

# **Narrative Writing Samples 1-6**

These writing samples are intended to show how student writing can be assessed using the NWT-ELA writing standards. The samples were selected from student writing from across the NWT. No one sample can accurately match every writing standard, so a number of samples have been included. When assessing student writing (either for or of learning) it is important to remember to use a variety of samples. The more samples you use, the more you can be confident in your observations.

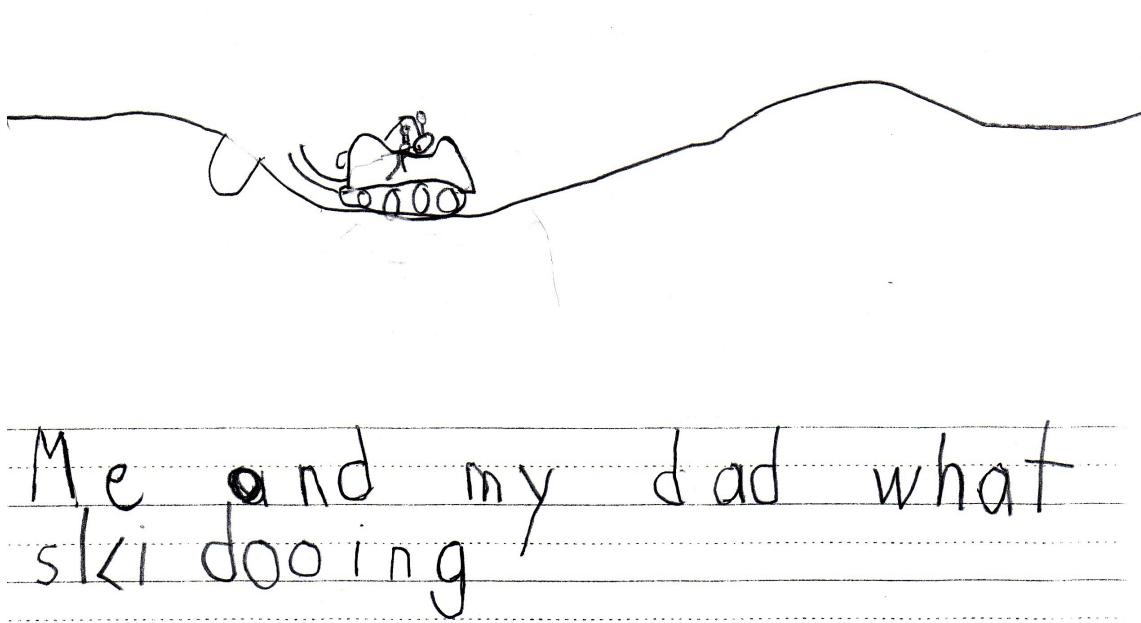


Government of  
Northwest Territories

## Grade One Writing

Students begin with simple drawings and labels then move to written descriptions and stories. By the end of grade one, students are able to write in several genres (narrative, expository, letters, and poetry). They use previously modeled forms, and often follow familiar sentence patterns. Although conventions are still not consolidated (there will still be approximated spelling and other errors), the intent to communicate should be clear. Content usually is focused on personal experiences, as well as areas of personal interest. Students begin to make connections between their own prior knowledge and experiences and new learning. They also begin to paraphrase information found in texts, as well as beginning to put ideas and information into sequential formats. Beginning writers will use initial/final consonant combinations along with some medial vowels, expand their sight word base, and use classroom environmental print. Word walls, posted charts and poems, big books, familiar texts, name cards, theme words, and other sources of text all contribute to the development of independent writers in Grade One. Students also need lots of opportunity to write – shared and interactive writing, guided writing, and independent writing time. It is also important for students to have choice in their writing – in topic, in genre, or both. They also begin to expand their ability to sort ideas and information, and begin to use graphic organizers such as K-W-L, RANN, and “beginning-middle-end” charts.

## Sample 1

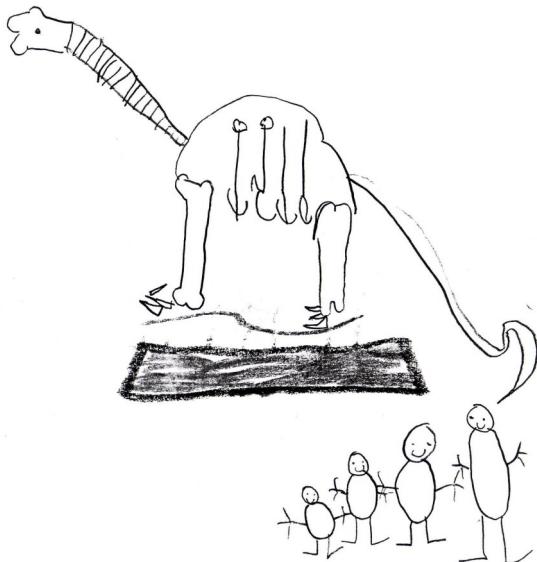


**Discussion:**  
This sample uses a journal entry format, with an illustration accompanied by a “story sentence” to explain the drawing. The attention to detail in the illustration likely indicates familiarity with this activity. The use of the word “what” rather than “went” could indicate the use of a word wall or other environmental print, an important part of writing development.

## APPROACHING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Content and character usually tell about personal experiences
- Writing focuses on a topic (*sentence and picture are consistent*)
- Writing makes sense independent of context-setting illustration
- Uses words related to topic (*ski-doing*)
- Writing is individual (sounds like child talking)
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- Capitalizes first letter of names, “I”, and the beginning of sentences (*Me*)



my family Went to  
the Jurassic Park to  
see the Diplodocus.

**Discussion:**  
This sample could be either a journal entry or a labelled picture. It shows the student's ideas clearly, as well as an intent to communicate information. Attention to detail in the picture would indicate a personal experience with the content. The sentence structure is very sophisticated for a grade one student, indicating strong oral language development

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

#### Rubric Qualities

- Content and characters usually tell about personal experiences (*family trip to dinosaur museum*)
- Writing focuses on a topic (*information relates directly to what was seen at the museum*)
- Writing makes sense independent of context-setting illustration (*writing can be read without referring to the picture*)
- Models familiar text structure: journal entry (*picture and simple explanation of activity*)
- Uses words related to topic (family, Jurassic Park, diplodocus)
- Writing is individual (sounds like the child is talking or telling the story)
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling (*all spelling is correct in this sample, but is not expected to be that way in all writing*)
- Capitalizes first letter of names, "I", and the beginning of sentences (*also includes upper-case letters in incorrect places*)
- Uses periods at the end of sentences
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

#### Sample 3



I like Mrs. Hill.  
She is so sweet.  
Mrs. Hill is so beautiful  
for me your friend

**Discussion:** This sample shows a common form of communication between student and teacher. It is a simple "letter" format. It clearly communicates the child's feelings about the teacher. There is a generalization of the idea of sentences, with one sentence per line. When the third sentence is longer than the line, the period is inserted randomly. There is a closing ("Your friend child's name removed"). Word spacing makes the text a bit difficult to read, but when the intent is determined, the text is easier to read.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content and characters usually tell about personal experiences (*teacher and school*)
- Writing focuses on a topic (*Mrs. Hill*)
- Writing includes a few details (*Mrs. Hill is sweet and beautiful*)
- Models a familiar structure (*simple letter*)
- Uses descriptive words to create an image (*sweet, beautiful*)
- Writing is individual (sounds like child is talking)
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling (*most words spelled correctly, "four" instead of "for"*)
- Capitalizes first letter of names, "I", and the beginning of sentences (*lots of other upper-case letters interspersed, but consistent with names and beginning of sentences*)
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable



Discussion: This sample deals with a familiar topic (soccer). It is written in third person, and is more like a story than a journal entry. The illustration helps to clarify the writing - without it, the approximated spelling is a bit difficult to read. The spelling shows good application of both phonic (ethr, sokr) and spelling rules (-ing ending), as well as sight words.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content and characters tell about personal experiences (*playing soccer*)
- Writing focuses on a topic
- Writing includes a few details (*goal, scores*)
- Models familiar text structure (*simple story*)
- Story has a beginning (*The boy is playing soccer*)
- Uses a variety of simple sentence patterns (*use of "This" and "That" to start sentences*)
- Writing is individual; sounds like child is telling the story
- Writing engages the audience
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- Capitalizes first letter of names, "I", and the beginning of sentences (*as well as random uppercase letters*)

The boy is Playing sokr

This boy score That got three

The ethr tem Has two

Ons there was a  
Captain that had no crew.  
He only has a parrot,  
His name was black  
beard. he had to  
do everything. he had  
lots of gold.

he had a pit at flag.  
him and his parit  
buried some gold.  
and sailed off.

Discussion: This sample shows a more focused attempt at telling a story. Rather than writing from immediate personal experience, this student is using information learned in class as the base for the story. It has a beginning, some details in the middle, and an end. There is an effort to describe the character. Without some knowledge of the topic, the approximated spelling makes the story difficult to read.

#### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic (*the pirate*)
- Writing includes a few details (*parrot, name, gold*)
- Writing makes sense independent of context-setting illustration (*spelling makes it hard to read, but the content makes sense*)
- Models familiar text structure (*simple story*)
- Story usually has a beginning
- Story may have middle and/or end
- Uses words related to topic (*Captain, crew, parrot, gold, flag, sailed*)
- Uses descriptive words (*only has a parrot, name was Black-beard, buried some gold*)
- Writing is individual (sounds like child is telling the story)
- Writing engages audience
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling (*uses environmental print - captain, parrot; phonics - oons, oly, avethin; and some spelling rules - saild, pirat*)

## Sample 6



When I went to my uncles his cat had two Babys. The Babys were smol. Then I went home.

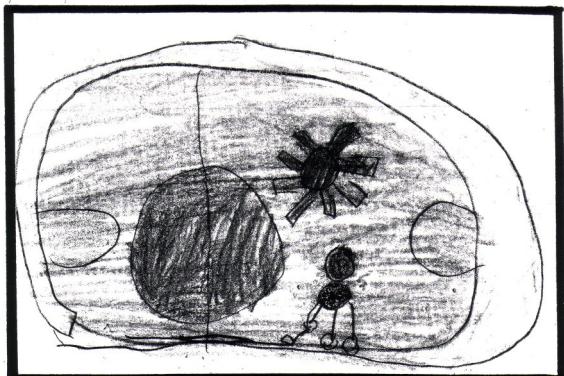
**Discussion:** This bed-to-bed story shows an attempt to sequence ideas through the illustrations. A feature of bed-to-bed stories is that they tell a linear sequence of events, but are not always directly connected to the original idea. In this case, the final sentence is connected in sequence, but is not directly related to the beginning.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- Content and characters usually tell about personal experiences
- Writing includes a few details (*the babies were small*)
- Writing makes sense independent of the context-setting illustration
- Models familiar text structure (*bed-to-bed story*)
- Story usually has a beginning
- Story may have middle and/or end
- Uses words related to topic (*uncle, cat, babies*)
- Uses descriptive words to create an image (*small*)
- Writing is individual (sounds like child is telling the story)
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- Capitalizes the first letter of names, "I", and the beginning of sentences (*includes other upper-case letters*)
- Uses periods at the end of sentences
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable.

## Sample 7



Once there was a boy who liked Skadling. he was 6 years Old. his name was Josh. he is in grad 1. he is a very good player. he was in hockey. There were Other kids that were Older and Biger. like Seven eight nine. and they had bigger sticks. he was pretty good at playn. and they livd hafly ever after.

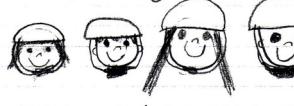
**Discussion:** Although this is structured like a simple story with a "Once there was..." beginning and a "happily ever after" ending, it is really more of a description. There is no story problem nor is there any action. However, there are specific details and descriptions. The author uses some sophisticated sentence structure (*there were other kids that were older and bigger*), and stays on topic throughout the piece. The punctuation is not correct, but the thoughts are generally in sentences and the communication is clear.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric Qualities:

- Content and characters tell about personal experiences
- Writing focuses on a topic
- Writing includes a few details (6 years old, name is Josh, very good player, other kids are older and bigger)
- Writing makes sense independent of context-setting illustration
- Models familiar text structure (fairy tale at beginning and end, but really a description)
- Story has a beginning
- Story has a middle and/or end
- Uses words related to topic (skating, player, sticks)
- Uses descriptive words (older, bigger, very good, pretty good)
- Uses a variety of simple sentence patterns
- Writing is individual (sounds like child is talking)
- Writing engages the audience
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- Uses periods at the end of sentences
- Errors may be distracting but communication is understandable

I Like to  
Ride my Bike

When I ride My  
bike I wear a helmet.  
I go rideing with my  
famile.   
We go rideing mene  
defrintplasis. My favorit  
plas to go rideing is the  
Taffrays house. 

**Discussion:** This piece is a simple description. It has some varied sentence patterns. The sentences connect clearly, although the first one is not particularly effective as an introduction since it is more of a detail than a main idea. There are other details included, but no real ending. The author has done a good job incorporating illustrations with the text. The spelling shows good sound/letter matching (*helmit, defrint, plasis*) as well as some sight words.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

**Rubric qualities:**

- Content and characters usually tell about personal experiences
- Writing focuses on a topic
- Writing includes a few details
- Writing makes sense independent of context setting illustration
- Models familiar text structure (simple description)
- Uses words related to topic
- Writing is individual (sounds like child is talking)
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- Capitalizes first letter of names (*Jaffreys*), "I", and the beginning of sentences
- Uses periods at the end of sentences
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is clear



One morning there was a fox.  
His name was Cutie. He was  
awake. He went for a walk.  
He got lost. He was afraid.  
He heard a sound. He thought  
it was his mom or dad. Nope it  
was just Sassy's mom. He  
remembered his dad said smell  
your way out. His dad was right.  
Then he went home.

