

BC Performance Standards

Grade 5 Writing

Additional Samples

The BC performance standards for Grade 5 writing consist of rating scales that describe student achievement in March-April of a given year and samples illustrating typical tasks and student work at all four levels described in the rating scales.

The additional sample tasks for Grade 5 writing included here generally show two examples of student work for each task:

- one that meets expectations at a minimal level
- one that fully meets expectations

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Grade 5: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Sample 1: Personal Connections to a Story

Context

The teacher in this class emphasized the importance of making personal connections to selections students read and heard, and information they learned about. Students had learned several strategies for generating connections, including webs, charts, Venn diagrams, and prompts (e.g., “This story reminded me of the time . . . because . . .”). The teacher had recently presented mini-lessons on using consistent verb tenses and on including a variety of sentences.

Process

Students read a story about a boy who found that there were some advantages to being accidentally locked in his house. They worked in small groups to create story maps, outlining key elements of the story. They then shared their maps as a class.

Students were asked to think about personal connections: experiences or feelings in their own lives that were similar to the story in some way. The class discussed some possibilities; then students wrote independently about their own connections. The teacher reminded them that their work would be evaluated for:

- making logical connections to the story
- connecting to some of the ideas and feelings (not just the events)
- writing clear, varied sentences
- organizing their ideas in a logical way
- complete sentences and correct spelling

The teacher explained that this was a personal response, so:

- they would not be asked to make a “good” copy

- their ideas would be the most important element of their writing
- they should check their writing over to make sure it makes sense and is written in complete sentences, with correct punctuation and spelling

Note: This was an integrated reading and writing activity. Only the analysis for writing is presented here.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This response makes a personal connection to the story, without any analysis.

- offers some relevant ideas
- uses some examples
- relies on simple language; somewhat vague and repetitive
- repeats a few basic sentence structures
- ideas are generally presented in logical sequence
- errors do not interfere with meaning

Locked out



We were just getting out of school. I had everything ready to go home. I got to the skytrain and I hopped on. When I was at the gateway station I just remembered I left my key at school and I said "I can't go back now". So I just went home and sat there until I remembered there is a key at the office. so I went and unlocked the house and did my homework.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This response makes a clear connection to the story and concludes with a “lesson” that shows the student’s analysis of both his own situation and the situation in the story.

- there is a sense of individuality
- gives logical explanations to develop the main ideas
- language is clear and shows some variety
- flows smoothly; varies sentence beginnings and uses a variety of connecting words
- errors do not interfere with meaning

This story reminds me of a similar situation that happened to me:

One day my dad and I came home from school when my dad noticed he left his keys inside.

"Oh no" I groaned. I was worried but I knew he would find away in.

"Don't worry we'll just open a window" my dad explained. So my dad got the ladder and opened the window. Soon after I crawled in the window. Next I stepped on the dresser and accidentally stepped on a colorful ornament and I fell off the dresser. It really hurt.

After that when I got up I unlocked the door. I was so relieved.

That's My story.

I learned that you should expect the unexpected. Also always have away in just incase.

Grade 5: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Sample 2: Response to a Video

Context

Students in this class were frequently asked to respond to written or visual works. The teacher often provided two to four headings or questions to help guide their work.

During recent writing activities, the teacher had emphasized:

- stating views or ideas clearly
- using supporting details, examples, or reasons

Process

Students watched a short video that was set to music, with no dialogue or narration. They were asked to react and respond to the video. The teacher suggested that they tell about their feelings, what happened in the story, and the message the video presented.

Students did not discuss the video before writing their responses. They wrote independently in preparation for small-group discussion. They did not have an opportunity to revise and edit their work beyond a check for surface errors.

Note: This was an integrated viewing and writing activity. Only the analysis for writing is presented here.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This response offers some ideas about the video.

