sound strange, but Venus Flytraps love it because they can catch bugs to get the extra nutrients they need. So, these states are like a perfect home for Venus Flytraps, where they can grow big and strong!



At first glance, the Venus Flytrap's leaves may seem like ordinary green foliage. However, upon closer inspection, one can notice the striking resemblance to a carnivorous creature. The leaves, also called traps, are divided into two lobes, each lined with delicate trigger hairs on their inner surfaces. These hairs serve as sensitive detectors, waiting to be tickled by unsuspecting prey.



### Catching Prey

Imagine being a tiny bug buzzing around. You might see a Venus Flytrap and think it's just another plant. But if you get too close and touch the little trigger hairs inside the leaves, watch out! The traps of the Venus Flytrap are shaped like tiny mouths with teeth, giving them a menacing appearance. When a small insect, like a fly or ant, lands on the surface of the trap and brushes against these trigger hairs, it sets off a chain reaction. Within milliseconds, the trap snaps shut with astonishing speed, trapping the insect inside. That's how the Venus Flytrap catches its dinner!

### Digestion Process

Once the bug is caught, the Venus Flytrap doesn't waste any time. It secretes special juices that help break down the bug into tiny pieces. These juices are like the plant's stomach because they help it digest its food. After the bug is all digested, the plant absorbs the nutrients it needs to grow big and strong. This process can take several days, during which time the trap remains closed to prevent escape. After digestion is complete, the trap reopens, revealing the indigestible exoskeleton of the insect, which is eventually washed away by rain or wind.

## **Adaptations**

Now, you might be wondering, why does the Venus flytrap eat bugs? Well, it's because it lives in places where the soil doesn't have a lot of nutrients, like a hungry Venus Flytrap needs a good meal to grow big and strong, just like how we need healthy food to grow tall and strong. That means it can't get everything it needs to grow from the ground like other plants. So, it catches bugs to get the extra nutrients it needs to stay healthy. Also, did you know that Venus Flytraps are really smart? They can tell the difference between a bug and something else, like a raindrop or a leaf. So, they only close their trap when they feel a bug touching them, saving their energy for the real food!



## **Conservation**

But don't worry, the Venus Flytrap doesn't eat big things like people or animals. It mostly eats small bugs like flies, ants, and spiders, which are like tasty snacks for them! So, you can admire these amazing plants without being afraid of them! Even though Venus Flytraps are super cool, they need our help to stay safe. One way we can help is by not taking them from their homes in the wild. These plants need their special habitats to grow healthy and happy. Another way is by learning more about them and telling others how cool they are, so everyone can help protect them. Lastly, we can support places like national parks and wildlife refuges where Venus Flytraps live, to make sure they have safe places to grow and thrive for a long time.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Venus Flytrap is a truly amazing plant that catches its own food. With its unique traps and clever adaptations, it's no wonder these plants capture the imagination of people all around the world. So, next time you see a Venus Flytrap, remember to marvel at its wonder and help keep it safe in its natural home!

## **Essential Task**

Using information from the article, describe the relationship between the Venus Flytrap and its environment.

## Informative Response Engaging Beginning Models

Quote

**“At first glance, the Venus Flytrap's leaves may seem like ordinary green foliage.”**

**Upon further inspection the plant is anything but ordinary.** I read the short article “The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!” and it taught me that this little plant is certainly amazing. It has adapted so well to harsh living conditions that now it is dependent on that environment to survive.

Action

**A fly lands softly on what looks like a petal and before they know it they are hopelessly trapped. A Venus Flytrap has caught its dinner.** I learned in the article “The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!” that the flytrap depends on insects to stay alive. This amazing plant has learned to live in very harsh living conditions and now is dependent upon that environment to survive.

List

**Bad soil? Check! Humid weather? Check! Mild winters? Check! That all equals a great place for a Venus Flytrap to live and thrive.** The article “The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!” taught me that the Venus Flytrap has adapted to its environment and now it is dependent on a harsh living condition to survive.

### Annotations

**Engaging question about the topic is bolded red**

Statement about the task is green

Title of the article is in green quotations



## **Informative Response Model**

### The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!

Bad soil? Check! Humid weather? Check! Mild winters? Check! That all equals a great place for a Venus Flytrap to live and thrive. The article "The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!" taught me that the Venus Flytrap has adapted to its environment and now it is dependent on a harsh living condition to survive.

