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My favorite season of the year is autumn. I love being outside in the not-too-cold, not-too-warm air with a gentle breeze that makes my hair sway in time with the blazing tree limbs. I love to watch leaves dance in the air then slowly flutter to the ground. Autumn is cool weather and vibrant trees. It is back-to-school time and the Fall Fun Fest. It is the school play and football season. Autumn is my favorite.

When most teenagers think about fall, they think about going back to school. They shudder at the thought of leaving summer fun behind and re-entering the world of academia. I, however, am not like most teenagers. When summer comes to a close and school begins, I feel a great sense of excitement for what the new year will bring. Autumn means that I will get to see friends I may not have seen all summer. That, to me, makes the fall very special and I always look forward to it.

Another exciting part of autumn is the Fall Fun Fest. Every year, our town puts together a big parade and a festival. There are booths, little shops that sell everything you could imagine, and tons of food. You can smell the festival from a mile away—kettle corn, hamburgers, and cotton candy fill the air with their distinguishable odors.

A really enjoyable part about autumn is our school's fall play. The theater department puts on a production every October, and I love being involved. Whether I'm on crew or on stage, I look forward to this part of autumn because it gives me a chance to be with all my friends and to participate in putting on a great show for the audience.

Autumn is the time for our high school football team to shine. Hundreds of students fill the bleachers on Friday nights to support the boys on the team. It's so much fun to dress in purple and gold and join the sea of people wearing the same colors. Loud shouts rise from the crowd when the team scores a touchdown and at half-time the marching band puts on a show. It's an exciting part of autumn and the whole high school experience.

From simple things like the cool, comfortable weather to loud football games and the school play, it is no question why autumn is my favorite season. Autumn is known best for its bright colors and crunchy leaves, and it's these things and more that make me love autumn best of all.

Organization/Purpose: Score 4

- The controlling idea is clearly stated in the introduction and is reiterated in the conclusion: “cool, comfortable weather,” “blazing tree limbs” and “bright colors,” football games.
- Transitional strategies such as adverbs and prepositions (“when,” “another,” “from”) link one paragraph to the next; key phrases are repeated to emphasize the central idea (“cool weather,” “bright colors”)
- Ideas progress logically: early fall festival to fall play to football games.

Evidence/Elaboration: Score 4

- Support for the main idea is integrated effectively: seeing friends at school; smells associated with the Fall Fun Fest; students dressed in purple and gold; a marching band playing.
- Vocabulary is appropriate for the purpose of revealing the special traits of a season: visual and olfactory imagery works well (odors of “kettle corn” and “hamburgers”; “blazing tree limbs”; “purple and gold”; “crunchy leaves”).
- Multiple elaborative techniques are used: personal anecdotes; descriptive language; specific examples.

Conventions: Score 2

- Consistently correct sentence formation.
- Few errors in punctuation, grammar, usage, spelling