- little analysis or sense of the individuality of the writer
- relies on simple language
- repeats a few basic sentence structures
- ideas are generally presented in logical sequence
- there is a beginning, middle, and end
- errors do not interfere with meaning

The Tournament

I thought the movie was really interesting. It's about a boy who is trying to impress this girl. A boy plays a game of chess with the girl. The girl wins because the boy gives up. Then the crowd claps for the girl.

Afterword 's a ...

The boy picks a rose. Then the girl comes and picks it up. Then the boy blows the girl a kiss.

That's the movie about The Tournament.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This response is clear and offers some insights into the video, although it loses focus in places.

- there is a sense of individuality
- gives logical explanations and examples
- language is clear and shows some variety
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- ideas are generally presented in logical sequence; some abrupt shifts
- errors do not interfere with meaning

First of all I liked this story because it was funny. It was funny when he imagined her as a donkey. I thought it was strange when he imagined her with bananas coming out of her ears. I also liked it because the girl beat the guy at chess because chess is a sort of sport and that means a girl beat a boy at a sport. I am happy that it finally happened in a movie.

What it's about

I think it is about love. What gave me that idea is when he played the harmonica, hearts came out. When he whistled hearts came out and showered her. He gave her a rose when she entered the garden. And at the end he blew her a kiss.

message

I think the message is don't be afraid to express yourself don't bottle your emotions

It's not healthy to keep
your emotions kept inside
you. You shouldn't
keep inside you should
let it fly freely.

Grade 5: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

Sample 1: Letters About a Dress Code

Context

Throughout the year, students had frequent opportunities to share their opinions about school and local issues, as well as issues that arose in the literature they studied. Students often wrote persuasive letters to story characters, advocating a particular course of action.

This activity arose out of discussions among parents and teachers about the possibility of developing a dress code for students.

Process

Students worked in groups to brainstorm reasons for and against instituting a dress code in their school. They then shared their ideas as a class. They talked about what makes a powerful argument and about the strategies that help writers be convincing. Each student wrote a letter to the principal offering an argument for or against a dress code. The class agreed that their letters would demonstrate the following criteria:

- clear, consistent point of view
- arguments well supported with details, examples, and reasons
- logical organization
- interesting language and varied sentences
- complete sentences, with correct spelling and punctuation

Students completed their first drafts independently and then consulted a peer editor before making their final copies.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This letter attempts to put forward some logical arguments, but the supporting reasons are often confusing or irrelevant.

- focused around a clear purpose
- language is clear
- repeats a few basic sentence structures
- ends abruptly, without a conclusion
- most familiar words are spelled correctly (mistakes include: *suposed*, *troble*, *resons*)
- uses commas instead of periods in places

XXX Box XXX
XXXBC XXXXXX

Dear Mr. Robinson,

I feel that children should be able to wear what ever they want to school but it should not be offensive to anybody. Firstly, I think that they ^{should be} able to because what if the clothes that they were suposed to wear to school were dirty, would they get in trouble? I would be very angry if I had to wear a dress all day every day because I hate dress'. Secondly, people should be able to wear whatever ^{and other reasons} they want because of the weather, if it was cold the girls would freeze and if it was hot the boys would sweat and give off an odor. Last of all children should be able to wear what ever they want because people

Should have freedom for their rights. If people didn't
have freedom for their rights lots of people would
be angry and move away.

Sincerely,

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This letter includes some support for each argument presented and ends with a conclusion that summarizes the main points.

- focused around a clear purpose
- includes some specific examples and details
- uses a variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- introduction makes the purpose or task clear
- conclusion sums up the information
- errors do not interfere with meaning

XXXXXX, XXX XX, XXXX

Dear Mr. Robinson,

I don't think students should have to wear special suits to school. Firstly, we have freedom, and a choice of what we like to wear. If you're worried about kids coming to school with inappropriate clothing, I don't know any people in our school that would come to school with their pajamas or bathing suit. Secondly, what if we had to wear a long sleeved shirt and pants in the summer? Or what if we had to wear shorts and a t-shirt in the winter? Students would be very uncomfortable, and that may very easily

interfere with their learning. Finally, if some students had medical needs, and they were wearing clothing that affected them, there would be many complaints and uncomfort. What if someone had a badly scraped knee, and they had to wear pants? Students should be comfortable when they're at school. So, we have a free choice of style, we should wear comfortable clothing wich we can pick and we shouldn't be wearing clothing that affects us in uncomfort or our learning. Please let us (students) wear what we choose.

