

Grade 7 Informative/Explanatory Writing Standard W.7.2

Grade 7 Informative/Explanatory

W.7.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting, graphics and multimedia when useful in aiding comprehension
- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples
- c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented

The Reading/Thinking/Writing Task

Students were given several texts to read about the Room to Read Project, an effort dedicated to bringing libraries to underserved students in developing countries. The students read the texts independently, then worked with the Focusing Question “*What impact does the Room to Read program seem to have made on people’s lives?*”

This is a question that requires inferential, cause-and-effect thinking and analysis of the texts, as well as synthesis in bringing evidence from multiple texts into a single well-focused and well-developed essay.

Focus of the Writing Task

What impact does the Room to Read program seem to have made on people’s lives?

The Writing Task in the Curriculum

How is it embedded in curriculum/content?

- ★ *Class: 7th / 8th grade integrated ELA / social studies curriculum*
 - focus on global studies
- ★ *Curriculum unit*
 - students study various historical and current issues
 - emphasis on “cause-and-effect” thinking – students will learn how to understand causal relationships within events
- ★ *Standards*
 - History (C3 Framework): D2.Hist.14.6-8
 - Reading: RI.7.1, RI.7.3, RI.7.10
 - Writing: W.7.2, W.7.9, W.7.10

How did students build the knowledge they needed?

- ★ *Texts*
 - Kristoff, Nicholas. “His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives”. New York Times, December 5, 2011
 - Roomtoread.org. “Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible”. September 30, 2015
 - Roomtoread.org. “Room to Read’s School Libraries Improve Reading Habits.” March 9, 2015
- ★ *Reading and re-reading*
 - teacher read texts aloud while students read along in their heads
 - students re-read texts independently
 - students had done some work with cause-and-effect thinking, but in this case the teacher wanted to see how much they had internalized so she would know what to emphasize in instruction
 - students took notes on texts independently

What instructional approaches were used to teach writing?

- ★ *Craft lessons*
 - students had already worked with expository structures (Painted Essay® in many forms and more) including such elements as introductions, transitions and conclusions.
- ★ *Writing approaches*
 - students were reminded of the elements that make up a strong essay in the directions. They then wrote and proofread independently.

What was the timeframe?

Brief (3-4 class periods)

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Proficient

Helping People Learn to Read

In 1998 John Wood a Microsoft director came upon a school in Nepal. It was a good school, but there was one problem. There were no books in school. John Wood delivered a large amount of books to the school, and so began his adventure. John quit working for Microsoft, and went on to found Room to Read, an organization that helped get books to kids around the world who didn't have them. John Wood opened thousands of libraries around the world in towns that were too poor to build their own, and it affected the education of kids greatly. More kids began to read, and they also got a greater education, because most girls did not bother to go to school either because they wanted to help their family, they could not cross a river, or it was simply too far away.

Room to Read libraries around the world impacted girls lives in poor cities in many ways.

One way that Room to Read impacted the lives of girls in poor countries is how it motivated them to strive for their education. In the article "Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible," a worker at Room to Read named Ruksana motivated girls to strive for their education by organizing "special learning camps for weaker performers, and they provided extra support for harder courses like math and science" (p. 3). This motivated them because they could proceed to learn new or harder things in more branches of education at a learning camp without having to travel so far from their home.

Another way Room to Read impacted the lives of girls in poor countries is when students got a better score. In the article, "Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible," [it says that] "five of the students received a perfect score, and all of the girls went on to 11th grade" (p. 3). This impacted them because it gave them the confidence to move on and get a good career, and get much more money to pay for things they need, instead of having to live in a dirt floored hut with bad food.

A third way that Room to Read has impacted the lives of girls in poorer countries is how they opened the libraries. "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives" says that "Woods charity, Room to Read, has opened 12,000 libraries around the world, along with 1500 schools." This impacted the girls in these countries because more girls could read in the libraries and at

home, which helped them learn more than if they still had nothing to use or read, and since more schools were opened, more girls had access to a good education closer to their home.