**Discussion:** This piece demonstrates good story organization, with a problem, action, and a conclusion. The beginning is a statement, telling time and character. The sentence structure is simple. There is not a lot of descriptive language, but there are some good word choices (*afraid, remembered, thought*) and the voice is clear. There are some jumps in the text that are a bit hard to follow (*Sassy's mom, 'smelling' your way out*) but that is consistent with Grade One writing.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

**Rubric qualities:**

- Content and characters usually tell about personal experiences
- Writing focuses on a topic (*Cutie being lost and finding his way home*)
- Story may include a problem (*being lost*)
- Writing includes a few details (*being afraid, hearing a sound, Sassy's mom, Dad's advice*)
- Writing makes sense independent of context– setting illustration
- Models familiar text (*simple story*)
- Story usually has a beginning
- Story may have middle and/or end (*has both*)
- Uses words related to topic
- Writing is individual (sounds like the student is telling the story)
- Writing engages the audience
- Uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling (*very minor spelling errors*)
- Capitalizes first letter of names, "I", and the beginning of sentences (*sentence beginnings, Cutie, Sassy*)
- Uses periods at the end of sentences
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable (*clear and easy to read*)

## Grade Two Writing

Students in Grade Two begin to expand their audiences and learn to use writing in varied ways, including sharing information and ideas, telling stories, persuading others, and using language to create images for others. Drama and readers' theatre are popular choices with grade two students. Content begins to extend beyond self and family, to include things from the community, as well as ideas and extensions of modeled text (books, films, TV, and other sources of text), memories, and opinions. Students experiment with a wider variety of modeled forms and genres. There is usually a logical organizational sequence to the piece. Teachers need to continue to model through shared and guided writing. Grade Two's can sustain longer periods of writing, and need longer, uninterrupted blocks of time to work on projects. As in previous years, students continue to need choices in topic, genre, or both. Grade Two writing becomes easier to read throughout the year as students gain further control over writing conventions, however it is important to remember that some approximated spelling is still to be expected. Continued time for reading aloud each day to students is also very important. Teachers can create mini-lessons using material taken from favourite read-alouds to illustrate such concepts as descriptive language, compound sentences, showing rather than telling details, etc. Students begin to experiment with new vocabulary, sentence patterns, and organizational sequences.

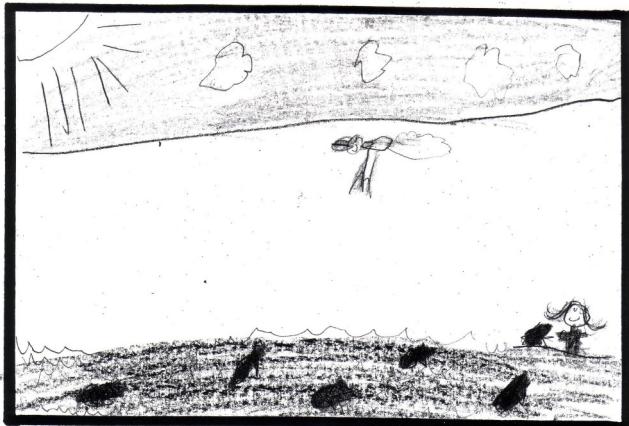
Once we went to visit Danielle. A bear came right out to us from the bushes. The bear started to chase us. We run really fast to Danielle's house. Then the bear went into the bushes and we played outside Danielle's house.

**Discussion:** This is a simple story, likely retelling a real experience. Voice is evident in the sentence structure (came right out to us from the bushes, We run really fast). The story has a definite beginning, middle, and end, as well as a well-defined problem.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric Qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing (*encounter with a bear*)
- Writing focuses on a topic (*visiting Danielle*)
- Story includes a problem (*the bear chasing us*)
- Story has a beginning, middle, and end
- Beginning of story identifies the problem
- Middles includes some action/events (*bear started to chase us, ran to the house, bear went in the bushes*)
- Ending is usually brief and/or predictable and may not be connected to story
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Writing is individual (*sounds like child is telling the story*)
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, and exclamation marks (*periods only*)



The little girl

One spring morning a little girl went to the beach. She saw a starfish. She picked it up. She wanted to put it back in the water. The starfish was happy when it was put back in the water the end.

**Discussion:** This story shows a clear beginning, middle, and end. The beginning is the strongest section, providing some details (*spring morning, little girl*). The rest of the story uses quite basic language, which is consistent with Grade 2 writing. The sentences are primarily simple. Because of the basic language and sentence structure, voice is not evident in this piece. The story is likely based on previous text experience of starfish and the ocean.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- Writing focus on a topic
- Story includes probably (usually stated as one of the events)
- Writing includes simple details (*saw a starfish, picked it up, starfish was happy*)
- Story has a beginning, middle, and end
- Beginning of story includes characters (*little girl, starfish*) and problem (*starfish out of water*)
- Ending is usually brief and/or predictable
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, and exclamation marks (*periods only*)
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

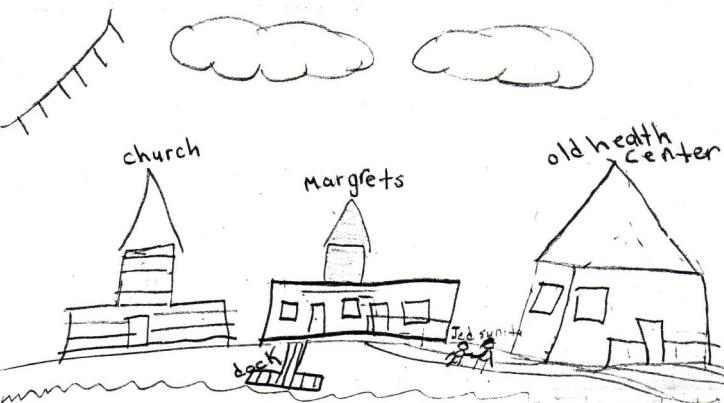
Last Sunday afternoon I was over at the O. There was a bird's nest up in a tree. The bird was yellow and The egg's were small. The color of the egg's were blue and white. There was two bullies walking by. The nest They started to try and knock the nest down. The mommy bird got really mad and started to Pick at them they got scared and ran away. They never bothered again.

**Discussion:** This piece shows an effort to develop the beginning of the story with added details. The repetitive sentence structure of the details and events makes the story flow less smoothly, and keeps the student's voice from showing. It also makes the piece less interesting to read. However, the piece is technically solid, with good conventions and structure.

#### MEETING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing (local place, bird nest)
- Writing focuses on a topic (bird and eggs)
- Story includes problem (two bullies trying to knock down nest)
- Writing includes simple details (bird and egg colour, egg size, mommy bird got really mad)
- Writing has a beginning, middle, and end
- Beginning of story identifies characters
- Ending is usually brief and/or predictable
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses words related to topic
- Uses a variety of simple sentence patterns
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, and exclamation marks (periods only)



This is Colville lake where I live with my family. I am walking with Jed. He is my baby brother, he is one years old. I need to hold his hand so he will not fall in the mud. We went on the school steps and then back to our house. This was a long walk and we were tired and hungry when we got home. We had some cereal for a snack. I ate it at the kitchen table. Then I watched a movie.

**Discussion:** This is a simple description. The author struggles with maintaining tense through the piece; this is common for Grade 2 students. The beginning and middle of the piece flow nicely, and the child's voice is apparent. The ending has extra information (*eating at the table and watching the movie*) that makes the story seem like a bed-to-bed piece. This is another common trait in Grade 2 writing, when the length of the piece seems to become important to some students

#### MEETING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- Writing focuses on a topic (until the ending)
- Writing includes simple details
- Story has beginning, middle, and end
- Beginning of story identifies characters
- Middle includes some actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for the intended audience
- Uses words related to topic (*hold his hand, fall in the mud, long walk, tired and hungry*)
- Writing is individual (*sounds like the child is talking*)
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, and exclamation marks (periods only)

## Sample 5

Today is Mon. Jan 14, 2002 <sup>grandpa</sup>  
 On Sunday I went hunting. We sauht  
 two caribou. We would of caught but  
 we only had two tags when  
 my dad and my grampa were takeing  
 out the gut's I puked behinde the truck.  
 When I went ski-doing I on most  
 got stuck in the snowe. It was bumpey  
 because all the caribou tracks. And  
 I mean it was bumpey!!! but I had  
 lots of fun in the back of the truck

Discussion: Although this piece is a bit difficult to read, there is definite voice coming through. The details are specific (*we only had two tags, I puked behind the truck*). This is a journal entry, so it is a first draft. This explains the missing words and spelling errors.

## MEETING STANDARDS

## Sample 6

A Crash

In year 2003 on a Thursday afternoon something bad happened. But you have to wait until the second paragraph to know. First a truck was driving down to the Mackenzie River.

Then when it was going over the river the truck fell through the ice. Luckily it was only shallow water. The driver tried to back up but it never worked. So he radioed another truck and eventually it came.

The driver in the other truck hooked a rope onto the back of the stuck one. Once it was out he

zoomed back to the town. The driver never ever forgot that day.

## Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- Writing focuses on topic
- Writing includes simple details
- Story has beginning, middle, and end
- Middle includes some actions/events
- Ending is usually brief and/or predictable and may not be connected to story (*final sentence seems to be an add on*)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses words related to the topic
- Uses a variety of simple sentence patterns (*statements, questions, exclamations*)
- Writing is individual (*sounds like child is telling the story*)
- Writing engages audience
- May show emphasis by using repeated punctuation
- Uses spelling generalizations, patterns, and structural analysis (*ownley, bumpey, behinde, snowe, oh most*)
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, exclamation marks (*periods, exclamation marks*)

Discussion: This piece shows good organization and some strong word choice (*luckily, shallow, eventually, zoomed*). The introduction shows an effort to craft the piece to engage the reader (*you have to wait...*). The events are connected and flow well, using some good transition words (*Then, Luckily, So, Once*). The ending is a bit weak, which is often the case with Grade 2 writing; the last sentence seems to be tacked on simply to finish the story.

## EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

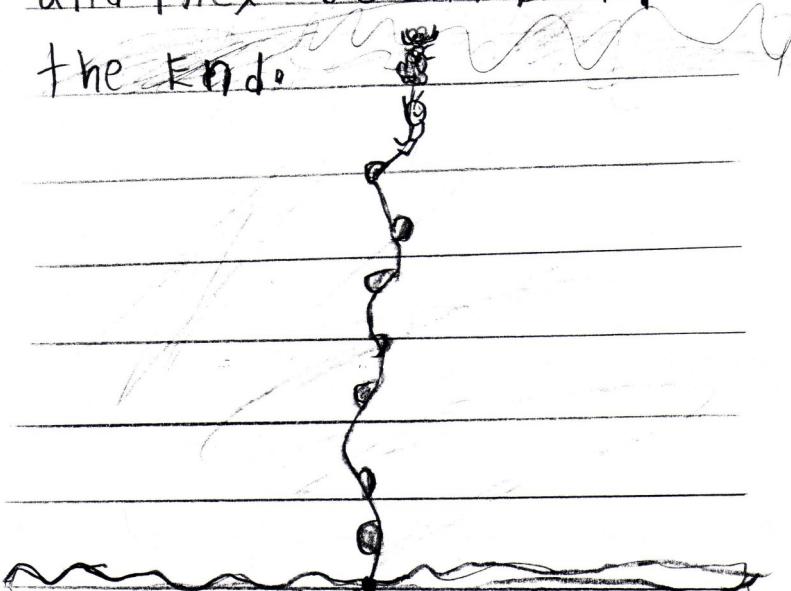
## Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- Writing focuses on topic
- Story includes problem (usually stated as one of the events)
- Writing includes simple details
- Story has beginning, middle, and end
- Middle includes some actions/events
- Ending is usually brief and/or predictable and may not be connected to story
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses words related to topic (radioed, hooked, stuck)
- Writing is individual (*sounds like child is talking*)
- Writing engages audience
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, exclamation marks (*periods only*)

Sample 7

## The mouse and the seed

One day I was walking and something was in my poket. It was a seed. I planted the seed. It grew so high! It touched the sky. I climed to the top and saw a mouse. A boy asck how did you get up here? I'm the Speret of the seed. A Speret in my seed! Yeah right. I can do macheck. OK let's see then go on go on make a flaur see. OK I beler you. Just how do we go down? Easy just climb down. OK I have an idea you can be my pet! OK! and they be cam best frends the end.



Description: This piece shows a strong introduction and good voice. It becomes harder to follow when the author switches to dialogue to describe the events that form the middle of the story. Because there are no quotation marks or descriptors to indicate when the speakers change, the reader is left to figure that out. This is a common stage of development in student writing, more commonly seen in Grade 3 work. There are some jumps in the flow of the middle events (*Who does the magic? Who goes down the plant?*). The author attempts to pull the pieces together in the ending, making the mouse become a pet, and having them be best friends. In this piece, the content is more advanced than the conventions. An editing conference would help to make the content easier to read.

### EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- Writing focuses on a topic
- Writing includes simple details
- Story has a beginning, middle, and end
- Beginning of story identifies characters (*although not all are clear*)
- Middle includes some actions/events
- Ending is brief and/or predictable and may not be connected to the story
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses words related to topic
- Uses descriptive words that may include adverbs and/or similes to create an image (*It grew so high! It touched the sky*)
- Uses a variety of simple sentence patterns (*statements, questions, exclamations*)
- Writing is individual (*Sounds like the child is telling the story*)
- Writing engages audience
- Uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high-frequency words
- Uses spelling generalizations, patterns, and structural analysis (*asck, macheck, frends*)
- Sometimes uses periods, question marks, and exclamation marks
- Errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

By Grade Three, most students are consolidating their writing skills. They are able to use their growing competencies in speaking, writing, and representing to communicate ideas and information or to persuade others to a particular point of view. Students experiment with new vocabulary and sentence structure and try out different ways to organize and present their material. They also may use dialogue as a way to advance the plot. Generally, Grade Three students do not have good control over the use of quotation marks and other dialogue conventions, and it is often difficult to follow the plot unless the student reads the piece aloud. This can be opportunity for a small-group mini-lesson on keeping the audience in mind when writing, and the strategies authors use to make it clear who is talking, and when the speakers change. Although quotation marks are not expected to be mastered until Grade Four they can certainly be introduced at this level because so many students begin to use dialogue. Writing has a clear introduction and follows a logical sequence. Students begin to write for a wider variety of audiences. Students are now able to do some self- and peer editing, checking for errors in conventions. Students can also edit for completeness of thoughts and basic sentence structure. Teachers need to continue to model a variety of writing genres, stressing the connections between receptive and expressive language. Mini-lessons to teach author's craft also help to expand the grade three student's growing repertoire of skills. Students are becoming more aware of traditional story patterns and are trying to incorporate those in their own writing. Oral discussion now includes sharing opinions as well as information, and students are able to support their opinions with supporting details and "evidence". These supporting details also start to appear in writing, giving more depth to stories and descriptions.

poor snake  
Title

One day two kids heard rustling in the leves near the pond. They found a water snake. So they brung the snake home and put it in the bathtub. Mom was going to take a bath when she found the snake she said that water snakes aren't aloud to be in the bathtub. So the kids put the snake in the sink. Then their dad came in to get a drink. When dad saw the snake he told the kid to put it in the pond. They put it in the pond and said bye. The end

**Discussion:** This piece is a first draft. It shows a clearly defined plot, with a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning sets the context, the middle provides some action, and the end, though brief, finishes the story logically. There are some details (*rustling leaves, mom taking a bath, dad getting a drink*) that add depth to the story. The spelling (*hered, leves, rustling*), punctuation, and grammar (*brung the snake*) errors are noticeable, but the piece is still readable. The word choice and sentence structure allow the author's voice to come through.

## APPROACHING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account (*mother's reaction to snake in bathtub*)
- Story events are predictable
- Beginning of story establishes context
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows a logical sequence (*coherence may falter occasionally—why did the kids bring the snake home in the first place?*)
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences (*Mom was going to take a bath when she found the snake, When dad saw the snake he told the kids to put it in the pond*)
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly

## Sample 2

Polar Bears on a ice berg.  
One day the twe little Polar Bears like to play but the one little Polar Bears decided to play on the big iceberg. But one said it might be dangerous. The other one wanted to play on it so they went there. They played tag and wrestlisd each other. They had fun. They stopped for a rest. They saw the ice berg had floated away. They felt alone and scared. They wanted their mom. Mom saw what happened. She called to them and they heard her. They weren't scared. She swam to them. She put them on her back and they swam to shore. They felt happy now

**Discussion:** This is a good example of using other text experiences to develop a piece of writing. The beginning has some structural errors, but is understandable. The events follow a logical sequence but are quite predictable. They are presented as statements, in simple sentences. The basic word choice and sentence patterns (*most sentences start with either 'they' or 'she'*) do not allow the reader to hear the author's voice in this piece. The piece is technically good (it has good structure, good conventions, and some simple details) but does not particularly engage the audience.

## APPROACHING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Includes descriptive details that are predictable (*played tag and wrestlisd with each other, felt alone and scared*)
- Story events are predictable
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, setting, problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience (*some confusion around how to use 'but'*)
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences (*better variety in the beginning section*)
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most high-frequency words correctly
- Uses end punctuation correctly (*only periods*)
- Errors do not interfere with communication

The Magic Whales  
 I went to Vancouver for a trip.

I saw whales at the Aquarium.

I went for a walk, and I saw a whale swimming around me.

We made friends. This whale could jump high + catch a ball, and TALK! He said, Let's go for a little swim. He put me on his back + dove down to deep water. I saw baby sea turtles, green coral. It was SPIKY. There was lots of seaweed. The water was clear. I saw lion fish, tiger fish and a red coral grouper. We stayed down  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour. Then we came up because the whale needed air.

**Discussion:** Although this piece is written in a story format, it is really more of a description of an event. There are lots of details, but they are recited in a list. This would be an opportunity for a conference or mini-lesson around the idea of "showing not telling" the details, to make the piece more interesting to the reader. The writing is technically good, but is very basic in its development (beginning, middle and end; list of events; list of details). The organization, sentence fluency, and conventions are strong, but the content and voice are weak. Although the word choice is specific to the topic, it does not really bring life to the piece.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on topic
- Includes descriptive details
- Beginning of story establishes characters, setting
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (sea turtles, coral, lion fish, tiger fish, red coral grouper)
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly (periods only)

The fairy and the little girl.  
 There once was a fairy, she had shiny beautiful wings. She wore a beautiful white flower gown. She lived in a beautiful rose castle. But one day a little girl stopped by, she looked at the flower, and said "my mom would like this rose. But there's only one!" then she said "o well, I'll come tomorrow." The fairy's shouted "Ahh. Then the girl picked the flower. The fairy said be calm. We'll pick a different spot." The other fairy's disagreed. She said "O.k, I'll trick her. Not that I mean to, but it has to be done." The fairy went up to the little girl, and shouted until her lungs got real soar.

The next day the little girl came back. The fairy shouted in her ear and said "You destroyed the fairy's house and god is really mad. The little girl said "I don't think you're telling the truth." the fairy said "Come to the place where you picked the rose." When she did the fairy camouflaged in the sky, she said in a megaphone "You destroyed the fairy's house, and you are destroying nature." She said "Sorry I never thought of that. I'll only pick 1 flower a year." Then the fairy said "I only wish that all little girls and boys could be like that."

**Discussion:** This sample shows the development of a story around prior text experiences. It also shows some integration of other concepts (camouflaging, a higher deity, destroying nature). The story has a strong beginning with significant details (the fairy lived in a rose) that are referred to later. The middle section has some actions that are not clear (the girl coming back tomorrow, but then picking the flower, the fairy yelling until her lungs were sore), but in general they follow a logical sequence. The ending neatly solves the problem and delivers a lesson at the same time. This sample also shows more control with quotation marks, making the dialogue much easier to read.

#### MEETING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account
- Includes descriptive details; descriptions may be stereotypical (shiny beautiful wings, beautiful white flower gown, beautiful rose castle)
- Beginning of story establishes characters
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows a logical sequence (coherence does falter occasionally)
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (camouflaged, megaphone, destroying, nature)
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Uses some transition words (But one day, The next day)
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Uses end punctuation correctly

## How The Toucan Got its color

One day Toucan was sad because he had no color. He was just white. He was also sad because all his friends had color. So he went to a artist's houses to see what he should do. When Toucan told him his problem he knew just what to do. So he took out his paint and started to work. When he was done Toucan was no longer gray. Instead he was all different colors like black, yellow, orange, green, and his favorite color red. When he got back the birds were astonished. And that how Toucan got his color.

The End

### Moral

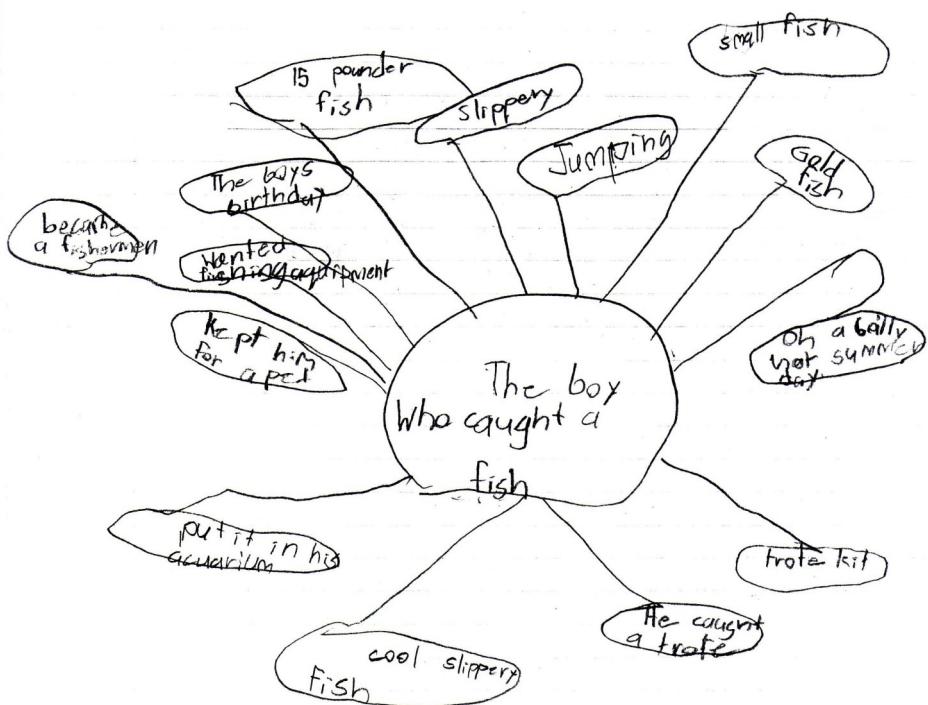
If you have a problem there is always a solution you just have to find it.

**Description:** This is written as a legend and follows the form of that genre (problem, solution, explanation of a natural phenomenon); it also incorporates the moral component of a fable. The details have an inconsistency (the toucan started as white, but is later grey before he gets his colours), but other than that, the piece flows well. The sentence structure and word choice (when Toucan told him his problem he knew just what to do; his favourite colour red; the birds were astonished) bring out the author's voice.

#### MEETING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Includes description that may be stereotypical/predictable
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, story problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence (coherence falters with colour)
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Uses some transition words
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Errors do not interfere with communication



Discussion: This sample shows a planning web and draft of story. The author has listed ideas for the story on the web, although there is no particular organization evident. Not all the ideas in the web were used, showing some revision from the planning to the drafting stage. The story includes extra information that does not really add to the story, even though it is on topic (not having fishing gear and being promised it for his birthday). This piece offers a good opportunity for a conference on narrowing the topic, and getting to the big idea to be shared. There are good descriptive phrases, and even though sentence control is not well-established (fragments and run-ons, and repetitions) the author's voice comes through clearly. An effort to use quotation marks shows development of this skill, even though they are used incorrectly.

## MEETING STANDARDS

## The Boy Who Caught a Slippery Fish.

On a bally hot summer day there lived a boy who really loved to go fishing. One nice calm day the boy asked his father if he could go fishing. "His dad answered" to the boy you don't have fishing equipment you can get it on your birthday.

On the boys birthday he got fishing equipment for his birthday the boy was absolutely astonished he ran outside the door with a big "Whoosh!" he went to the lake faster then a bullet.

He set up his fishing equipment and he put his trout lines on he even put powerbait on his rods. He dropped his line in the water. The water was very calm. Suddenly a trout bit the bait it was flopping jumping everywhere then the trout got tired then he reeled it up and kept it for a pet.

He put it in his aquarium and fed it some bait.

The boy kept his fish forever and the boy became a fisherman.

## Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account (trout lines, powerbait, calm water)
- Includes descriptive details (bally hot day, absolutely astonished, bit the bait, flopping jumping everywhere)
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, setting
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (equipment, rod, bait, reeled)
- Uses some expressive language to create images (adjectives, adverbs, simile)
- Uses some transition words (on the boy's birthday; suddenly)
- Voice is evident
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences (even though control is not well developed and punctuation is missing, there is evidence of variety)
- Writing creates a tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with story characters (different sizes of print – Whoosh!)
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically

## Chocolate's Adventure.

Chocolate is a horse that lives in the mountains. She is brown with a white diamond on her forehead. One day the Sun was Shining and Chocolate decided to go on an adventure. So she went down the trail of the moutains. She Came down to a Valley of fresh green grass. Chocolate was hungry so she ate some of the grass. Then Chocolate saw a wolf. They became friends and the wolf joined Chocolate in her adventure. Along the trail they went till they came to a forest. They met a robin and they all became friends. The robin joined them. Down the trail they went till they came to a lake where they met a fish. They all became friends. The fish wanted

to join them but he couldnt leave the water. It was getting late anyway so all the friends decided it was time to go home and they would all come back tommorow to visit. Chocolate and all her friends made their way home. Back in the mountains Chocolate thought she had a great day. She made lots of friends. She was happy she went on an adventure.  
The End.

**Discussion:** The piece uses a repetitive pattern to build the story. There is no real story problem; it is a sequence of events. The repetitive nature helps to keep the piece interesting. The story starts with strong word choice and good descriptions; in the middle, the descriptions taper off as the story line becomes more repetitive. The ending ties up the story nicely. The word choice and sentence structure work together to make the piece engage the reader.

### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account
- Includes descriptive details; descriptions may be stereotypical/predictable
- Story events are predictable
- Beginning of story establishes context and main character
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses some expressive language to create images (brown with a white diamond, a valley of fresh green grass)
- Uses precise vocabulary related to the story
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Uses some transition words (one day, along the trail they went, it was getting late)
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Errors do not interfere with communication

## Little Red Riding Hood

**Narrator:** This is the story of the Little Red Riding Hood and she is going to her grandma's house to give her some flowers and cookies.

**Mother:** Can you bring your grandma some cookies and flowers so she can have something to eat.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** Yes mom I will bring cookies and flowers to her so that she can have something.

**Mother:** But beware of the Big Bad Wolf or he'll have you for dinner and don't take short cuts.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** Ok mom I'll beware of the Big Bad Wolf and I'll follow the right way.

**Wolf:** I need to get to the house before she does so I can get the cookies.

**Narrator:** Now that the Big Bad Wolf is going to the house of grandma what we'll she do.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** Hmm hmm hmm I think I'll pick wild flowers for her.

**Big Bad Wolf:** I think I'll trick Little Red Riding Hood by going to her grandma's house.

**Narrator:** Finally she made it to the house but wait and hear this.

**Wolf:** There it is she is coming soon so I can get right at it I wonder.

**Grandmother:** Who's there ahhh, help there's a wolf he's going to eat me ahhhhh.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** I've finally found my grandma's house (enters) what big teeth you have and ears you have.

**Wolf:** To hear you with to and to swallow you up with your grandma in my big mouth come here now.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** Help dad help or I'll be swallowed up by the big bad wolf, dad help!!

**Dad:** (Center with a shot gun) Here I come to save you bang bang now you will never see him again, grandma where were you?

**Grandma:** I have just been in a wolf mouth Is the wolf coming back because I don't want to get swallowed.

**Narrator:** And know the story of The Little Red Riding Hood and how she got to her grandma's house.



**Discussion:** This is an adaptation of a familiar story into a script (either for readers' theatre or a drama presentation); the story is quite neatly summarized, with a good balance between dialogue and narration. The author has the wolf "think out loud" to show details, rather than just having the narrator tell them. This makes the piece more interesting and engages the audience.

### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated (wolf wants cookies)
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account
- Includes descriptive details
- Story events are predictable
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, story problem
- Middles includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence, although coherence may falter occasionally ("There she is now so I can get right at it I wonder")
- Ending may be predictable and/or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Uses some transition words (finally, soon)
- Voice is evident

- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most high frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Errors do not interfere with communication

# The Orange ①

"What do you have for lunch Kayla?" Katelyn asked.

"I have pizza" Kayla said, I have an orange and a sandwich Zip! Zip! I opened my lunchbag and out popped a orange Catch me if you can! He shouted. He jumped on everyone's head and ran into the hall. Get him! Gassy shouted. No running! Mrs. Routledge yelled. The orange ran in Mrs. Malekos class room and pranced on everyone's desk. Get him! Paxton shouted. The grade 2s and 3s were chasing him. Catch me if you can! He yelled. No yelling! Mrs. Maleko called. Prancing and jumping up and down, the orange skipped into Mrs. Oldfords class. Hey, look! It's an orange! Kirstin shouted. The orange danced on everyone's head and ran. GET HIM! Jacob yelled. The grades ones and twos and threes chased the orange down the hall. Not to menchin the three angry teachers running after the orange! He ran into the atrium. The orange fiddled all over Mr. Fluentez art work! Acarumba! He yelled!

The orange was cornered. The grade ones, twos, threes and not to menchin the four angry teachers. So the orange scurried into the office. But, Mrs. Celine was standing in front of him. What should your punishment be? She asked. We think a detention! yelled the grade ones. O.K. Mrs. Celine said. For two hours after school. YET! We all shouted.

First draft discussion: This piece also uses a repetitive pattern to build the story. It has strong descriptive language and the sentence structure is quite sophisticated. The author starts out using quotation marks but they disappear early in the piece. This might indicate that the author is concentrating more on getting the ideas down than on the conventions. Dialogue in this piece moves the action forward, showing rather than telling it.

**The Orange**

"What do you have for lunch, Kayla?" I asked.

"I have pizza," Kayla said.

"I have an orange and a sandwich."

Zip! Zip! I opened my lunch bag and out popped an orange!

"Catch me if you can!" he shouted.

He jumped on everyone's head and ran into the hall.

"Get him!" Cassy shouted.

"No running!" Mrs. Routledge yelled.

The orange ran into Mrs. Malakoe's room and pranced on everyone's desk.

"Get him!" Paxton shouted. The grade 2's and 3's were chasing him.

"Catch me if you can!" he yelled.

"No yelling!" Mrs. Malakoe called. Prancing and jumping up and down, the orange skipped into Mrs. Oldford's class.

"Hey look! It's an orange!" Kirstin shouted. The orange danced on everyone's head and ran!

"GET HIM!" Jacob yelled.

The grade 1's and 2's and 3's chased the orange down the hall. Not to mention the three angry teachers running after the orange! He ran into the atrium. The orange fiddled all over Mr. Fuentes' art work!

"Ail Carumba!" he yelled.

The orange was cornered. The grade 1's, 2's, and 3's and not to mention the four angry teachers. So the orange scurried into the office. But, Mrs. Kelln was standing in front of him.

"What should your punishment be?" she asked.

"We think a detention!" yelled the grade 1's.

"OK," Mrs Kelln said. "For two hours after school."

"Yey!" we all shouted.

Final draft discussion: Correct formatting on dialogue makes the piece easier to read and makes the repetitive pattern more evident. There is no evidence of revision in this piece, only editing.

**EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS****Rubric qualities:**

- Writing focuses on a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Uses connections to personal knowledge and experiences to develop a fictional account (*school setting, classrooms, friends, and teachers*)
- Includes descriptive details
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, setting, and story problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending may be predictable or contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses some expressive language to create images (*jumped, pranced, danced, fiddled*)
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Uses some transition words
- Uses a variety of simple and some compound sentences
- Voice is evident
- Writing creates a tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with the story/characters; uses repetition of important phrases (*catch me if you can, the grade 2's and 3's were chasing him*), different sizes of print (*GET HIM!*), and punctuation (*exclamation marks*)
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Errors do not interfere with communication

Students in Grade Four write for a variety of purposes and audiences and are able to set more specific purposes for writing. They are expanding their informational writing, including information from a variety of sources and looking at different techniques and forms to convey their meaning. Narrative writing uses dialogue and description to show action; the content expands to include imagination and fantasy. In Grade Four, students begin to organize their writing in paragraphs. Students continue to require focused mini-lessons on the author's craft to develop their skills; they understand how visuals can help to focus the attention of the reader or to emphasize ideas. They also are able to adapt their language use to particular audiences and purposes and begin to use resources such as dictionaries, a thesaurus, or a spell checker to support conventions. Shared, guided, and independent writing time continue to be important within the class schedule. Students in grade four continue to need opportunities to share their work with others, and to write for real audiences and purposes.

On Friday when I got home I did my homework, then I watched a movie called (*The Return of Jafar*). Then D came over, we went to the cabin with L and D's dad D. On Saturday me, C and D cleaned up the cabin and yard, then we rode the quad around the yard. Then we went for a boat ride. On Sunday we plucked ducks in the morning, in the afternoon we went for a boat ride, and after that we rode the quad, we had a bar-cue, steaks, potatoes, smokies and Hot dogs.

**Discussion:** This is a journal entry that shows good sequencing and description. It is technically proficient although the sentence structure and word choice are rather basic. Even so, it allows the author's voice to come through.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains topic
- Supporting details state setting
- Actions/events are reasonably clear but they may not be detailed or extended
- Beginning of story includes setting (time/place)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Uses some transition words
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Uses commas and apostrophes
- Errors do not interfere with communication

## Sample 2

Escape From the Shark  
We had foggy days in Tulita but fog in Florida was as thick as Stew. It was Scary! A Shark was around me in the boat. It was following me in to the forest of seaweed. I was paddling the boat as fast as I could. Shark saw an eel and went after it. He come back! The Shark was coming to me. I was Scared! I wanted help. My dad came for me. But the shark come back for us. Now we were both scared. I saw a clownfish-a clownfish. The shark always kept coming to us. But dad saved the day. He took his rifle and shot it! Lots of blood came out. It made the water bloody. Now we were able to go boat to shore. What a day in Florida. It was fun but scary.

**Discussion:** This piece tells a basic story. It has a strong beginning, with an attempt to set up the context and setting. Details are included throughout the story to add to the setting (fog, seaweed, clownfish) but they do not always directly relate to the plot (*the clownfish*). The author has attempted to build suspense in the story by having the shark keep coming back, a repetition common in scary stories and movies. The author sets the story in Florida (with the ocean, seaweed, and a shark) but uses some details that are more specific to Tulita (a rifle in the boat, paddling, fog); this is common in Grade 4, when students attempt to integrate ideas from different sources into one piece. The ending ties things up nicely, solving the problem and reinforcing the setting once again.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Includes ideas from other sources into fictional account
- Supporting details state setting
- Actions/events are reasonably clear but they may not be detailed or extended
- Beginning of story includes context (typically stated) and states setting
- Ending is often contrived but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses expressive language (*thick as soup, forest of seaweed, saved the day*)
- Uses some transition words (*but, always, now*)
- Voice is evident
- Spells most words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically

The Fox and the Dog

A red and white fox was walking on a bush trail when he tripped over a stump. He was knocked out. About the same time a dog was in his backyard. And he broke his chain. He took off in the bush. His owners looked and looked for him but they could not find him.

The dog helped the fox. The dog found out the fox's name is tails. The dog's name is lucky.

They made a hole to sleep in. When they got up, there was a pack of wolves beside their den drinking water.

The alpha male was watching the wolves. He was looking for food to feed his pack. They went to sleep.

The fox and the dog ran away when the wolves fell asleep. They ran up the hill.

The wolves woke up and saw them and ran after them. The fox and dog ran away. They lost them.

The fox and the dog ran in a bush. They saw a bear and ran

again. They ran and ran and the bear got caught in a trap. The bear died. More bears came and chased tails and lucky. When tails and lucky were running towards a waterfall and they made a left, the bears fell down the waterfall. They made the bears fall but one bear lived. The bear hid in a bush and when tails and lucky slowed down the bear ran after them. The bear got caught in a trap. They saw an abandoned barn yard and decided to stay there.

**Discussion:** This piece shows an effort to set up a fictional narrative using animals as the main characters. The beginning sets the context (how the dog and fox came to be together) and provides some details about the characters. The middle of the story is a sequence of actions (all dealing with escaping threats); the bear sequence seems to have been extended to add more action or length to the story. This is common in Grade 4, as students want to have a longer "middle" portion in their stories, but have run out of plot ideas. The piece is well organized in paragraphs to begin with, but as the actions become repetitive the paragraphing disappears. The ending is a bit contrived, but is consistent with the context for the story.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

##### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains a topic
- Supporting details state characteristics (red and white fox, pack of wolves, alpha male)
- Actions/events are reasonably clear but they may not be detailed or extended (extended as a repetitive idea with the bears chasing them)
- Beginning of story includes context and setting
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence (chase sequence)
- Ending is often contrived, but is connected to actions/events (an abandoned barn yard in the bush where the two animals can live)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (alpha male, feed his pack, abandoned barn yard)
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Errors do not interfere with communication

Revised copy #1

## The last Gingerbread Boy.

Long ago, in a forest far away, there was a gingerbread house. The gingerbread house belonged to a gingerbread family: a mother, a father, a sister, a brother and a gingerbread dog named Ginger. One very cold day in winter the gingerbread boy was sent to get some wood for the fire. He didn't come home. The mother and father were worried so they took Ginger and left to look for him. They searched for hours but never found him. The mother started to cry. At home, the sister was watching ginger-vision when all of a sudden, she heard crying. But it wasn't her mother, it was coming from the back of the house. She went outside to take a peek. It was the gingerbread boy! He was sitting next to a tree. She called her mother on the phone. They came home as quick as they could. They brought in the boy and gave him some hot cocoa. Then the father said, "Why didn't you come home with the wood?" "Because you didn't give me an axe!" "Oops" everybody said together.

THE END

1. Patrick  
2. Chandelle

**Discussion:** This is a first draft and a revision (a first revision, which may mean that the author intends to do some more work on it). The names at the bottom of the first draft likely indicate peer conferencing partners. The revised draft is definitely more interesting and engaging than the first, which shows a good revision process. The story is based on familiar characters, with a twist similar to Fractured Fairy Tales. The author has created a strong beginning with details and descriptions; the first paragraph sets the context and the second establishes the setting and story problem. The middle and end of the story are all combined into one lengthy paragraph. This is common in Grade 4 writing, as description and detail often are strongest in the beginning. The author uses repetition of the "ginger" theme (gingerbread house, a dog named Ginger, watching Ginger-vision) to create a humorous effect. The ending is funny and effective, making the piece fun to read.

MEETING STANDARDS

### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated (gingerbread boy is lost)
- Includes ideas from other sources into fictional account (details from fairy tale)
- Supporting details state setting
- Actions/events are reasonably clear but they may not be detailed or extended
- Beginning of story includes context, characters, setting, and story problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is often contrived but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Uses some transition words
- Voice is evident
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Uses commas
- Errors do not interfere with communication

## The last Gingerbread Boy.

Long ago, in a forest far away, there was a gingerbread house. The house was very nice, a gumdrop walkway, candy cane windows, and a garden in the back which grew licorice. The house belonged to a gingerbread family: a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, and a dog named Ginger.