Sincerely,

Grade 5: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

Sample 2: Pen Pal Letters

Context

The teacher had arranged for students to exchange letters with another class. The two classes planned to meet for a picnic in the spring.

Students had previously learned the format and conventions of a friendly letter.

Process

Students received letters from their pen pals. After reading the letters, they shared their reactions and talked about some of the things that made a pen pal letter special (e.g., you really feel as if the person is interested in you; she or he asks you questions, doesn't just tell you things; the writer tries to add interesting details).

The class worked in groups to brainstorm ideas for their own letters. They recorded their lists on chart paper and shared them with the class. They discussed their letters and agreed that they should be approximately one or two computer-generated pages or two or three hand-written pages long. They also agreed on these criteria:

- include ideas about at least three different topics or experiences (some students wanted to develop one idea in detail; they were allowed to do so)
- make it personal—let your personality come through
- show that you are interested in the person
- use a variety of sentences

Students drafted their letters independently. The class reviewed rules for paragraphing, writing complete sentences, and spelling. Students had opportunities to work with peers to edit and proofread their work before creating the final copy.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This letter has a friendly, appealing tone, but it rambles in places and includes several grammatical and sentence errors.

- focused around a clear purpose
- includes some specific examples and details
- relies on simple language; somewhat vague and repetitive (e.g., uses *it* frequently, without a clear antecedent)
- most paragraphs have a main idea and some related detail
- includes repeated errors in spelling of basic vocabulary (e.g., *are* for *our*)

XXXX XXX XXX
X-XX XXXX
XXXXX, XX
XXX-XXX

April 15, 1998

Dear Katie

Thank you for that nice Easter card you gave me. I really like it!

Katie three test in one day that a lot of test to do! I wouldn't never last that day. In math we take it out of a book called Interaction, it's really hard. I don't like it that much, and it not fun at all.

This Easter was fun we have Friday and Monday off so we went back on Tuesday. On Friday I went to a birthday party with Dantie, Mack, Brittany and me. We went to a pool hall it was fun. Saturday my family went to my mom's work in downtown Vancouver. Sunday we went to church and when we came home we were not happy because my dog Toby ate 4 hard eggs that we had died and eggs with the package stuff still on. He had very bad gas that day! Our family went to the beach and I got some really neat rocks there. Our family did a lot of stuff and now were all very

In school I'm doing track and it's very fun! Everyday on tuesday and thursday in the morning at 8:15, what we do is run around and around the field and sometimes we run in a squa for a long time because a person has to chase us until they pass us. One day we had to miss a day of school because of tack. Do you have tack in your school?

Are class is inviting you to are park for lunch on May 12th we will be doing a tour of are school, having a baseball game and lunch together. I'm looking forward to see you there.

Your Pen pal:
Heather

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This letter is clear and well organized and includes some interesting detail.

- includes some specific examples and details
- language is clear and shows some variety
- introduction makes the purpose clear
- each paragraph has a main idea and some supporting details
- errors do not interfere with meaning
- presentation shows evidence of care and pride

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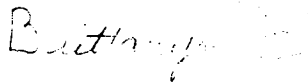
Dear Cathy,

Thank you for your great letter, and your wonderful card, I received it on Thursday, April 9th, 1998. I'm very sorry that your class pet died. You must have been very upset. Our salmon have now turned in to Fry (that means that they lost their yolk sacs). We will be releasing the salmon at the very end of April, I think then, I will be upset too.