John Woods libraries helped millions of girls around the world have a better education and a better life. John Wood opened thousands of libraries for girls in poor countries who needed them for a good education. His idea of Room to Read and his building of it helped many people in many ways. We can see how Room to Read made an impact on people's lives.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Approaching

No piece available at this level.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Beginning

The Book Club

A organization from who helps girls from Bangladesh so they can get through school. Many of the girls in Bangladesh either don't go to school if they did not pass the test to get into eleventh grade. The girls who couldn't walk to school or pass the river during the rainy season. This organization started in 1998 with John Woods and he called it Room to Read. This program was for girls so they can do better in school. But he also built libraries with only one room so the kids can read more and do better in school and get into eleventh grade. The Room to Read program also required if and how much better the girls were doing in school. This all came as positive data, the girls were getting much better in school and all were passing into the eleventh grade. But some days the girls couldn't get to school because the rain was making the river to run off. To get through the Room to Read got a very big boat to bring all the students to school. The girls loved this program. [It] made them feel like they could get a job for themselves. The program gave lots of confidence to all the girls that went through it.

In this paper I will be talking about 2 out of 3 articles where the Room to Read help girls through what they think is impossible to get through school and get a job for themselves. All the girls were very happy when they were asked to be part of the program.

In the article "Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible" a woman named Ruksana Sultana was the program director in Bangladesh and wanted the girls to get an education for themselves. Girls were scared to walk to school because child marriages were legal so they could marry off their kids to anyone. This program helped them stay in school and it reduced child marriages by a lot while the girls were in school. This really helped the girls stay in school then graduate from high school. This made the girls have hope that they can do whatever they wanted to do when they are older like be a teacher a data entry person or could be part of the military and they could do whatever they wanted to do. The director of the program in Bangladesh talked to many of the parents of the students who didn't want to walk and bike then cross the river to get to school. Ruksana Sultana the director told the parents that the program would pay for the tuition and they would pay for the school dress code clothes and other fees that you need to stay in school.

The last article that I will be talking about is “His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives.” In this article John Woods gives out his 10,000,000 book at a library. John Woods is the founder of the Room to Read program. John Woods makes libraries that are one room and his goal is to get 10,000 libraries so the kids could read more. He’s made 12,000 libraries so far and opened 1,500 schools. Many kids [are] happy that he made a libraries in their town or village so they they could read. Kids say that there reading skills and fluency has gotten better while the libraries were put up. John Woods mentioned to some of the parents that Kim Kardashian’s wedding costed \$10,000.000 and that McDonalds opens a new outlet every 1.08 days. John Woods does not like how they could spend the money on founding a school for the kids. John Woods also does not like that \$1,000,000,000 or more goes to military like paying for missiles when they could be spending more money on school. As he says, “The more money we spend on schools today, the less we’ll have to spend on missiles tomorrow.”

John Woods and Ruksana Sultana both think that education is very important for kids. John thinks building libraries will help kids a lot. Ruksana Sultana thinks that girls in Bangladesh need more education and a safer way to get to school. Both of them are very right. What they have done for all of the kids will help them a lot in the future.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Exceeds

The Room to Read Foundation

John Wood founded an organization to provide underprivileged children with books called the Room to Read foundation. In the foundation they give out free books and try to further the educations of all children. There are many different locations for this foundation and they all focus on different issues. There are even branches for just girls who don't get an education in Bangladesh. The Room to Read program has impacts on children all over Africa, and Asia. Two of the largest impacts are on the mindsets of children, and on the children's education in general.

One great impact on children is their mindsets. In the article, "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives," by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells about John Wood and why he founded this organization. An example of when he changes the mindsets of children in this article is when John is handing out his ten-millionth book. The author of the article went on to see this great accomplishment, and found that the children were cheering and embracing the books that John provided, as if they were treasures. This is changing the mindset of these children by giving them hope for a better education. The children might not have even thought of going to school or reading before, but when they were introduced to the pleasure of reading without a cost to them or their families it gave the children hope for an education. Another example of when the foundation impacted children's mindsets was when a girl who had once thought that her education wasn't important, admitted that she now wanted to go to university. In the article, "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives," by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells also about when the author went to meet a girl whose mindset was affected by the program greatly. Her name was Le Thi My Duyen. She was in the tenth grade at the time, she discussed how she had dropped out of school in seventh grade, and how she is now in tenth grade. She shyly admits to the author that she would like to go to university someday, which is a great change from not thinking that her education was important enough for her to continue school. One great impact on children that the foundation has is on their mindsets.

