ISTEP+
Grade 4 Writing

Lionfish

Practice Set 1
Directions
Read the article “Beware of This Fish!” Then answer the questions.

Beware of This Fish!

Hunters in the Deep
1 Deep in the ocean, a fierce predator swims and hunts. It’s not a huge shark or a scary squid. It’s a striped fish that’s only about the size of a dinner plate. It’s called a lionfish, and it’s causing big problems for its ocean habitat.

Lionfish Invasion
2 Lionfish are an invasive species. Invasive species are plants or animals that live where they don’t belong and harm the habitat.

3 Right now, many lionfish are in the ocean near the United States. But lionfish are native to oceans far from our country. That means they normally live in faraway oceans. How did they get here?

4 No one knows for sure. But some scientists think that people in the U.S. kept lionfish as pets. When the people got tired of the lionfish, they put them in the ocean. Over time, the lionfish started to take over the habitat!
**Unstoppable Lionfish**

Lionfish eat more than 70 different kinds of ocean animals. And lionfish keep eating, even when they’re full.

Not many animals are able to hunt and eat lionfish. Lionfish have sharp spikes. When an animal touches a spike, the spike lets out venom, which is a poison that can hurt or even kill.

Lionfish also have a lot of babies. A female lionfish can lay 2 million eggs in a year!

All of this is bad news for the habitat. Lionfish eat so much that not much food is left for the other animals. And since other animals can’t eat them, the number of lionfish keeps growing.

**Living with Lionfish**

Scientists don’t think it’s possible to get rid of all the invasive lionfish. There are too many, and they swim in deep water, where it’s hard to get them.

Some places hold contests to see who can catch the most lionfish. If the lionfish are cleaned and their spikes are removed, people can eat them! In other places, people train sharks to eat the lionfish. Lionfish venom doesn’t harm sharks like it harms other animals.

Scientists are also trying to teach people how to stop problems like this before they start. People should not release their pets into the wild. It’s best to keep animals in the habitats where they belong!
You have read an article about the problem of an invasive fish species. Using details from “Beware of This Fish!,” write a persuasive article for the school newspaper explaining to students who have pet lionfish why they should not release them into the wild.

Be sure to include

- details from the article to explain why lionfish should not be released into the wild
- descriptions of some of the ways that invasive species cause problems
- an introduction, a body, and a conclusion to your article

*Use the following Prewriting/Planning page to help you plan your writing. Then write your final draft on the lined pages.*
“Bye Mom see you when I get home.” I said as I left the house on a fine Sunday morning. “Be careful!” My mom said as I disappeared into the fog. I was on my way to the toy store a couple blocks down the street. I was going to buy the newest model of a Ford remote control monster truck.

Just as I came out of the toy store I stepped on a sheet of newspaper. The headline read, “Invasive Species.” Then I picked it up and saw a picture of a lionfish. I lived in Fort Myers, Florida and out of Pythons, Nutria, and snails they’re worried about lionfish. I took the newspaper home to read more. When I was on my way home I saw an upside-down box turtle and took it home too. When I got home I showed the newspaper to my parents. My dad walked into the room. “Ah, I see you’ve seen the news.”

“Yes, and I’m not impressed. A fish,
"I yelled, "There are pythons out there!" "The lionfish are very dangerous. Do you see those snakes, they are poisonous and very dangerous."

"My dad said, The next day I took the news to school and showed the principal. He told me to copy the paper and put them in the school news boxes. My teacher made us do a writing and read mine to the class."

"If you have a pet lionfish and don't want it, give it to a zoo, not an ocean."

Writing - 6 pts The response stays fully focused and has a unique perspective in that the main character presents an idea where he finds a newspaper article about lionfish, further using dialogue well to enhance the paper. There is a clear order, with a beginning, middle, and end along with logical progression including thorough and complete ideas. It has exceptional word usage with dynamic vocabulary and vivid descriptions (disappeared into the fog, ford remote control monster truck, upsidedown box turtle). It exhibits a writing that is fluent and easy to read along with displaying a strong sense of audience.

Language Conventions - 4 pts While there are some errors, they do not impair the flow of communication and are of a first draft variety.
Don't Let Them Go!

Do you own a lionfish? Well, if you do don't let them into the ocean! Here are some reasons why.