Speaking of pets, I just got a new pet of my own. I got two girbels for Easter. I decided to name them Stumpy and Snoopy. I got those girbels from my friend Heather James. Heather named Stumpy before I got him. Stumpy only has 3 legs. But he thinks he has 4. I can tell because when I put him in my maze, he throws his right legs in the air. Snoopy is also very cute, he is black. Don't worry, my girbels are both boys, who grew up with each other. Do you have any pets? If you do, please write it in your next letter back, thanks.

Are you in any sports? You already know that I am in soccer right? Well I am also in fastball. Our team is called the "Black Magic". So far, we have played 4 games (we won two and we lost two). That's what I did most of my Spring Break.

Your Pen Pal,



Brittany

P.S.

You may have already heard, that we are having a picnic on Tuesday, May 12th. I am very excited aren't you?

Grade 5: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

Sample 3: Recipe for a Peanut Butter and Jam Sandwich

Context

This activity was part of a unit on reading and writing procedural text. During the unit, students had opportunities to read and follow instructions for a variety of tasks, including simple constructions and experiments.

Process

The teacher provided a collection of recipes from a variety of sources. Students examined the recipes and identified some common features:

- each step is described in detail
- steps are numbered
- there is usually a list of materials or ingredients
- instructions start with an action word (e.g., *put*, *divide*, *insert*, *stir*)
- sometimes there are diagrams to make the steps clear
- the language is very straightforward and precise

The teacher explained that students would be working in pairs to write a recipe for making a peanut butter and jam sandwich. The teacher emphasized the importance of giving precise and complete instructions. He explained that he would choose four sets of instructions at random and make sandwiches according to the steps outlined.

The teacher provided a template (see samples). Students worked in pairs to plan, write, and edit their instructions.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

These instructions include most of the needed information, but they are flawed by frequent errors.

- focused around a clear purpose that is accomplished at a basic level (i.e., with some inferences, the reader could follow the instructions)
- information is generally accurate
- sentences are poorly constructed and often run on
- sequence is generally logical, but two or more steps are combined in places
- most familiar words are spelled correctly (but there are several errors—e.g., *strewberry*, *cuboerd*, *scoup*)
- errors do not interfere with meaning, although they do make the writing hard to understand in places

Recipe: peanut butter and jam sandwich

Ingredients:

Sliced bread

strawberry jam

and smooth peanut butter

Utensils:

Butter knife

spoon

plate

napkins

Directions:

① Take two slices of bread out ^{of the bag} then lay
both ^{slice of} bread flat on a plate.

② Take brown peanut butter ^{and} red
strawberry jam out of the cabinet.

③ Take the butter knife and a spoon out
of a drawer.

④ Use butter knife for peanut butter take
the butter knife and stick it the peanut
butter jar and scoop up some peanut
butter and spread it on the bread.

⑤ Use spoon for jam take the spoon and
scoop up some jam and spread it on

5 Other bread.

6 After that flip it on the other
slice of bread and make store
there even then you can
eat it.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

These instructions are complete and generally easy to follow, although some of the steps are not explained clearly.

- information is generally concrete, accurate, and complete
- language is clear
- well organized into sections
- most words are spelled correctly
- most sentences are complete and correct

Recipe: Peanutbutter and Jam sandwich

Ingredients:

1st two slices of bread

2nd strawberry jam

3rd smooth peanut butter

Utensils:

1st butter knife

2nd spoon

3rd plate

4th napkins

Directions:

1st Take the two slices of bread and lay them on a flat surface.

2nd Open the jar of strawberry jam.

3rd Get the spoon.

4th Put the spoon in the jar.

5th Take some out and spread it on the bread.

6th Get the other bread.

7th Get the butter knife and open the jar of peanut butter.

8th Take some out then spread it on the bread -
facing downward to the peanut butter bread.

9th Then lay the sliced peanut butter bread down and the jam bread

10th Put the peanut butter and jam sandwich on the

plate. 11th Then eat the yummy Peanutbutter and Jam

sandwich. 12th Get the napkin then wipe your face

Grade 5: Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information

Sample 4: Experiment Reports

Context

Students in this class learned a standard format that they followed for recording all experiments. Previously, the teacher had presented instruction and guided practice in listing materials, outlining procedures, writing from observations, and explaining conclusions.