The Venus Flytrap has learned to live in harsh environments. It is found in the warm and humid areas of North and South Carolina where the "soil is sandy and doesn't have a lot of nutrients." Since it cannot get much nutrition from the soil, it captures its food and absorbs the nutrients from the insects it traps. In addition, the flytrap has also developed some trigger hairs on its leaves that are able to sense a bug or ant and it immediately snaps shut. The article said, "It secretes special juices that help to break down the bug into tiny pieces." Days later the trap opens and the skeleton of the bug is washed away by rain or wind. Now that the plant has gotten used to eating bugs, it is dependent on them to live.

In the article, I also learned that the Venus Flytrap is a very smart plant. Due to its adaptations to the environment, it has learned to tell the difference between a raindrop or leaf and a bug. They only close their trap when it is a bug. It cannot be tricked by other things touching their trigger hairs. The adaptations this plant has made, makes it special.

Much like an alligator that attracts a bird to its nose for a tasty lunch, the Venus Flytrap has learned to lure an insect to its leaves to gain some much needed nutrition. Wow, it is amazing how, thanks to its adaptations to a harsh environment, this interesting plant has survived and thrived where many other plants could not.

## Informative Response Model

### The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!

**Bad soil? Check! Humid weather? Check! Mild winters? Check! That all equals a great place for a Venus Flytrap to live and thrive.** The article **"The Amazing Venus Flytrap: A Hungry Plant!"** taught me that the Venus Flytrap has adapted to its environment and now it is dependent on a harsh living condition to survive.

The Venus Flytrap has learned to live in harsh environments. It is **found in the warm and humid areas of North and South Carolina** where the **"soil is sandy and doesn't have a lot of nutrients."** **\*Since it cannot get much nutrition from the soil,** it captures its food and **absorbs the nutrients from the insects it traps.** **In addition,** the flytrap has also developed some **trigger hairs on its leaves that are able to sense a bug or ant** and it immediately snaps shut. **The article said, "It secretes special juices that help to break down the bug into tiny pieces."** **Days later** the trap opens and the skeleton of the **bug is washed away by rain or wind.** Now that the plant has gotten used to eating bugs, it is dependent on them to live.

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nutrition. **\*Wow,** it is amazing how, thanks to its adaptations to a harsh environment, this interesting plant has survived and thrived where many other plants could not.

**Annotations**

**Engaging strategy is in bolded red**

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Addressing the essential question is in green

**Transitions are bolded in orange**

**Connections are underlined in bolded green**

Concluding restatement is in red

**Name of the article is in bolded black**

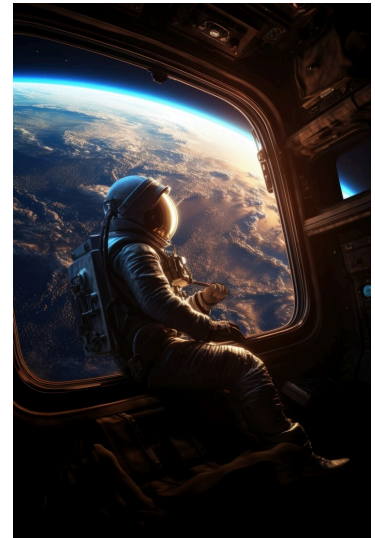
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## Unveiling the Secrets of Space Exploration

Have you ever looked up at the night sky and wondered what lies beyond the stars? Space exploration is a fascinating journey that humans have embarked upon to unlock the mysteries of the universe. From the first satellites to landing on the moon and sending rovers to Mars, space exploration has captivated the minds of scientists and adventurers alike.

One of the most exciting aspects of space exploration is learning about the planets in our solar system. Did you know that Jupiter, the largest planet, has a storm called the Great Red Spot that has been raging for centuries? Or that Saturn has magnificent rings made of ice and rock particles? Exploring these distant worlds helps us understand more about the formation of our solar system and the possibility of life beyond Earth.

But space exploration isn't just about planets; it's also about understanding the vastness of space itself. Telescopes like the Hubble Space Telescope have allowed us to peer deep into the cosmos, revealing galaxies, nebulae, and other celestial wonders. By studying these distant objects, scientists can learn more about the origins of the universe and the forces that shape it.



One of the most iconic moments in space exploration history was the Apollo 11 mission, which landed the first humans on the moon in 1969. Neil Armstrong's famous words, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," echoed around the world as he took those historic steps onto the lunar surface. Since then, humans have continued to push the boundaries of space exploration, with missions to Mars, the outer planets, and beyond.



But space exploration isn't without its challenges. The vast distances, harsh environments, and limited resources make it a daunting task. Scientists and engineers must overcome these obstacles through innovation and teamwork to ensure the success of their missions. Whether it's developing new propulsion systems, designing life support systems for astronauts, or building rovers to explore distant worlds, space exploration pushes the boundaries of human ingenuity.

### Essential Question

How has space exploration expanded our understanding of the universe?