Lionfish are an invasive species. None of the animals in the ocean can hunt them except for sharks. The reason why animals can't hunt the lionfish down is because they have sharp spikes that let out venom. The venom can hurt or even worse, kill an animal! People who own a pet lionfish usually get bored, or don't want to own them any more, so they let their lionfish into the ocean. Lionfish are very dangerous.

Do you know what you are doing if you let them go? The lionfish will keep eating even though they're full! Scientists don't want lionfish in the ocean, but lionfish can lay up to 2 million eggs in a year! Lionfish can eat more than 70 different kinds of ocean animals. When you let a lionfish go, over time the lionfish starts to take over the habitat. Lionfish eat so much food, that other animals have nothing to eat, so they can't survive.

Scientists don't think it's possible to get rid of the invasive creatures. They live deep underwater, where it's hard to reach. Some people are training sharks to eat the lionfish. Some hold
contests to see how many lionfish they can catch. Sometimes the lionfish are clean and they get their spines removed. After that, some people like to eat them.

So, if you own a lionfish and you don’t want it anymore, here are some tips. Give or donate them to a pet store. Give it to a friend, or someone who wants to keep a lionfish. Don’t forget to remind them to not dump the fish in the ocean. These are the reasons and tips to tell you about the lionfish. Don’t let them go.

**Writing - 5 pts**
The response includes many details from the passage to persuade the reader as to the threat posed and possible solutions. The response introduces alternative methods of dealing with lionfish in the conclusion without thoroughly developing these ideas. There is clear order with a beginning, middle, and end. The writing is fluent and easy to read along with providing a sense of audience (if you own a lionfish and you don’t want it anymore, here are some tips).

**Language Conventions - 4 pts**
While there are some errors, they do not impair the flow of communication.
Do you have a lionfish? If you do I wouldn't release it into the ocean. You shouldn't release it into the ocean because it could hurt other animals. It could hurt the other animals by putting poison in them. That would be very bad. That's why I don't have a lionfish.

It could hurt them with their spikes. This even could hurt people. It could hurt the people by the lionfish killing the animals that affects the people because what will the people eat? The fish swim around the United States. Which means that it can getdangerous. If you don't want the lionfish anymore, take them to a wet or to a zoo. I would take them there so that they could meet other lionfish. I would take them to a wet because someone else could have a lionfish. I would take them to the zoo because they could have company. Either place they still (Handwritten notes and corrections may be present in the document. Not all lines are legible due to handwriting style and possible errors in transcription.)
They would be happy then. Some people eat lionfish. All you have to do is step 1 clean the fish. Step 2 take out the poison and spicier. Step 3 cook them. So that's how people eat lionfish. If I were you I wouldn't eat a lionfish. Did you know that all Burmese Python and Nutria and Giant African Snail and lionfish have something in common. They eat a living thing. The Burmese Python eats animals. The Nutria eats animals and plants. The Giant African Snail eats animals too.

**Writing - 4 pts** The response is mostly focused with a minor tangent about the Burmese Python, Nutria and Giant African Snail. The student includes relevant ideas and information as well as solutions for handling the disposal of lionfish. The response has a sequence which includes a clear beginning but lacks a conclusion. The student uses ordinary/common words and displays a sense of audience (Take them to the zoo. I would take them there . . . I would take them to a vet).

**Language Conventions - 4 pts** There are no errors that impair the flow of communication.
Daily news for LME

Lion Fish Eat Too Much

Today I'm going to talk about a pressing matter, releasing lion fish into the ocean. Don't ever release lion fish into the ocean, because they eat almost every sea creature! They also are very hard to kill, because only sharks eat lion fish, but they need to be trained to eat lion fish. This leaves many people having to dive down and catch them themselves!

Lion fish also won't die out, because women give birth to 2 million fish a year! So that means in 10 years there will be 20 million more lion fish from 1 fish! They are hard to eat because they have big spikes that eject poison that only a shark can't get sick from!

Many animals harm other animals, though, like the Nutria...
Burmese Python, and the Giant African snail. They all have bad eating habits. Even though the lion fish does look beautiful, it does a lot of harm.

**Writing - 4 pts** The response stays mostly focused on the topic as to why students who have pet lionfish should not release them into the wild until the latter paragraph where other invasive species are introduced. The response develops why lionfish are so dangerous as an invasive species with supporting details. The response has order with a strong introduction (Today I'm going to talk about a pressing matter, releasing lion fish into the ocean, because they eat almost every sea creature!), but the conclusion is weak. The writing exhibits mostly adequate word usage along with mostly ordinary/common words.

