**Unit: Writing Personal Narrative with Power**
**Grade: 5**
**Task: Student Work Sample**
**Title: In Cold Blood**

*The following student artifact has been retyped; please see a copy of the original student work at the end of this document. Comments about student work can be found in the box on the right.*

## In Cold Blood

"THUMP, THUMP, THUMP!" exclaimed the creaky floor. "THUMP, THUMP!" it repeated as more footsteps were made. It was a cold cloudy day in Jackson, MI at 5th grade nature center. Being a chatterbox, I instantly started talking to my friend, Nikki about how nervous I was. "What if I mess up?" I worried aloud. "Don't worry. It'll be completely fine!" she assured me as we entered the classroom.

"Hi guys! My name is Kate!" said the instructor. "Today's class is called 'In Cold Blood', and we are going to learn about nature's cold blooded animals." The class was actually very interesting. Kate taught us things that I had never learned before. While I was listening to Kate, part of my attention zeroed in on the row of boxes sitting on the floor. She started to open the first box and I immediately knew what the boxes held. They held the cold blooded animals! We were introduced to box turtles, tree frogs, and my favorite, Vladimir the Russian tortoise. When we were given the opportunity to hold the animals, I started wondering which one I would hold first. But my curiosity shattered when I looked at the box of snakes. I know I promised myself I would hold a snake, but now I wondered if I had the guts to do it!

Our travel group split up into groups to different stations. I held and enjoyed the frogs, turtles, and lizards but I still had one

station left and that's where the snakes were. A shiver zoomed up and down my spine like a crazy race car driver as I reached into the box to pick up Wilson, the python. I finally relaxed as the snake settled into my hands. My faint grin turned into a mega-huge smile, and I started to chuckle. I couldn't believe it! Here I was, with a snake in my hands and I was completely fine! I loved holding Wilson. The snakes luster scales were hard, yet smooth, and it was lazily chilling in my hands. He looked like he thought my hands were some kind of lazi-boy sofa! I was disappointed to leave the snakes. Wilson was friendly and special and he as the first snake I've ever held. He helped me relieve my fears and become even braver.

The class had sadly come to an end, and I left the nature center trying to hold on to my 'mega smile' feeling. I was sad, but also happy. I had fun, and I had reached a few goals. I still am surprised by my bravery, and yes, I can't wait for another opportunity like this one. I learned that overcoming your fears isn't the easiest, but you'll thank yourself later on.