One very cold day in winter, the gingerbread boy was sent to get some wood for the fire. He didn't come home. The mother and father were worried. So they took Ginger and left to look for him. They searched for hours but never found him. The mother started to cry.

At home, the sister was watching Ginger-vision when all-of-a-sudden, she heard crying. But it wasn't her mother. It was coming from the back of the house. She went outside to take a peek. It was the gingerbread boy! He was sitting next to a tree. She called her mother and father on the phone. They came home as quick as they could. They brought in the boy and gave him some hot chocolate. Then the father said, "Why didn't you come home with the wood?" "Because you didn't give me an axe!" "Oops" everybody said together.

THE END

# The Case Of The Missing Gamebox

One freezing cold winter day I was taking a shower. When I got out dried off and gotten dressed I could not find my gameboy. So I called over Matthew, Fraser, and Joel.

We searched the whole house high and low. It was nearly impossible to find. Then we found something, and that something was dog hair. That was clue #1.

About an hour later we had a little bite to eat then continued on with the search. On the couch we found a piece of plastic.

There was clue number 2. There was only one more place to look under the bed.

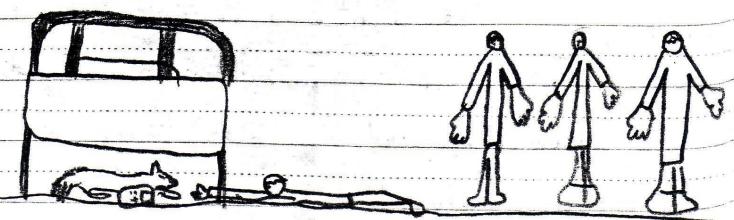
When we looked under my dog was sleeping. But then by its side we seen something silver. "Is that it?" I wondered. So I reached out and grabbed it. I was it. Case solved.

**Discussion:** Although this piece is short and has some noticeable convention errors, it has strong content and organization. It uses a traditional title ("The Case of...") and accurately follows the pattern of a mystery story. Although the clues are a bit contrived and the piece of plastic is not clearly tied to the developing plot (unless we assume that the dog is chewing on the Gameboy), the focus is generally well-sustained through the piece. The author has managed to turn an everyday event into a very engaging story.

## MEETING STANDARDS

### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Includes ideas from other sources into fictional account (*mystery stories*)
- Supporting details state setting (*one freezing cold winter day*)
- Beginning of story includes characters (*author, Matthew, Fraser, Joel*), setting (*freezing cold winter day, at home*), and story problem (*lost Gameboy*)
- Middle includes actions/events and details (*searched the house, found dog hair, had a little bite to eat, found piece of plastic, look under the bed...*) and follows logical sequence (*clue 1, clue 2, case solved*)
- Ending is often contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (*detective stories: searched high and low, continued the search, clues, case solved*)
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Uses some transition words (*then, when, but then, about an hour later*)
- Voice is evident
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader (*curiosity*)
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Uses quotation marks (*in dialogue*) and commas (*in name list*)
- Errors do not interfere with communication.



## ATTACK OF ROBOT GP01X5

Billy and Susan were smart kids that when to Backwood Elementary and they loved science so much. One day Billy read about a contest where the prize is to help in a scientific experiment. Billy was so excited, he had to tell Susan what they had to do is make a hand made model crane that does not have a motor or is controlled by hand. "We can use the power of force" said Susan. "Yah" piped Billy. They built the crane like professionals. The next week they announced the winners. "The winners are", "Billy D and Susan M" said the judge. The next day the kids went to the town laboratory. The first thing was unusual the actually want to put a brain into a machine robot. Me and Susan liked the idea, so they did it and put a data chip in the brain so it could think and move in the mechanical body. "It works" exclaimed Susan.

But it turned out that the brain had a evil side, literally just all evil known. Billy and Susan went home. The next morning they came to the laboratory but then the Robot GP01X5 was not there. "He's gone" Susan said. There was a big hole in the wall. He got away to the city" said Billy looking at the tracks. The people are in danger. The two kids went off to the city. Only taking a diversion from the laboratory. I think that electricity stalls machinery. They got to the city finally. There was a huge crowd around a big bank. The robot taken the bank hostage" someone said. "Oh No" Susan yelled. "We got to stop it. One of the bank tellers got away. He said there's a vault entrance with the code "6395H". The kids went to the entrance and opened it and went in and hid behind the counter. They could see the robot. Bill aimed the electric rod at the robot and hit it right in the middle with the ray. The robot

stalled. Billy ran over and took off the brain cover and pulled out the chip and chucked the brain over the counter. The robot would never work again. Billy D. and Susan M. were heroes.

**Discussion:** This is a longer story, which means the author has to work harder to maintain focus on the topic. This is one slip in maintaining the 3rd person storyteller, but in a piece of this length, that is not significant. The beginning sets up the context; the description of the contest and what Billy and Susan did is an example of adding lots of detail and information to the piece without really adding to the story itself. Often students in elementary grades confuse the purpose of detail and description in narrative, adding extra pieces to a story simply for the sake of having more descriptions rather than for adding depth to the critical parts of the story. They may also skip over areas that could use some description in their haste to get to the action of the piece. The middle of the story does tend to jump from action to action but is still fairly easy to follow. Putting the detail about the ray gun into the middle of the story, for use at the end, shows good planning. Sentence structure shows an effort to give a sense of voice, using pauses (The winner is..., ...an evil side actually just all evil), although the author doesn't have the punctuation to show this clearly. The notion of the children being the heroes and saving the world is likely incorporated from popular movies and other text forms.

### EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated (evil-brained robot escapes and threatens the city)
- Includes ideas from other sources into fictional account (winning a contest, kids saving the world)
- Supporting details state setting; dialogue may be confusing to the reader (quotation marks help, and the dialogue is attributed to speakers, which helps to make it clearer)
- Actions/events are reasonably clear but they may not be detailed or extended (beginning and ending having extended details, middle is more action-oriented)
- Ending is often contrived (having the two children save the world) but is connected to actions and events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (laboratory, force, robot)
- Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences
- Voice is evident
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Uses quotation marks (without internal punctuation or paragraphing)
- Errors do not interfere with communication (but editing would certainly help the clarity)

## Why The Beaver Has A Flat Tail

Long ago when animals could talk the busy beavers were rebuilding the lodge and once again it was fall. The beaver family was busy getting their lodge ready for the long winter ahead and the dam set for when the ice freezes. Lots of work must be done before winter. The food pile needed to be added to. Everyone in the beaver family was helping.

"It is a beautiful, crisp fall morning" says Mrs. Beaver. But let's get going! The birds are flying south for winter; the bears are eating berries and grubs to get fat. Lots of animals are also getting ready to hibernate.

"Good morning" says Mrs. Moose. Who always comes for a good morning snack. "I see you are so busy on the house. You should come tonight to celebrate before you go under water." Mrs. Moose offers.

"Sorry, but I can't. I have to do a lot of fixing", replies Mrs. Beaver.

One cold morning there was snow lying every where. Mrs. Beaver said it was time to stop working soon because it was winter. This was the very last day to do work. So the beaver family was busier than ever!

The ice was frozen solid. The beaver family was snug in their lodge. But it was the dead of winter and the food supply was low. Mrs. Beaver said that she would go out to get some more food. Mr. Beaver said that he would go with her.

They swam to find a hole in the ice to go through. "Look right there" exclaimed Mrs. Beaver. They poked their heads out of the hole. "Hi! Mrs. Beaver! How come you are out of the pond."

"Because our food supply is low," explained Mrs. Beaver.

"Oh, what a shame!" said Mrs. Beaver.

"Well, I have to get going cutting down trees," said Mrs. Beaver. "Good luck!" replies Mrs. Moose.

So Mr. and Mr. Beaver were busy cutting down vertical log, and carrying them to the food pile. Mr. Beaver wanted to cut down a BIG tree so they could get a lot more branches for their pile. Mr. Beaver chomped and chomped away until it was ready to fall. He yelled "TIIMMBBEERR!!"

Mrs. Beaver was walking with a branch and the tree was falling her way. "Run honey!" Mr. Beaver shouted. "Oh No" she screamed. BOOM! The tree fell right on Mrs. Beaver's tail.

After the tree fell Mr. Beaver came running to see what had happened. He asked Mrs. Beaver if she was hurt. "I am fine, but my tail is stuck under the horizontal log."

"I will get some help for you, to get you out." called Mr. Beaver. Quickly Mr. Beaver went out to find some help for Mrs. Beaver. "Someone help me HELP! Mrs. Moose was near by and heard Mr. Beaver. "What is the matter Mr. Beaver?" ASKED Mrs. Moose in a worried tone. "Oh No!" Mrs. Moose said in shock.

While Mr. Beaver was talking with Mrs. Moose. Mr. and Mrs. Wolverine, and Mr. and Mrs. Lynx, and Mr. and Mrs. Wolf came by. So, all the animals went to help Mrs. Beaver free her tail.

When they were ready they all got to lift the log. Mr. Beaver shouted, "One, two three, HEAVE!" And they DID IT!! Everyone shouted with excitement.

After all the (commotion had died down). Mr. and Mrs. Beaver traveled back to their children what happened, and who told their children the story about why beavers have a flat tail.

**Discussion:** This is a legend and follows the pattern (problem, solution, explanation of a natural phenomenon); the actions in the story are well-planned and follow a logical sequence. The story incorporates real information (beaver lodges, getting food, hibernation) with elements of legends (talking animals, helpful community) to create a new text. The beginning is carefully crafted (Long ago, when animals could talk...) to establish the context. The problem comes well into the middle of the story, and then is quickly resolved. The structure works well, though, and the piece is engaging. The conversations help to advance the plot by showing the passage of time and setting up the cooperative community. The ending adds the detail of passing the story down through the family, which enhances the piece. There are some issues with tense (moving between present and past) and some with sentence structure control (a few fragments), but given the length of the piece, these aren't significant.

## EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Writing focuses on and maintains a topic
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Supporting details state characteristics (busy beavers, talking animals) and setting (falling, rebuilding lodge)
- Actions/ events are reasonably clear
- Beginning of story includes context (getting ready for winter), characters (talking animals, specifically the beaver family), and setting (long ago, in the bush)
- Middle includes action/events and details, and follows logical sequence (also includes story problem)
- Ending is often contrived, but is connected to actions/events
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to the story (lodge, hibernate, food supply, berries and grubs)
- Uses expressive language (Timber!, commotion, dead of winter, chomped and chomped)
- Voice is evident
- Uses different sizes of print (upper case to show intensity) and punctuation (exclamation marks)
- Uses capitalization correctly
- Spells most words correctly
- Uses end punctuation correctly
- Uses quotation marks (and some internal punctuation and related paragraphing)
- Errors do not interfere with communication

Students in Grade Five continue to refine their writing skills in multiple genres. They are able to make notes (with guidance) and integrate into their writing ideas and information from several sources. They are able to experiment with different organizational formats and genres to share their ideas and information. Grade Five students are becoming more aware of their own voices when they write, and begin to try to develop their uniqueness. They become better able to structure their writing in paragraphs using a logical plot sequence (for narrative) and different organizational formats (compare/contrast, cause and effect, etc.) for informational text. The actions and/or events are often structured to advance the plot, and the ending is often contrived to fit the actions and the story problem. As the middle of the piece becomes more complex, it may be harder to tie up all the loose ends. They develop more control over conventions including tense and spelling. Students use expanded vocabulary in their writing, and are becoming more able to match word choice to audience and purpose for writing. They pay more attention to the connections between form, purpose, and audience, and begin to apply the “writing process” in different situations (video production, slide shows, drama, music, etc.). Time to work on self-selected pieces, with lots of opportunity and support to craft and refine them, continues to be important.

## Sample 1

## How The Cat Got His Whiskers!

One day in a far away house lived a cat named Scotia. This cat had no whiskers. But he didn't mind. He never cared because he was too busy playing with string. Scotia had lots of friends. His friends were dogs and cats. All of the dogs were very nice. The cats were too. One day when Scotia was playing with all his friends he heard his owner calling him. But just then he got all tangled up in his string and six little pieces got stuck to him. When everybody saw him they said "wow! What are those called. We like them. Could we get some too". Scotia said "I don't know how I got them. I just got tangled up in this string". When he looked at his string then he looked back up he saw everybody tangled up in string and got whiskers too. So they all lived whiskerly ever after.

Discussion: This piece is written as a legend to explain how cats got whiskers. The problem is clearly stated at the very beginning: "This cat had no whiskers". The rest of the piece explains how the cat got his whiskers. The solution is somewhat contrived, but provides a logical conclusion. The closing sentence is cleverly crafted (whiskerly ever after). The dialogue is missing correct punctuation. It is also missing internal commas. There are some parts of the piece that show voice, but overall the voice is not well-developed.

## APPROACHING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur (*no whiskers, got tangled up in string*)
- Story problem is clearly stated (*cat has no whiskers*)
- Supporting details in dialogue serve to advance the plot (*owner calls, gets tangled, gets whiskers, everyone else wants them*)
- Writing shows an attempt to integrate ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account (*using the structure of a legend*)
- Beginning of story establishes story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects (*whiskerly ever after*)
- Uses a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation (except in the quotation marks)
- Uses appropriate prepositions
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

## Sample 2

Dr. Jane

"Jane get up" Mr. Smith yelled

"Leave me alone" Jane yelled back "I don't want to go to school"

"So dad get up"

"Fine I'm getting up" Jane yelled.