Another great impact that the Room to Read foundation had on children was on their overall education. In the article "Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible," it tells about the branch of the organization that helps girls in Bangladesh get a

better education. An example from this article of the impact of the foundation on children, is when they travel to the Char islands, one of the most rural places in Bangladesh. Before they started the program in Char, they could not find a single girl who had passed the Secondary School Certificate exam, which means that none of them were able to pass to the eleventh grade. After some of the girls went to learning camps, all of the girls they chose had passed their Secondary School Certificate exam, and five of them had finished not with the country wide pass rate of ninety-one-percent, but with perfect scores! In the article, “His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives” by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells about how they got Le Thi My Duyen to the point where she could fulfill her education. She had dropped out of school before because she felt that her education was not important, and that her family would be better off without having to pay for her education. The foundation thought very much otherwise and journeyed to her family’s tent and offered to pay for Le Thi My Duyen’s enrollment fees, uniform costs, and even offered her a spot in a dormitory so she wouldn’t have to trek to and from school every day. Another great impact that the Room to Read foundation had on children was their overall education.

The Room to Read foundation has been helping children have access to books and get a better education for many years. They have many different areas of work to reach children of all walks of life in need. They work long and hard to provide children with what they need for an education. The Room to Read program has impacts on children all over Africa, and Asia. Two of the biggest impacts are on the mindsets of children, and on the children’s education in general.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Proficient

Helping People Learn to Read

In 1998 John Wood a Microsoft director came upon a school in Nepal. It was a good school, but there was one problem. There were no books in school. John Wood delivered a large amount of books to the school, and so began his adventure. John quit working for Microsoft, and went on to found Room to Read, an organization that helped get books to kids around the world who didn't have them. John Wood opened thousands of libraries around the world in towns that were too poor to build their own, and it affected the education of kids greatly. More kids began to read, and they also got a greater education, because most girls did not bother to go to school either because they wanted to help their family, they could not cross a river, or it was simply too far away.

Room to Read libraries around the world impacted girls lives in poor cities in many ways.

One way that Room to Read impacted the lives of girls in poor countries is how it motivated them to strive for their education. In the article "Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible," a worker at Room to Read named Ruksana motivated girls to strive for their education by organizing "special learning camps for weaker performers, and they provided extra support for harder courses like math and science" (p. 3). This motivated them because they could proceed to learn new or harder things in more branches of education at a learning camp without having to travel so far from their home.

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Introduces the topic clearly: the writer gives appropriate context which summarizes the issue/topic for a reader.

The writer **previews what is to follow** by stating a main idea/focus that responds directly and appropriately to the thinking required by the prompt

Organizes ideas and information using categories: the writer organizes by type of impact, within an overall cause-effect structure.

Develops topic with appropriate, relevant facts and concrete details in evidence from the text to inform about the topic (the impact of Room to Read)

on to 11th grade” (p. 3). This impacted them because it gave them the confidence to move on and get a good career, and get much more money to pay for things they need, instead of having to live in a dirt floored hut with bad food.

Provides analysis of relevant content; uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to do so: the writer explains/analyzes the evidence in terms of the impact (focus of the essay).

A third way that Room to Read has impacted the lives of girls in poorer countries is how they opened the libraries. “His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives” says that “Woods charity, Room to Read, has opened 12,000 libraries around the world, along with 1500 schools.” This impacted the girls in these countries because more girls could read in the libraries and at home, which helped them learn more than if they still had nothing to use or read, and since more schools were opened, more girls had access to a good education closer to their home.

Uses appropriate, varied transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts: the writer connects ideas both between and within paragraphs.

John Woods libraries helped millions of girls around the world have a better education and a better life. John Wood opened thousands of libraries for girls in poor countries who needed them for a good education. His idea of Room to Read and his building of it helped many people in many ways. We can see how Room to Read made an impact on people’s lives.

Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information presented

Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style

Final Thoughts
(Gr 7 Informative: Proficient)

Overall, this essay shows solid understanding of the topic, the impact of the Room to Read program on the lives of girls. The writer responds to the prompt (“*What is the impact of the Room to Read program on girls?*”) with a clear and specific focus/thesis statement. The writer sticks consistently to that focus, supplying and synthesizing evidence from the texts he has read about that impact.

In addition, the writer analyzes the evidence, at an appropriate 7th grade level, in terms of the impact of Room to Read. All of this thinking is done within a clear structure, including clear transitions, that makes the thinking well-connected and easy for the reader to follow.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 7 Informative: Proficient)

Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Approaching

No piece available at this level.