Students were currently studying water. During the previous period, the teacher had guided students through conducting and writing about an experiment involving surface tension. Discussion focused on the scientific method and on the concept of surface tension.

Process

The teacher reviewed the scientific method and provided students with a template for recording experiments. Students completed an experiment on surface tension, with teacher guidance. As they completed each part of the experiment, students recorded their actions and observations, using a template provided by the teacher. The teacher emphasized the importance of:

- using direct, straightforward language
- being exact—telling precisely what you did and what happened
- clear organization—using headings and recording information clearly and neatly
- making sure all important information is included
- writing in complete sentences with correct spelling

Students did not make “good” copies of their work, but they were expected to edit and make corrections.

Note: This was an integrated science and writing activity. Only the analysis for writing is presented here.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This report is clear, but it provides only basic information.

- information is generally accurate
- includes a limited amount of detail
- language is clear
- organized into steps or sections; omits steps
- omits required diagram
- errors do not interfere with meaning

~~Exp~~

Penny Drops



Purpose: To find out how many drops will fit on the penny

Hypothesis: That 44 drops will fit on the penny

Materials:

penny

water

bowl/or petridish

eyedropper

Procedure:

① Fill the bowl with water

② Take the eyedropper and use the eyedropper to drop on to the penny

③ count how many you can put on the penny

Results: I fit 37 drops on the penny

Conclusion: My penny fit 37 drops on because the drops kept getting a little bigger.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This report is clear and easy to follow; it is complete except for a sketch or description of what the penny looked like.

- focused around a clear purpose that is accomplished at a basic level
- information is concrete and accurate
- language is clear and shows some variety
- well organized into numbered steps
- omits required diagram
- sentences are not separated with capitals and periods (this is likely a function of the format, rather than the writer's skill)
- clearly and neatly presented

The Drops of Water

Purpose: To find out how many drops of water

Hypothesis: I think that 10 drops will stay on the penny

Materials:

- water
- eye dropper
- penny
- petri dish

Procedure:

- 1) put the water in the petri dish
- 2) put the penny on a flat surface
- 3) use the eye dropper and suck up some water
- 4) hold the eye dropper straight up and down
- 5) put drops of water on the penny
- 6) keep track of how many drops of water till the water falls off the dish

Results: 28 drops of water were able to fit on the penny.

Conclusion: My hypothesis was wrong. This happened because of the H_2O likes to stick together.

Grade 5: Writing Stories and Poems

Sample 1: Personification Poems

Context

Throughout the year, students occasionally read, listened to, and wrote poems. Recently they had studied personification, identifying examples of this technique in poems they read and discussing its effects.

Process

The teacher presented four examples of personification poems written by other students (from a district anthology and previous classes). Students identified what was being personified and the human traits given. The class brainstormed a list of topics suitable for personification poems and then chose one topic and created a collaborative poem. The teacher shared potential evaluation criteria for personification poems. Students tried to apply the criteria to their collaborative poem and suggested ways to improve the criteria.

Each student chose a topic and drafted a personification poem, keeping the criteria in mind. Students shared their drafts in authors' circles and offered feedback to each other. The teacher also responded to the drafts.

Students used advice from the teacher and peers to revise their poems and create published copies.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This student has tried to create a personification poem, giving human qualities to teddy bears. The images are familiar and predictable.

- includes some detail
- shows some awareness of audience
- follows most of the “rules” of the chosen poetic form; has difficulty in places (e.g., reads more like a paragraph than a poem)
- uses some descriptive language
- most familiar words are spelled correctly

Teddy bears

The Teddy bears reached there arms out to hug me. As they hugged me they whispered something, and started laughing. They looked lonely when I put them back on the shelf, and as I took them down to my bed, they got excited and said "Good Night"!

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This student uses figurative and descriptive language to create some interesting and unusual images.