"At the breakfast table Jane said "I hate school" Mr. Smith replied by saying "what are you complaining about, you got to school, sit and listen to the teacher. I have to go to work" "Oh you have to go to work" Jane said in a dumb voice. "You get to sit at a desk all day and answer a phone" "Fine" Mr. Smith said "you can go to work for me today Dr. Jane"

"Fine" Jane said

As news gets around like most things do. everyone heard about Mr. Smith and Jane switching places. so most parents did the same thing. That morning Jane went to the hospital as Dr. Jane and Mr. Smith went to gr. 6 as Sheila (her first name).

Jane's assistances that morning were her friends Becky, Sam and Nichey. Jane sat down in the big black comfy chair and put her feet up on the desk. just then the phone rang. It was Nichey "You have a patient she said. Jane walked out. There on the stretcher was Mr. Walker. "What do I do with him" Jane stammered. "He needs brain surgery quickly" Sam said. "But I don't know how to do brain surgery" Jane said "You do now" said Becky. The head is already split open, just take the brain out and put the new brain in" Nichey wheeled the stretcher into the operating room. The stretcher bumped against the wall and the brain fell out.

Nichey, Sam, Jane and Becky ran out of the operating room screaming. "Do you think he's dead" Sam said "I'm a murderer" Nichey yelled "Shut up" Nichey he's not dead" said Becky. The brain had to come out anyway. They all tyrod back into the room. The brain was on the floor. "Where's the new brain?" asked Jane. No one knew. "Just put the old brain back in" suggested Sam. Jane tried to put the brain back in

the head but it wouldn't go back in. Then the brain fell to the floor. But it didn't stay on the ground. It bounced off the floor then hit the wall and rebounded to the ceiling where it got stuck. "That's not the real brain is it" said Nichey "Do you think it's the real brain" Nichey it only bounced" said Jane "Someone must have switched the brain and Becky" They all looked around the room. "There in the jar" said Jane. There in the jar was a brain. Sam ran over and took the brain. She handed the brain to Jane. "Hurry stick the brain in" said Becky. "I'm trying" said Jane. The brain finally went in the head and Nichey sewed the brain up. "What about the jar? People are going to notice there is no brain in the jar" said Becky "We will put that brain in" said Jane pointing to the ceiling. Sam climbed up on the operating bed and grabbed the brain. She threw it to Nichey who put it in the jar.

After that day Jane didn't complain about having to go to school. And the bouncing brain and brain transplant was all a trick set up by Mr. Smith. But Mr. Smith doesn't know that Jane got the real brain out

of the jar and put the bouncy brain in. She won't know until she has a patient that needs a brain transplant.

**Discussion:** This piece uses an idea from movies ("Freaky Friday", "Switching Places") to develop the story. Most of the events are clear although the ending (when the reader learns the bouncing brain and brain transplant were all a trick) is a bit hard to follow, and a bit contrived. The dialogue does advance the plot well though "show, not tell", but is hard to follow because the conventions of punctuation and spelling are not consistently applied. There are elements of humour in the story (brain falling out, kids running from the room), and some development of voice, although it is not consistent.

#### APPROACHING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur
- Supporting details in dialogue serve to advance the plot
- Writing shows an attempt to integrate ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account
- Beginning of story establishes context and setting
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is often contrived, but attempts to resolve the story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct capitalization

## story The blob

On a good day in Edmonton, two boys named Daniel and Dan had chores to do. One of their chores was to get rid of a bucket of red goo that had mysteriously showed up at their house.

Daniel asked "Why do we have to get rid of this stuff? It's so gross and sticky! Yuck!" "Mom said we have to or we don't get any allowance" said Dan, "and besides, it sure stinks!"

The two boys lugged the bucket out to the back yard. "Don't spill it on Mom's flowers! She'll be angry if we kill her garden!" Warned Daniel. Just when the boys were bringing the red goo outside, it started to rain. The boys were

② getting soaking wet. They put the bucket of goo behind a pile of rocks in the back yard.

The boys turned to walk back to the house when they heard a rumble of thunder. Lightening shot down from the sky and hit the bucket of goo!

The goo started to shiver and shake just like it was alive! The boys got scared, but went to look at it anyways. The goo slithered out of the bucket and started to slide into the drain pipes.

The goo moved through the pipes and found the way to the kitchen. The boys' mother was washing the dishes.

She reached out to turn on the faucet.

When she did, the red goo flowed out and swallowed her up. The red goo started to get bigger and bigger!

The red goo grew and grew. As it got bigger, it got hungrier and it began to eat the police force's bullets. It even swallowed the men and women! The red goo turned green and began swallowing everything in sight. It ate all the people in the town, the country and eventually the whole world.

**Discussion:** This piece is a simple narrative, but shows good detail and plot development. It is well-organized in paragraphs, except for the dialogue sections. The dialogue is effective, providing details and images, and moving the plot forward. However, the dialogue only appears in the beginning of the story. The middle and end of the story are more a list of actions, although there is still good detail in the actions. The ending extends the action to a somewhat contrived conclusion (eating the whole world), and some details are unclear (why the goo turned green, and why it ate everything). Word choice is good, and there are some clear images (rumble of thunder, lightning shot down from the sky, the goo started to shiver and shake just like it was alive). There is evidence of developing voice in the piece.

### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur (lightning strikes the goo and it comes alive)
- Story problem is clearly stated (goo eats everything)
- Supporting details in dialogue serves to advance the plot
- Beginning of the story includes context (boys doing chores, ordinary day)
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence (series of actions)
- Ending is often contrived, but attempts to resolve story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects (see above)
- Uses a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Uses varied sentence lengths
- Uses some transition words
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas
- Uses appropriate prepositions
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

Sample 4

# The Three Little Pigs

Once upon a time there were 3 little pigs and they had a band. One day they were coming out of their brick house and going into their corvette. When they got into their car the wolf came and wanted to ask if he could join their band, but by the time he got to them they were gone. The 3 pigs also didn't want to talk to the wolf because he blew their house down, so they didn't want to talk to him because they were scared of him too. One day a sheep named Charlie came and asked if he could join the 3 little pigs band, and they let him join. The wolf got jealous and tried to eat Charlie, Charlie didn't notice the wolf trying to eat him but the pigs did. When the pigs finally caught the wolf, the wolf told them how he was wanting to join their band for a long time and how he was jealous of Charlie, because the pigs let Charlie join but they didn't let the wolf join. So they felt sorry for the wolf and they let him join. The wolf still had the picture of pork chops in his eyes. When the band decided to have a break they went back stage and took a break. When it was time to go back on stage and sing, the pigs couldn't find the wolf or Charlie anywhere. When the wolf came out of the back room licking his lips the pigs knew that Charlie was no longer part of the band. But they didn't really care they just burst out laughing. So the wolf and the 3 little pigs lived the rest of their life performing shows and singing songs.

**THE END**

**Discussion:** This piece is an extension of the traditional fairy tale. Some details carry forward (*living in a brick house, wolf blew down other house*) but introduces a new character (*Charlie*), setting (*playing in a band*), and adds new events (*eating Charlie*). The piece has some good word choice and images. The sentence structure is weak, and needs some editing. It also needs to be edited for paragraphs. There are also extra details; the piece could be tightened up with a revision and be made to flow better. However, it shows good ideas and certainly demonstrates good voice. The events are generally clear (although the sentence structure is a bit confusing) and the ending is clever.

**MEETING STANDARDS**

**Rubric qualities:**

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur (*Charlie and the wolf want to join the band*)
- Ideas can be plentiful but not all are significant to the plot (*didn't want to talk to the wolf because he blew down their house, when the pigs finally caught the wolf, pigs just burst out laughing*)
- Supporting details describe setting (*coming out of their brick house, getting in their Corvette*)
- Beginning of story establishes main and minor characters (*three pigs, Charlie, wolf*), and setting (*playing with a band*)
- Ending is often contrived, but attempts to resolve story problem (*wolf ate Charlie, lived the rest of their lives performing*)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects (*picture of pork chops in his eyes, came out of the back room licking his lips, the pigs knew that Charlie was no longer part of the band*)
- Uses varied sentence lengths (although control over sentence structure is weak)
- Uses some transition words
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader (*piece is humorous*)
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas

We are having a garage sale today at our house and today I have to put the stuff that I don't want anymore in a box for the garage sale. Today I also have to put price tags on the things that I want to sell. Some of the things that I want to sell are a cat coloring book that I haven't colored in before, a orange cat with black stripes teddy that I don't play with anymore, a black cat lamp that I don't use anymore, a purple shirt with a dog on it that doesn't fit me, and fox books that I don't read anymore and the books are called Puppies in the Pantry, Bunnies in the Bathroom, Kittens in the Kitchen, Hound in the Hospital, and Puppy in a Puddle.

After I was done putting the things in the box I went ~~outside~~ and put the box outside for people to buy. When I was done putting the stuff outside I went to get my piggy bank to the money in. Then I went outside to sell my stuff. By the end of the day all of the stuff was sold and I got \$99.50 for all of the stuff that I sold. So after supper I went upstairs to my room when I saw that Titi my most prized possession was gone!

I ran downstairs to tell my mom that Titi was gone. After I told her she said

that Titi probably got knocked over off the bed and probably landed in one of the boxes that she was with and had put on the ground to get my toy from my room. Once she told me that Titi had gotten sold I started to ask her who went to the garage sale and who had bought stuff. I started to phone and ask all the people who had been at the garage sale. But no one had bought Titi. Then my mom remembered that a man from Hay River had bought something from the garage sale and it must of been him that had bought Titi. So me and my mom drove to Hay River to find that man so I could get Titi back. When we got to Hay River we checked everywhere in Hay River and no one yet had Titi. But there was one more house to go. So they went to that house and a man was standing at the door. That man was the man who had bought Titi. So they asked the man if he still had a brown fox with fur missing. But he had sold it to his neighbor who lived beside him just now. So they went next door and got Titi back.

**Discussion:** This piece is a description of a real event, extended into a longer story. The garage sale setting is familiar to most students; added to that is the accidental sale of a prized possession. The beginning sets the context, but quickly starts to describe lists of details. This piece contains lots of details, but many are not essential to the story (the things being sold, the amount of money). Although the reader can empathize with losing a prized possession in the story, the voice is not strongly developed.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Ideas can be plentiful but not all are significant to the plot
- Beginning of story establishes context and story problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is often contrived, but attempts to resolve story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses varied sentence lengths
- Uses some transition words
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas
- Uses appropriate prepositions
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

Sample 6

## My Grandpa's Visit

Hello. My name is James Ritchie, and I live in Wetcrest, Atlantis. Do you love your grandparents? I do, that's why my grandpa, Bill, came all the way from Las Vegas, Nevada to visit me for the holidays last week. He came in about two days. I was flabbergasted when my parents told me he was coming.

My grandpa was coming in one day now. I was so excited! I cleaned up my room so when my grandpa comes, it would sparkle like a diamond! I put my clothes in my drawer, folded and washed, I put my toys in my toy box, and I vacuumed my room.

My grandpa came in noon the next day from the airport. We arrived there 5 minutes before his arrival. When I saw him come out of the doors, I was so excited that I almost gave myself a headache from screaming, "Grandpa, grandpa, you're here!" He said that I almost scared the begebers out of him.

When we got home, we ate lunch. My dad asked my mom, "What's for lunch honey?" "Chili," she replied. "Can I have cheese on mine?" my grandpa asked. "Sure dad," my mom said, "Why?" "Cheese is good, and very nutritious for the body," he joked. Everybody laughed.

That night, we had a game of Scrabble. My dad went first. He spelled dragon. My mom added on to that and spelled nitrogen. It was my turn next. I added on to that and spelled ogre. My grandpa's turn was next. He looked at the board for a moment. He added on to mine and spelled cheese. Everyone laughed harder than in the kitchen.

The next morning, we went to the park to play catch. My grandpa and I put the baseball mitts on and started to play. I threw the ball to my grandpa. The ball landed in the glove safely. My grandpa put the ball in his hand and said, "I'd run backwards if I were you," "Why?" I asked. He threw the ball as hard as he could. It went right by me and hit a tree 10 feet away from me. "Whoa!" I gasped. "How'd you do that?" "Practice," he answered. I looked back at the tree. There was a big

hole in the bottom the size of the baseball.

I thought this fun would never end, until the next morning. My grandpa received a phone call on his cell phone after breakfast. He answered it right away. "Hello...yes...alright...okay, bye," "That was the hospital from Las Vegas. They said that your grandma is very sick," he told me. "They said she wants me to go back to keep her company." "Poor Grandma," I said sadly.

So we all set out to the car. as we were driving to the airport, I started to weep. "I know how you feel," he told me. "I still want to spend time with you too." "You do?" I asked. "I do, but I have to take care of your grandma now, and there'll be other times." "we're here," my dad said. Well, I best be off," he said. "I'll miss you guys."

When he disappeared through the doors, I put my smile back on my face. He'll be back, I thought, He'll be back.

## The End

**Discussion:** Although this is set up as a narrative there is no story problem, and as a result story lacks some direction. The piece is well-crafted, though. It has good organization in paragraphs (except for the dialogue). There is some good descriptive language (*it would sparkle like a diamond, there was a big hole in the bottom the size of a baseball, I put my smile back on my face*), and the dialogue and descriptions show the author's voice throughout the piece. The attention to detail adds depth to the characters, building a relationship between the boy and his grandfather. The ending is contrived, but brings the story to a suitable ending and makes sense in the context of the story.

