Developing | Exemplar Essay

The Making of a Scientist

Making a Scientist

Clarity and Focus

The essay contains a central idea ("Richard Feynman learned many life lessons from his father including the importance of translating everything and noticing things"), but does not fully develop it or address the demands of the prompt. The essay would benefit from more explicit statements that connect the central idea to the points made in the body (What did the father actually translate for Feynman? In what specific ways did Feynman learn to notice things?).

Development

Examples from the source are used to support the central idea ("Feynman said he 'learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something'"), but do not clearly connect to the points in the thesis. Sweeping statements are made without adequate development of the idea for the reader ("This was about how Feynman's dad taught him not just about science but about life lessons").

Organization

There is an organizational structure with a beginning, middle, and end. The introduction and hook work to engage the reader ("Do you know how a scientist is made?") and the final sentence vaguely attempts to circle back to the original idea ("This is how a real Scientist is made"). There are some transitions throughout ("afterwards," "then"), but relationships between and among ideas could be more clear.

Language and Style

The essay attempts to establish a formal style ("Feynman is a famous American physicist, he studies matter and energy"), but it is not maintained throughout. There is some variety in sentence structure and some use of precise language ("importance," "definition," "successful"). The essay contains some errors that occasionally 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.

Exemplar Essay

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Notes

Do you know how a scientist is made? Well, in the story “The Making of a Scientist” Richard Feynman talks about that. Feynman is a famous American physicist, he studies matter and energy. Richard Feynman learned many life lessons from his father including the importance of translating everything and noticing things.

Feynman's father taught him the big difference between knowing something and just knowing the name. One example from this passage was when the kids were playing in the park and a kid asked Feynman this question "See that bird? What kind of bird is that?" then he answered "I haven't the slightest idea." Then the boy says, "It's a brown-throated thrush. Your father doesn't teach you anything!" But it turned out that Feynman didn’t know the name, but he had watched the bird and knew how it acted and lots more about it. Afterwards Feynman said he “learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.”

The way that Feynman's father taught made Feynman want to become a scientist because his father decided to not only tell him a name but to also give a definition. The way that Feynman's father taught made him want to dig deeper into science. His father showed him how to look at things and observe them and think about them. This was about how Feynman's dad taught him not just about science but about life lessons. And after all of the hard work Feynman did as a child he grew up to be a successful Scientist. This is how a real Scientist is made.