- some sense of individuality or originality
- includes supporting details that elaborate events and images
- shows a sense of audience; attempts to engage the reader
- language is clear, with some variety
- errors do not interfere with meaning

Hockey Puck

The thick puck danced with little grace down the rink.
It tried to dodge the bitter sticks slashing and hitting at it trying to score,
but they had surrounded it.

Finally it gave up and took the slash and it flew into the net.

The crowd cheered and the game was tied.

They had to go into over time.

The puck thought to itself here we go again,
as it skated to center ice it was ready to finish the game.



Grade 5: Writing Stories and Poems

Sample 2: Stories From the Titanic

Context

Most language arts activities in this classroom integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing. This activity took place as part of a study of the book *Survival! The Titanic*. Students discussed and responded to the book, participated in a variety of role-playing and representing activities, and learned about the world of 1912. They accessed newspaper articles and other information through the Internet and collected other books.

Process

This activity took place over a period of five language arts classes. The class first worked together to model developing a story based on a picture, then students wrote individual stories.

The teacher provided several illustrations of people and events on the *Titanic*. The class worked together to generate story ideas for one of the pictures by following this process:

- develop one or two characters based on what you see in the picture
- create a brief story line related to the illustration
- include references to factual information learned

The class reviewed criteria for effective stories. They decided that for this activity their stories should:

- have some emotion—engage the reader’s feelings
- include interesting detail
- use a variety of sentences (sophisticated sentences)
- fit in with the facts of the *Titanic*
- use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar

The teacher briefly reviewed what they had learned about writing sophisticated sentences.

Students drafted, edited, and published their stories independently. The teacher encouraged them to use resources such as thesauruses and dictionaries.

Note: This was an integrated reading, viewing, and writing activity. Only the analysis for writing is presented here.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This student has attempted to write in the style of a first-person log or diary, but it becomes confusing.

- relies on ideas from the selection
- includes some detail; elaborates some parts and not others
- relies on simple language; somewhat vague and repetitive
- repeats a few basic sentence structures
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end
- errors do not interfere with meaning

TITANIC

April 10,1912 11:00am-Titanic leaving in one hour. Everyone is boarding the Titanic. They all are looking their best. Well I mean the most luxureous and biggest ship at the time.

April 10,1912 12:00 noon-Titanic leaving everyone waving goodbye. Titanic leaves on what was hoped to be a seven day journey to New York.

Day one-everything went well.

Day two-everything went well.

Day three-everything went well.

Day four- everything went well until about 11:45pm. All of a sudden there was a move. Kind of a jerk but not really. Then when you looked behind the Titanic there was a huge iceberg. Everyone said the Titanic was unsinkible. Was it? Or was it just the rumor?

The Titanic had water tight doors so almost no water could get past. The water tight doors went down and the gates were shut. Something must be very wrong.

The third class people could not get out. Soon the Titanic started to sink and the life boats were being lowered. Maybe but not likely. Maybe the Titanic was sinking. It had to be a dream. But it wasn't, it was real. But it couldn't be real. Could it? **THERE WERE TONS OF PEOPLE JUMPING OFF. THEY WERE ACTUALLY JUMPING OFF THE**

TITANIC. The water must be so cold. Then someone called out life boat # 3-lower away. About an hour later the same voice called out life boat # 16-lower away. A little while later the last of the Titanic went down.

Soon after the **CARPINTHIA** came and rescued Titanic's survivors. Later people thought the Titanic had just been towed!

THE END

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This story is told through a series of journal entries. The writer has not used periods or capitals to separate sentences—this may be deliberate, but it makes reading difficult.

- some sense of individuality or originality
- includes supporting details
- attempts to engage the reader and create an emotional impact
- language is clear, with some variety
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end
- characters are “types” without any depth; descriptions focus on appearance
- sentences are not separated by capitals and periods

Note: The following is a transcript of the student's work. The original was presented in the form of a diary, including drawings to represent mementos such as tickets.