### EXCELS AT MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur
- Ideas can be plentiful but not all are significant to the plot
- Supporting details describe the characters and setting, and dialogue details serve to advance the plot
- Writing shows an attempt to integrate ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account
- Beginning of story establishes context, characters, and setting
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is often contrived
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects
- Uses a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Uses varied sentence lengths
- Uses some transition words

- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas
- Uses appropriate prepositions
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

## Year: 3040. Location: Mars Space Station.

"When we landed on Pluto's surface, everything was fine. But when we went out to look for samples, everything went wrong." Captain Wesley Avery's holographic image explained to General Erich. "Lyndon, Ruby, and I just got out of the *Yellow jacket*, when a huge laser cannon went off." Wesley said shakily. Just then, Erich noticed that Wesley's space suit was stained red. "They killed Lyndon, and wounded Ruby. They also destroyed the engines so we couldn't escape." Wesley wept. "End transmission." A computer said. "This is bad." Erich said seriously. Just then, there was a knock at the door. "Come." Erich said. "Sir, we've lost all contact with the *Yellow jacket*." A commander explained. 'One minute, there was a signal, the next it was gone.' 'This is really bad.' Erich said again.

"How are we suppose to survive?" Ruby asked Wesley. "I don't know." Wesley replied. "Ah!" Ruby exclaimed. "Sorry," Wesley said. "I didn't know I hit you." Wesley said sympathetically. "Not that, that!" Ruby screamed. Wesley followed her pointing finger, to more laser cannon fire. "Oh great," Wesley yelled. 'Do they ever give up?!?' Wesley asked in fury. The ship rocked violently. "They're

trying to get in!" Ruby yelled. 'The heck they will.' Wesley muttered. "Can you take care of your self?" Wesley asked Ruby. "Sure." Ruby replied. "Great, that's what I need you to do." Wesley said. "Where are the guns?" asked Wesley "Under this bed." Replied Ruby. Just as Wesley got the guns out of their spots, the door was blasted out of its hinges. 'What the?' Wesley said puzzled.

"Send out a rescue team." Erich commanded. "Yes sir." Commander Matt replied. "Who shall I send?" asked the commander. 'A team of twenty in the *Aurora*.' Erich said. "Yes sir." Matt said.

Blaster fire was exchanged from both sides. "How, in the name of the lord are we suppose to defeat these things?" asked Ruby. "Give up, earth people!" yelled one of the aliens. "Never!" Wesley exclaimed. Soon, all the aliens that were dead multiplied then became alive. "Lord, help us." Whispered Ruby.

"The *Aurora* goes 100,000,000 times faster than light." Explained the general. 'So that means we'll get there in no time.' Said a

crewmember. "Yes." Erich said. "Any questions before you leave?" he asked "None? Good, now GO!!!!" he yelled. They ran towards the ship. As soon as they got into their stations, they left off.

"You'll never win, earth inhabitancies!" another alien yelled. They had been throwing insults at each other for what seemed forever. Then, a huge sonic boom occurred. "What was that?" asked Ruby. "It was a sonic boom." Replied Wesley. They both watched in amazement as the aliens ran away. "Wow, I guess the sonic boom scared them away." Said Wesley. Ruby & Wesley were amazed as they saw their own kind come out of the sleek, silver ship that just landed. "We've come to rescue you." They said to the two astonished faces that looked so dirty, bloody, and scared. As they got into the ship, Wesley & Ruby told the rest of the story of their now famous tale.

**Discussion:** This is a science fiction piece, and requires some prior knowledge of the genre to make sense of the story. The opening paragraph sets the context for the story (general receiving a transmission describing what had just happened), then the middle switches between "live action" on the planet and the response from Mars. This is organized like a TV script, alternating between two scenes. The dialogue helps to move the plot forward, although the conventions are weak, sometimes making it hard to follow. This is true for the spelling, as well. Editing would have made this piece easier to read.

EXCELS AT MEETING STANDARDS

**Rubric qualities:**

- Content is developed with an audience/purpose in mind
- Content includes "why" and "how" actions/events occur (*attacked by aliens, stranded on Pluto*)
- Story problem is clearly stated
- Supporting details describe the setting, and dialogue details serve to advance the plot
- Writing shows an attempt to integrate ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account (*based on science fiction stories*)
- Beginning of story establishes context, setting, and story problem
- Middle includes actions/events and details, and follows logical sequence
- Ending is often contrived (*rescued by their colleagues*)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary related to story (*holographic transmission, laser cannon, sonic boom*)
- Uses expressive language to create images or effects (*The Aurora goes 100,000,000 times faster than light, Wesley's space suit was stained red*)

- Uses a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Uses varied sentence lengths
- Uses some transition words
- Writing evokes a feeling or response on the part of the reader
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas
- Uses appropriate prepositions

Grade Six students are becoming more proficient in revising and crafting their representations. They keep their audience and purpose in mind when choosing the genre to use as well as the appropriate language and vocabulary. They understand the power of well-crafted material to move and persuade others, and focus on enhancing their work to improve their communication. They are able to delete irrelevant or unnecessary information as well as adding details. Vocabulary choices reflect an understanding of the ambiguity of language and the ability to convey various shades of meaning. Presentations show evidence of planning and an understanding of organizational formats specific to genres. Students also begin to adapt organizational formats to meet specific needs according to their audience and purpose. Grade Six students write for their own purposes and to express their own messages. They continue to need time to work on pieces that are sustained over a longer period of time. Modeling and mini-lessons continue to be an important part of the learning process for Grade Six students.

## Bible Camp

I am on my way to a camp called "Bible Camp." It was a wet rainy day on the way to the camp. My sister, cousins and I were going to the camp. When we finally got to the camp, we had to register. We could buy a camp T-shirt if we wanted. I bought a red one.

This is my first time going to camp and I am very excited. After we registered we walked around and viewed the camp. I saw something very weird. It was called the blob.

Then we went to my cabin. We met the cabin counselor, his name was Barry. There were eight people in my cabin, and I was with my best friend. His name was Justin. Our cabin cabin number was cabin eight. There were twelve cabins in all at camp.

The first day of camp we all met at the dinner hall for breakfast. After breakfast we went to first period where everyone participated in many different fun activities. My first activity was rocketry. At rocketry we started building a model rocket that we would be able to launch, at the end of camp.

When we went to lunch, you had to sit at a table with the people from your cabin and your counselor. There was a contest on to see which cabin could finish eight litres of water first. My cabin came in third place.

After lunch was second period. The activity I had for second period was archery.

It was really fun. Then came third period. My third period was Kayaking it was hard and you got soaked. When third period was over it was supertime.

Then the fun began. We went down to the lake. By the lake was the blob. My counselor explained how it worked. Instead of going swimming I decided to try the blob. The blob was a big pillow-like balloon floating in a dugout. You climbed up a really high ladder onto a platform. Then you jumped onto the blob. When you hit the blob you would crawl to the end of the blob then you wait for the next person to jump. After the next person jumps and hits the blob you bounce up high in the air and hit the water. It is awesome.

This was my first full day at camp. I am sure I will experience more days like these to come. My favorite part of camp was the friendship and the blob. It was the best part of my summer.

**Discussion:** This piece is an extended journal entry/activity description. It is technically well-written with good sentence structure, paragraphing and conventions. There is not a lot of description beyond the specific details of the activities. There is not much evidence of voice in this piece, primarily because of the word choice. There is a lot of repetition in both word choice and structure (first period, second, period, activity); this seems to keep the piece from flowing well. The description of "the blob" should have been the strongest section, since it was the most fun, but the description of it was the same as the rest of the piece. Revision to look at word choice might make the piece more engaging to the reader, as well as giving it more voice.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account (*describes first day of camp*)
- Beginning of story establishes key information about context and setting (*going to camp*)
- Writing is organized in paragraphs (*one clear idea in each paragraph*)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Uses a variety of sentence lengths
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation
- Uses appropriate noun-pronoun agreement
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

## Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Dylan .  
 He hates going to the dentist  
 He has to go  
 He is sitting in the dentist chair  
 The dentist leaned over  
 Dylan opened his mouth  
 Suddenly something fell from the Dentist's mouth  
 Dylan spit it up  
 He sat up  
 The dentist was coming closer  
 Dylan kicked the light that was over him  
 It hit the dentist  
 The dentist fell backward onto the floor  
 He bursts into a million cockroach  
 Sprays the cockroaches with water and other things  
 Cockroaches die  
 It was a dream

Like every kid  
 Dylan hates going  
 to the dentist.

"I won't go and you can't make me" he screamed.  
 Dylan was holding onto the door frame while his  
 mother was trying to pull him out. Finally he lost  
 grip and let go of the door frame. Dylan's mother  
 pulled him over to the car and pushed him in.

Half an hour later he was sitting in the dentist  
 chair waiting for the dentist. "He made me go" he  
 muttered. Just then the dentist walked in. He was a  
 short man, fat with thin arms. Kind of like a cockroach.  
 Dylan thought. "Open your mouth" said the dentist.  
 Dylan opened his mouth. Then dentist leaned over  
 to look in his mouth. Suddenly Dylan felt  
 something on him. He looked down and there was  
 a cockroach. Then it doubled so there was two  
 cockroaches.

The dentist was coming at him. Dylan had to

Discussion: This piece has strong content, organization, and voice. The ideas are quite well developed and are set out clearly in paragraphs. The beginning and middle are strong, although the ending is contrived (*it was all a dream*). The actions flow well and follow a logical sequence. The descriptions are brief but effective, and develop the sense of rising action and evoke the feeling of anxiety about the insects. The sentence structure and conventions would definitely benefit from editing as there are a number of sentence fragments and some of the spelling, number agreement, and punctuation errors do make the piece difficult to read.

## APPROACHING STANDARDS

## Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional accounts (*visiting dentist, mutant insects*)
- Context and characters are generally developed and sustained throughout story (*multiplying evil cockroaches*)
- Includes descriptive details (*reluctance to go to the dentist, multiplying cockroaches, squishing them, killing with candy*)
- Beginning of story establishes context and setting (*dentist visit*)
- Middle develops plot: rising actions are selected to move the plot forward and there are established connections among actions (*appearance of cockroaches, keep multiplying, trying to kill them, finding the candy, all the cockroaches dying*)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience (*tools, fluoride, water spray*)
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in reader (*most can empathize with not wanting to go to the dentist and a revulsion towards the cockroaches*)
- Uses correct capitalization

think fast. He looked up, there was the light  
 the dentist used to look in his mouth. Dylan  
 kicked it. The light hit the dentist in the  
 stomach. The dentist fell backwards onto the floor.

Then the dentist split open into millions of  
 cockroaches. Dylan looked around. cockroaches  
 were coming at him from every direction. On the  
 tray beside him was a water spray for rinsing  
 your teeth. Dylan picked it up and sprayed  
 the cockroaches. The pressure from the water  
 burst the cockroaches into tiny pieces. Then  
 there was even more cockroaches coming at him.  
 Dylan jumped off the dentist chair and onto the  
 floor. Squishing cockroaches as he walked. He  
 couldn't kill them fast enough. They started to  
 crawl up his body. Shaking them off he jumped  
 up on the counter. Dylan started throwing all the  
 dentist's tools at them. Some of the cockroaches  
 died. There were still lots of them. Dylan picked  
 up a bucket of pink stuff. It was fluoride. He  
 threw it. Nothing happened. Opening cupboards

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and throwing whatever was in them. He came  
 to the last cupboard. There was candy and suckers  
 in it. Dylan picked up a piece of gum, chewed it  
 then spit it at the cockroaches. They started to die.  
 Dylan started throwing suckers and all the  
 candy at the cockroaches. The cockroaches were  
 from a dentist's body. Candy is bad for your  
 teeth. Dylan started throwing them. Dylan didn't eat  
 any of the candy. Eventually all the cockroaches died.

Then Dylan heard a drilling from behind him.  
 He turned around and opened his eyes. It was  
 all a dream and the drilling was the dentist  
 drilling a cavity.

### My experiences with the land

I like to go camping out in the bush at our friends cabin. We go to the cabin for a little vacation on the weekends. When we go into the bush we always set snares. We snare only rabbits. The snaring area is near the salt river. It is a frozen stream. We always have fun set them. We go sliding, and sledging all day. We take breaks and climb on the ridge near the thick frozen salt river.

When kids are out then they always roast hot dogs over the blazing fire. We huddle up close together because of the icy northern wind. By the end of the day our mittens are damp, cold feet and red noses come into the warm cabin. We always set snares on one day then as early as we can we get up to check our waiting rabbit snares. If we caught a rabbit we would wash it, skin it, then we would chop up the rabbit and make rabbit stew sometimes.

Sometimes we go and trap muskrats with Conular traps and long stick poles. We drive along looking for muskrats breathing hole, that were we set the big traps.

On nice sunny day we take the long three hour drive to the old buffalo ranch. There we ride the horse fence and drop back first into the three foot deep snow.

We also go out with d... and s... (they own the cabin) to look for moose. We find moose tracks and follow them to track them down. It's fun out there away from the town and having a peaceful but really fun weekend out in the bush.

**Discussion:** This piece is a description of a series of events on the land—skidooing, trapping, hunting, etc. It integrates a number of different events. There is no story problem, since this is a series of events and activities. The descriptions are clear and there is good use of imagery (huddle up close together because of the icy northern wind, cold feet and red noses come into the warm cabin). There is a strong voice in the beginning and middle; it is carried through to the end, though perhaps not as strongly. The errors in this piece (conventions, primarily) could be corrected in an editing conference, making the piece easier to read.