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Beginning

The Book Club

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Introduces the topic: the writer gives some appropriate context which summarizes the issue/topic for a reader. However, the writer also gives some detail that, while accurate, is not needed for summary-level understanding.

Begins to develop topic with appropriate, relevant facts and concrete details, attempting to use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary in evidence from the text to inform about the topic (the impact of Room to Read)

However, the writer also includes irrelevant evidence (about Ruksana) – accurate from text, but not relevant to this “impact” question.

The writer attempts to **preview what is to follow** by stating a main idea/focus that responds to the prompt. However, that focus does not respond directly to the prompt; instead, it shows some misunderstanding of the “impact” thinking that the prompt asks for.

Organizes ideas and information: the writer organizes by article, not categories of impact.

a lot while the girls were in school. This really helped the girls stay in school then graduate from high school. This made the girls have hope that they can do whatever they wanted to do when they are older like be a teacher a data entry person or could be part of the military and they could do whatever they wanted to do. The director of the program in Bangladesh talked to many of the parents of the students who didn't want to walk and bike then cross the river to get to school. Ruksana Sultana the director told the parents that the program would pay for the tuition and they would pay for the school dress code clothes and other fees that you need to stay in school.

Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style

The writer attempts to use **transitions to clarify relationships among ideas**, but has lost track of the "impact of Room to Read" focus, so transitions are less helpful.

The last article that I will be talking about is "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives." In this article John Woods gives out his 10,000,000 book at a library. John Woods is the founder of the Room to Read program. John Woods makes libraries that are one room and his goal is to get 10,000 libraries so the kids could read more. He's made 12,000 libraries so far and opened 1,500 schools. Many kids [are] happy that he made a libraries in their town or village so they could read. Kids say that there reading skills and fluency has gotten better while the libraries were put up. John Woods mentioned to some of the parents that Kim Kardashian's wedding costed \$10,000.000 and that McDonalds opens a new outlet every 1.08 days. John Woods does not like how they could spend the money on founding a school for the kids. John Woods also does not like that \$1,000,000,000 or more goes to military like paying for missiles when they could be spending more money on school. As he says, "The more money we spend on schools today, the less we'll have to spend on missiles tomorrow."

Here, the writer appears to lose track of the "impact of Room to Read" focus. Instead, the essay becomes a summary of one of the articles. While the writer does include some evidence about the impact and attempts to use **precise language and domain-specific vocabulary** (*many kids are happy and kids say there reading skills and fluency have gotten better*), this paragraph overall is a summary of John Woods' work in creating the Room to Read program, including an interesting but irrelevant detail about Kim Kardashian's wedding.

John Woods and Ruksana Sultana both think that education is very important for kids. John thinks building libraries will help kids a lot. Ruksana Sultana thinks that girls in Bangladesh need more education and a safer way to get to school. Both of them are very right. What they havedone for all of the kids will help them a lot in the futur

The writer attempts to **provide a concluding section that follows from and supports the information presented**. However, the writer has lost track of the focus (the impact of Room to Read) and instead references the two key players in the texts.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 7 Informative: Beginning)

Overall, this piece shows some understanding of the general topic, the Room to Read program described in the texts. However, the writer shows only partial understanding of the *impact* of the Room to Read program on the lives of girls (the cause-effect thinking that the prompt is asking for). The writer works inconsistently with that focus, supplying and synthesizing evidence from the texts he has read about that impact in one part of the essay, but then losing track of that in the rest of the essay.

This loss of focus affects the proficiency of the entire essay. Structurally, for example, the essay is clear: the writer has an introduction, thesis/focus statement, evidence from the text, and a conclusion. In addition, the writer does some analysis of the evidence (“this made the girls have hope”), in terms of the impact of Room to Read.

However, the loss of focus (the impact of the Room to Read program) makes this structural control and some bit of analysis less useful to the overall level of the essay.

The writer would benefit from help with articulating the Focusing Question itself and its focus/answer, then selecting only those details/evidence that develops that focus.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 7 Informative: Beginning)

Partial Control of Conventions: Although the writer has some control over language and conventions, the student could benefit from instruction in the following skills:

- sentence structure
- consistent verb tense

Standard W.7.2
Grade 7
Exceeds

The Room to Read Foundation

John Wood founded an organization to provide underprivileged children with books called the Room to Read foundation. In the foundation they give out free books and try to further the educations of all children. There are many different locations for this foundation and they all focus on different issues. There are even branches for just girls who don't get an education in Bangladesh. The Room to Read program has impacts on children all over Africa, and Asia. Two of the largest impacts are on the mindsets of children, and on the children's education in general.