The Diary of Eliza Jacobson

1st class passenger

April 10 1912

Today we left Southam Eng on the Titanic [unreadable text] won't see Pa-pa for so long and I won't get to thank him for the wedding present

April 11, 1912

Tonight there was a wonderful dance Mr. and Mrs. Straus were there, they said they would rather stay in there room. crazy. Tom looked great in his suit and I must say so did I in my blue silk gown and plume

April 12, 1912 11:15

Tom has fallen ill so I spent most of my day with him and the doctor he is getting better and has a weelchar

April 13, 1912

Tom is much better now and we went to the dinning lounge to eat the food is lovely and the place itself is amazing it has dark wooden moldings and crimson curtains, and seats there velvet!

Eliza Jacobson went down with the ship she refused to leave her husband

All characters were made up

Grade 5: Writing Stories and Poems

Sample 3: Parodies

Context

Students in this class were expected to follow some basic steps whenever they completed a writing activity:

- *Plan:* generate and organize ideas
- *Draft:* think about your audience as you write
- *Revise:* read aloud to check that it is clear; read silently to check that ideas and language are interesting; ask someone else to read and respond
- *Check for errors:* spelling, grammar, sentences, and punctuation
- *Publish:* make a “good” copy that will be inviting to your readers

Process

Students formed small groups to collaboratively retell the story of “The Three Little Pigs.” The teacher then read the parody *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, by Jon Scieszka, pausing to invite student predictions and reactions to story events. Students participated in role-plays (e.g., interviewing characters such as Mr. Wolf, the families of the “victims,” the local police, and character witnesses).

The class brainstormed a list of other villains who may have been misunderstood (e.g., Hansel and Gretel’s grandmother; Cinderella’s stepsisters). The teacher read aloud a traditional version of “The Three Billy Goats Gruff” and asked students to brainstorm, in small groups, how the story might be different from the troll’s perspective.

The teacher asked the students to write the “true story” of “The Three Billy Goats Gruff,” from the troll’s point of view. Before they started, students reviewed the things the author of *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* had done to make the story interesting.

Students reviewed the criteria their class used for story writing and added these items for this assignment:

- sticks to the troll's point of view ("I")
- uses funny details
- follows the original events
- is convincing

Students drafted their stories independently and then consulted with a peer editor about revisions and corrections.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This story attempts to engage the reader through interesting detail. Unfortunately, it is marred by frequent errors that make it hard to follow in places.

- some sense of individuality or originality
- includes supporting details
- sentences are often poorly constructed or run on
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end; wanders in places
- often, sentences are not separated with capitals and periods
- some grammatical problems

Note: The following is a transcript of the student's work. This student included a map of the story setting.

The Troll's side of the Story of the three Billy Goat's

My name is Gorge troll my friends call me Jo so you can too. Now I will tell you the true story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff told by me of course. Now I was having a nice nap. I have a bit of a problem. When I sleep if I hear a noise over me I roll around. When I got kicked out of my little log cabin I had no where else to live but under a bridge. So with my little problem I would wake-up hafe way up streem with those's billy goats named Gruff always crossing the bridge. What do you expect me to do but get mad so while I tell my side off the story you can follow me on the map. One day I was just wakeing up when the small billy goat was crossing the brige I was pretty steamed up so I said if you cross this brige agin I will eat you for supper. Then he put on the inisant face and said "oh Plese don't eat me I am so small wait for my brother I tried to tell him that I did not want to eat him or his brother but he did not lisen to me and just crossed the bridge. Then his brother came along I said to him to tell his little brother that I did not want to eat him or you but he did just what his little brother had done and said, and walked off the Bridge. When the biggest billy goat came along I said to him just what I had said the last billy goat he was very understanding. I invited him in for tea and cookies we had a grand time he helped me get a house it was very nice but the to mean brothers wer julose of me and told the press company that I thretend to eat them and I was mean and would not let them across my bridge how puthetice. Me and the biggest billy goat are best friends and house mates. I hope you belevie me and if you don't I will still be you friend

Signed G TROLL

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This story includes some original and humorous detail.