**Language Conventions - 4 pts** While there are some errors, they do not impair the flow of communication.
Don't release pets

Ok imagine this, you live in Florida, you release a python their population goes up and it causes animals to get endangered how would you feel. You're pet could kill out an animal species.

So don't release your pet if you do think about this how did the Florida everglades get invaded by python how did the united states get invaded by lionfish.

The lionfish invasion killed a lot of death to fish, Lion fish have an eating habit, they eat and eat teg even eat when their full. And they can't be eaten “when alive” whether spikes are touched the release a venom that could either kill or harm.

Scientist train sharks to eat the lion fish because a shark isn't affected by their venom as much as other
The Burmese python invaded Florida, the giant African snail did to the giant african snail eats plants that we grow to eat.

Writing - 3 pts
The response stays minimally focused with some relevant ideas. It has some order with a beginning and middle, however the conclusion is missing. Word use is simple and there is some attempt to write for an audience (imagine this, you live in Florida... release a python... it causes animals to get endangered how would you feel).

Language Conventions - 3 pts
The response contains occasional errors, mostly spelling and run on sentences, but these errors do not obscure the meaning of the response.
Dear students, we would like to inform you of something. If you are keeping a lionfish as a pet, do not release it into the wild. If you are wondering why, we will tell you a few facts about the lionfish. 

#1, they are invasive species. Invasive species are plants and animals that live where they don't belong and harm the habitat.

#2, females can lay up to two million eggs per year.

#3, they are hard to kill, so if you are thinking why would someone kill a fish for no reason, because they lay eggs and there are tons of them.

#4, they eat up to 70 different ocean animals, and they will keep eating, even when they're full.

#5, they swim in deep water, so they are hard to kill.

#6, sharp spikes have venom, and when a fish tackles it, the venom will come out and can hurt the other fish, and in some cases, killed.

#7, lionfish may be small, but they are mighty. Students, we hope you have learned
not to release lionfish into the wild, because if you do, they could destroy the habitat.

Writing - 3 pts: The response stays minimally focused with relevant ideas that are written more as an organized list. It has some order with a beginning, middle, and end. Anchor A-4 is also a list without the order present in this response (#1 . . . #2 . . . #3). Word use is simple and there is some attempt to write for an audience (Dear students, we would like to inform of something).

Language Conventions - 3 pts: The response contains occasional errors, mostly spelling and run on sentences, but this does not obscure the meaning of the response.
The lionfish is a poision fish. Not many animals are able to hurt and eat. The female lionfish can lay 2 million eggs a year, but since they poison and other fish can not eat them because lionfish have sharp spikes when a animal touches its spiket it test outa venom which can hurt or even kill but there is one fish that can eak the lionfish do not hurt the. Gark cool huh!

Writing - 2 pts
The response stays less than minimally focused with few relevant ideas (The lionfish is a poison fish) and (lionfish have sharp spikes). There is no clear beginning, middle, or end. The writing exhibits less than minimal word usage containing ordinary/common words with little sense of audience (cool huh?!).

Language Conventions - 2 pts
The response has frequent errors across all areas of conventions, but the errors do not obscure the meaning of the response.
Attention to everybody who is reading this, if you have a pet lionfish and you don't want it, don't you dare through it in the ocean. Did you know lionfish are very mean and dangerous. If you touch their spikes you can get hurt or even be killed! They eat over 70 different types of ocean animals! That's a lot. They also ruin other animals habitats. We are training sharks to eat them. So please do not put lionfish in the ocean.

**Writing - 2 pts**

The response stays less than minimally focused with few relevant ideas. It has minimal order with beginning, middle, and end. The writing exhibits less than minimal word usage containing ordinary/common words with some sense of audience (Attention to everybody who is reading this) and (Did you know lionfish are very mean and dangerous?).

**Language Conventions - 2 pts**

The response has frequent errors, but these do not completely obscure the meaning of the response.
One day Cameron was going to dump lionfish. Over time, the effort went swimming to clean fish.

**Writing - 1 pt** The response is too brief to establish or maintain focus (going to Dump a lionfish), to show organization or style.

**Language Conventions - 1 pt** Errors are in multiple categories causing the reader to struggle to discern the writer’s meaning.
Lionfish are poisonous
they smell like
musk and
spit. You
have a lionfish
don't ries
it, heks. It
kond her
tother.