One great impact on children is their mindsets. In the article, "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives," by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells about John Wood and why he founded this organization. An example of when he changes the mindsets of children in this article is when John is handing out his ten-millionth book. The author of the article went on to see this great accomplishment, and found that the children were cheering and embracing the books that John provided, as if they were treasures. This is changing the mindset of these children by giving them hope for a better education. The children might not have even thought of going to school or reading before, but when they were introduced to the pleasure of reading without a cost to them or their families it gave the children hope for an education. Another example of when the foundation impacted children's mindsets was when a girl who had once thought that her education wasn't important, admitted that she now wanted to go to university. In the article, "His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives," by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells also about when the author went to meet a girl whose mindset was affected by the program greatly. Her name was Le Thi My Duyen. She was in the tenth grade at

Introduces the topic clearly: the writer gives appropriate context which summarizes the issue/topic for a reader.

The writer **previews what is to follow** by stating a main idea/focus that responds directly and insightfully to the thinking required by the prompt.

Organizes ideas and information using categories: the writer organizes by type of impact, within an overall cause-effect structure.

Develops topic in depth with appropriate, relevant facts and concrete details, uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary in evidence

Provides thoughtful analysis of relevant content; uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to do so: the writer analyzes the evidence in terms of the impact (focus of the essay).

the time, she discussed how she had dropped out of school in seventh grade, and how she is now in tenth grade. She shyly admits to the author that she would like to go to university someday, which is a great change from not thinking that her education was important enough for her to continue school. One great impact on children that the foundation has is on their mindsets.

Another great impact that the Room to Read foundation had on children was on their overall education. In the article “Helping Some of the Most Vulnerable Girls in Bangladesh Do the Impossible,” it tells about the branch of the organization that helps girls in Bangladesh get a better education. An example from this article of the impact of the foundation on children, is when they travel to the Char islands, one of the most rural places in Bangladesh. Before they started the program in Char, they could not find a single girl who had passed the Secondary School Certificate exam, which means that none of them were able to pass to the eleventh grade. After some of the girls went to learning camps, all of the girls they chose had passed their Secondary School Certificate exam, and five of them had finished not with the country wide pass rate of ninety-one-percent, but with perfect scores! In the article, “His Libraries, 12,000 So Far, Change Lives” by Nicholas D. Kristoff, it tells about how they got Le Thi My Duyen to the point where she could fulfill her education. She had dropped out of school before because she felt that her education was not important, and that her family would be better off without having to pay for her education. The foundation thought very much otherwise and journeyed to her family’s tent and offered to pay for Le Thi My Duyen’s enrollment fees, uniform costs, and even offered her a spot in a dormitory so she wouldn’t have to trek to and from school every day. Another great impact that the Room to Read foundation had on children was their overall education.

The Room to Read foundation has been helping children have access to books and get a better education for many years. They have

Uses appropriate, varied transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts: the writer connects ideas both between and within paragraphs.

Develops topic in depth with appropriate, relevant facts and concrete details, uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary in evidence; provides thoughtful analysis of evidence about impact of Room to Read

Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style

Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information presented

many different areas of work to reach children of all walks of life in need. They work long and hard to provide children with what they need for an education. The Room to Read program has impacts on children all over Africa, and Asia. Two of the biggest impacts are on the mindsets of children, and on the children's education in general.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 7 Informative: Exceeds)

Overall, this piece exceeds proficiency for 7th grade. The writer shows solid understanding of the content, the impact of the Room to Read program on girls. The writer responds to the prompt (“*What is the impact of the Room to Read program on girls?*”) with a clear and specific focus/thesis statement. The writer sticks consistently to that focus, supplying and synthesizing evidence from the texts he has read about that impact.

The writer also analyzes the evidence in terms of the impact of Room to Read. All of this thinking is done within a clear structure that makes the thinking easy for the reader to follow.

In addition, the essay exceeds the standard in several ways. First, the writer builds her essay around a particularly insightful focus for 7th grade, the “mindset of children.” In addition, the evidence she supplies is carefully chosen to develop her thesis/focus, and is both supplied and analyzed in unusual depth for independent work at this grade level.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 7 Informative: Exceeds)

Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.