- sense of individuality or originality
- supporting details elaborate events
- attempts to engage the reader and create an emotional impact (humour)
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end
- dialogue is generally clear; tries to show how different characters might talk
- errors do not interfere with meaning

Note: The following is a transcript of the student's work.

My side of the Story of the Three Billy goats Gruff

I'm a troll and I know you all think I'm mean but I really am nice. This is the True story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff. The name's Tr and my last name is Oll but you can call me troll for now. You all think I'm mean because I eat goats but its apart of our food chain if you saw a cheese burger cross YOUR bridge you would eat it.

Okey lets get to the story.

Once upon a time I was looking for food in my house and I found one single peice of bubble gum! I looked for about two hours and then I got tired so I took a nap. I heard this annoying sound tip tap tip tap. I got up and said whos that crossing my bridge. It is I the first brother of the three Billy goats Gruff. "Okey I will try not to eat you" said troll. "Come on you know you want to" said the first brother. "Wait for my athore brother he is more plump and bigger" said the First brother. I went back to bed. Tip tap tip tap who is on my bridge. It is I the second brother of the Three Billy Goats Gruff. "I will try not to eat you" I said "come on you know I will become dinner" the second brother said. No! I will not eat you. Just wait for my ather brother. Tip! Tap! Tip! Tap! I knew it was the third and final Bill Goat.I said I will not eat him I will not eat him. But it was to temptinng just as I was about to take him he called 9-11. So I got 10 years for attempted eating!

Grade 5: Writing Stories and Poems

Sample 4: Fables

Context

Students had recently completed a unit on fables in which they read, listened to, discussed, and dramatized fables. They developed story maps to study the structure of the fables and created illustrations to show key characters and events. They also studied the language of fables and how authors use specific words to create interesting effects.

Process

The class reviewed the fables they had read and heard, and brainstormed a list of qualities they had noticed. The list included:

- animal characters
- animals have human qualities
- short and simple: problem-solution-moral
- teaches a lesson
- interesting language
- lots of dialogue
- different kinds of sentences

The teacher provided the following planning guide and asked each student to create a new fable:

My fable characters will be . . .

- The problem will be . . .
- The solution will be . . .
- The moral will be . . .

Students shared their outlines with partners and experimented with various ways of telling their stories orally. Students then drafted and edited their stories independently. They used a word processing program (including the spell-check function) to make their final copies.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

This simple story does not follow the conventions of a fable; the moral is not really a lesson.

- offers connected events; confusing in places
- includes some detail
- relies on simple language
- repeats a few basic sentence structures
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end
- some grammatical problems

THE LOST BABY FERRET

Once there was a baby ferret who got lost in a storm. A little girl called Nicole saw it and took it home. She kept it in the garage with out her mom knowing. She said “ I wish we could find the mommy ferret.” The next day the Mommy and Daddy ferret went looking and followed the smell of the baby. She got to the garage door and Nicole came out and thought the baby was the Mommy’s ferret, so she let it out and the Mommy ferret picked it up in her mouth and look it home.

MORAL: A wish sometimes comes true when your small and lost.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

This story follows the conventions of a fable and shows some originality.

- includes supporting details
- shows a sense of audience; attempts to engage the reader
- language is clear, with some variety
- uses a variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- includes a logically sequenced beginning, middle, and end
- focused around a theme
- sense of control; few errors, and these do not interfere with effectiveness

THE SQUIRREL AND THE BUNNY

There was once a squirrel who wanted to know how to crack an walnut. Everyday he would try but there was no way for him to crack the walnut so he got mad. He started jumping up and down until Bunny came along. He was a very smart bunny because he read a lot.

The bunny asked, "Need some help?"

"No thanks," replied the squirrel.

"I happen to have a book right here telling about how a squirrel cracks a walnut," offered the bunny. "It says a squirrel cracks a walnut with its teeth."

The squirrel crunched down with his teeth and it worked!
The walnut cracked!

From that day on if the squirrel needed help he would ask for help.

The moral is if you need help, just ask for it.