### APPROACHING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account
- Includes descriptive details
- Beginning of story establishes context and setting
- Middle establishes connections between events
- Writing is organized in paragraphs
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary
- Uses descriptive and figurative language
- Uses a variety of sentence lengths
- Uses a variety of transition words
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader

# Sumi

## and the Oracle of Shadows

One summer there lived an elf named Sumi. He was ten and he had yellow hair. He was always wearing green. Sumi had two friends. Their names were Ellis and Makue. Ellis was a wizard and Makue was a water elf. Ellis liked wearing red and his hair was black. Makue liked wearing blue and his hair was green.

These guys liked exploring around and making new friends. One day they were walking and they saw a gate. They all looked at their maps and saw a gate. It said it was the gate to the Forest of the Dark.

So, the three friends went into the Forest of the Dark. It was scary. All of a sudden, a thing jumped past the three friends. They all ran out of the forest. They ran all the way back their home land. They got some more equipment. They picked up a sword, a shield, and a bow and arrow. They went back to the gate and they went back in.

They saw the scary trees. They went farther into the forest, and then they saw a castle. They went in some bats flew out. They saw some stairs they climbed up.

Then all of a sudden the door shut. So they went in a door that was half open, and they saw two people with an magic stone. The people saw them

and one shot a fireball at them.

Sumi hit it back at the person. Ellis looked at his book. It said that there were two people who lived in the forest their names were Vex and Bakura. It also said that they were evil and they wanted to rule the world.

So the shadow warrior Bakura battled Sumi and Vex. Bakura battled Ellis and Makue. After the battle Bakura was gone and Ellis and Makue were down. Sumi got revenge for Ellis and Makue by destroying Vex.

He then brought Ellis and Makue to the helping hospital. They were okay but they had to stay there for 2 weeks. After that they lived happily ever after.

**Discussion:** This piece has strong content, integrating ideas from anime, manga, and Tolkein. The organization is basic, but effective. It has a beginning, middle, and end, and a basic story problem. The piece uses basic vocabulary and sentence structure. There is an attempt to include description and detail in the beginning, but it is not sustained throughout the piece. The middle relies heavily on basic vocabulary to describe the actions (got some more equipment, went back to the gate, went back in, they saw, they went, they saw). The author uses mostly simple and compound sentences, and follows a consistent pattern. Despite the basic word choice and sentence structure, though, there are some points in the story where the author's voice does come through.

## MEETING STANDARDS

### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to story problem (*story problem is not clearly defined, as there is no reason given for going into the Forest of the Dark*)
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account (*typical anime and manga*)
- Context and characters are generally developed and sustained throughout the story (*actions and details are consistent with the style*)
- Includes descriptive details (*basic details including description of characters*)
- Beginning of story establishes characters
- Middle develops plot
- Ending is connected to actions/events and resolves the story problem (*defeat the evil characters and save his friends*)
- Writing is organized in paragraphs
- Word choice is appropriate for intended Audience (*equipment, sword, shield, bow and arrow, fireball, shadow warrior*)
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation
- Uses appropriate noun-pronoun agreement
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning

## Amanda and the Dragon

There once was a girl who lived with her family on a farm outside of Olds A. B. She had a sister, a mother, a father, and a dog named Ruff. Her name was Amanda. She was a tall girl with blond hair and brown eyes. She was a nice polite person.

One day, Amanda took Ruff for a walk around the farm. Ruff was a golden retriever with long ears and a short tail. As soon as they reached the fence to the yard, Ruff pulled on the leash as hard as he could and ran off into the woods.

Amanda ran after him, calling, "Ruff! Ruff! Come here, boy!" But Ruff didn't come.

Then she heard a soft whimper beyond the bushes ahead of her. Amanda ran into the bushes but didn't see anything. Amanda started to worry so she decided to get help. But when she went back through the bushes she realized she was lost. Amanda didn't know what to do.

Just then, she heard a whimper again except louder this time. She ran back into the bushes. She kept going until she came to a large cave. There she saw a dragon.

The dragon stared at Amanda. Amanda screamed. Then out of the cave came Ruff. He looked perfectly fine. He was wagging his tail and looked happy. Amanda then realized that the dragon

**Discussion:** This piece starts out with a strong introduction; it has lots of details and sets the context well. The dialogue in the middle section moves the story forward, although there is not a lot of action in the middle. The ending introduces the description of the dragon, but does not use that information. The final paragraph is rushed and does not connect the details from the beginning and middle of the story. Despite the weak ending, the story is engaging and the author's voice does come through. A revision conference to work on the ending might be helpful. The conventions in the piece are generally good. The dialogue is correctly punctuated and paragraphed, with only a few errors.

### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Integrates ideas from personal experience and different sources into fictional account (dog gets lost, meeting a dragon)
- Dialogue and action work together to advance the plot (Ruff pulls Amanda to the dragon, dragon assures Amanda that she is nice and not to be scared, dragon invites Amanda into her cave)
- Includes descriptive details (descriptions of Amanda, dog, cave, dragon)
- Beginning of story establishes key information about characters and setting (Amanda and Ruff, and the woods)
- Writing is organized in paragraphs (dialogue, with only a few errors, as well as regular paragraphing)
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses descriptive and figurative language to create desired effects (heard a whimper beyond the bushes, started to worry, Amanda was trying to break away quickly with Ruff)
- Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences effectively
- Voice is evident
- Uses correct capitalization
- Uses appropriate noun-pronoun agreement
- Spells most words correctly, errors do not significantly impede meaning

was still staring at her. Ruff ran to Amanda. Amanda was trying to back away quickly with Ruff. But Ruff was pulling Amanda to the dragon.

The dragon said, "Hi." Amanda was scared. Then the dragon said, "Don't be scared. I am a nice dragon."

Amanda thought the dragon was tricking her. "What's your name?" asked the dragon.

"Amanda," said Amanda.

"My name is Dora the dragon."

"Hi," said Amanda.

"Don't be scared of me," said Dora.

"You can trust me."

Amanda started to like Dora. "Ok," said Amanda. "But can you tell me why you had my dog?"

"He came to me," said Dora.

"Oh, Do you live here?" asked Amanda.

"Yes I do. Would you like to come into my cave?"

"Sure," said Amanda.

So they both went into the cave. It was a nice cave. There was a large bed, a very big swimming pool, a tiny window, and a chest full of books.

"Wow!" said Amanda. "I like your cave."

"Thanks," replied Dora.

Then Dora switched a light on. In the light, Amanda noticed that Dora was a red and purple dragon with a spiky tail and her eyes were a dark blue colour. Amanda looked around the cave and noticed a clock. It was 5:30. She should have been home an hour ago! She said good-bye to Dora and promised she would be back the next day. From that day on Dora and Amanda were best friends.

### The Grave-Yard of death

By:

On Halloween night a girl named Natalie was invited to a Halloween party. To start off the party they told ghost stories. Natalie couldn't help but burst out that she wasn't afraid of ghosts. In her mind she wondered why she had impulsively burst out that she wasn't afraid of ghosts.

They were having a good time until they decided to play Halloween truth or dare. Natalie was nervous because she didn't know what they were going to ask her to do especially because she had burst out that she wasn't afraid of ghosts.

Some people were dared some pretty scary things, but Natalie finally became okay with it... until it was her turn. Then she became nervous again. She thought about the ghost storys and the cemetary down the road. She was really freaked out.

The boy next to her asked her "Truth or Dare?"

Natalie answered quickly "I choose dare! What's the worst that could happen? Anyway, I'm not even afraid of ghosts!"

"Since you're not afraid of ghosts I want you to go to the grave yard, take a knife and stick it in to Old Man Jeoffory's grave. I bet you're scared now?" replied the boy.

For a trick some of the kids decided to make some ghosts and scare Natalie away from the cemetery. Since she had been bragging about how she wasn't scared of ghosts.

When Natalie got to the grave yard she saw that all of the graves were old and dusty. Natalie felt a chill of fear run up her spine when she saw Old Man Jeoffory's grave. Natalie thought it was a sign to get away from the cemetery but she thought she was paranoid. Suddenly, she saw an older looking man walking through the dark fog. The figure was pale and Natalie thought he was calling somebody.

All of a sudden a cold gust of wind blew by Natalie causing the knife to fall out of her hands. The figure of the man was coming closer and closer then Natalie finally figured out the old man was Old man Jeoffory's ghost. She tried to run but the knife had caught Natalie's costume.

Natalie turned around and the ghosts that the kids had made came flying towards her. Natalie started to scream! She saw the ghost of Old man Jeoffory just feet away. Then Natalie became so overwhelmed that she died from Cold, hard, FEAR!!!

**Discussion:** The piece is written as a ghost story, with a build up of suspense from beginning to end. This is generally effective; the author makes a point of discussing how Natalie bragged about not being afraid of ghosts even though she was. This keeps coming up in the story until she is finally overcome by her fear. The story is well organized in paragraphs. The details are fairly specific, but may be repetitive ("she burst out" is used several times). There are some minor sentence structure errors, along with some convention errors ("your" instead of "you're", missing apostrophes), but the piece is generally clear and easy to read. Many of the rubric qualities are present but at a standard level.

#### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Dialogue and action work together to advance the plot
- Includes descriptive details
- Beginning of story establishes key information about context (*Natalie has said she's not afraid of ghosts*), characters (*Natalie*), setting (*Hallowe'en party*), and problem (*dared to go to the graveyard*)
- Middle develops plot through rising actions selected to move the plot forward (*dare, making ghosts, cold wind, Old Man Jeofrray's ghost*)
- Ending is connected to actions/events and resolves the story problem
- Writing is organized in paragraphs
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience (*nervous, scary, bragging, finally became okay with it, she was really freaked out*)

- Uses precise vocabulary (*impulsively burst out, paranoid, overwhelmed, chill of fear run up her spine*)
- Voice is evident
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader (a good ghost story!)
- Use correct capitalization
- Uses correct end punctuation and commas (sentence structure is not always consistent)
- Uses appropriate noun-pronoun agreement (a couple of errors, but not significant)

## \*The Crystal Den\*

"Aww man!" Sighed Kyte when his team mate absentmindedly kicked the ball over the fence and into the bush.

Kyte was 12 and was on a soccer team, but the team stank. They lost almost every game, and were mockingly laughed at by the other teams.

"I guess I'll have to get it." murmured Kyte angrily when no one went after it.

As he walked through the gate and into the overgrown bush where the ball had rolled, he sighed. He had been having a pretty bad day. He got a D in his math test and his parents were going to be mad at him.

As he pushed his way through a berry bush, he spied the ball rolling to a stop in front of a strange tunnel. It looked man-made, but the bricks were worn and smooth, obviously it had been out here for a while.

When he went over to pick up the ball, he was startled to hear a soft voice.

"Hey Kyte, whatcha doing?"

It was Laura his soft spoken 9 year old sister,

"Hey Laura, im just getting the ball for our soccer game,"Replied Kyte, "how about you?"

"I come here to think, I guess its the smell, but ive never noticed this tunnel before."Commented Laura quietly.

She was right, the woods had a peculiar aroma, it was calming, and cleared ones mind.

"This tunnel is strange" Mentioned Kyte, forgetting about the soccer game,"I'm going to crawl through"

"Be careful Kyte," Reminded Laura, as Kyte crawled in cautiously. "I don't want you to get hurt,"

"I will be Laura" Came Kyte's reply from inside the dark tunnel," don't worry.

As Kyte crawled through slowly, he noticed a faint glow like a buzzing young firefly. He paused, wondering what it could be, but then dismissed it.

As he crawled further and further, he felt out of place, kind of like a fish out of water, he felt like he didn't belong here at all, but he couldn't stop, he was to far in to turn back now.

**Discussion:** This piece is a more complex one, with greater detail and description. The author attempts to use precise words, but not always correctly (murmured angrily). However, the language does build imagery. It would appear that the author has an image he is trying to convey but hasn't quite found the best word choice to do so. Details included in the piece, while not always linked directly to the plot (a D in his Math test), do serve to help to develop the character. Sentence structure often includes a series of phrases with commas but no transition words to connect them. The plot moves along to the conclusion, which is quite well-connected to the rest of the story, and which does provide adequate closure. It is a bit rushed compared to the rest of the piece, but this is not unusual even in Grade 6 work.

### MEETING STANDARDS

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account
- Dialogue and action work together to advance the plot
- Context and characters are generally developed and sustained throughout the story
- Beginning of story establishes context (*exploring a mysterious tunnel*), characters (*Kyte*), setting (*cave*), and problem (*getting out of the cave safely*)
- Middle develops plot; rising actions/events are selected to move the plot forward (*the faint glow growing larger and brighter, sudden opening of floor, finding the crystal, breaking it, etc.*) and connections are established among actions and events (*breaking the crystal, taking it with him, being trapped inside, putting the pieces back together, returning the crystal to the shrine, and then being able to escape*)
- Ending is connected to actions/events and resolves the story problem
- Writing is organized in paragraphs
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses descriptive and figurative language to create desired effects (*woods had a peculiar aroma, faint glow like a buzzing young firefly, kind of like a fish out of water, a pool of the clearest water he had ever seen*)
- Uses a variety of sentence lengths
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the story
- Uses correct end punctuation
- Uses appropriate noun-pronoun agreement

Continued on next page

The soft light in the distance grew larger and brighter as he got closer towards it. the buzzing seemed to get gradually louder also.

"A dead end?!" Kyte screamed loudly when he reached the end of the tunnel. "I missed my soccer game for thi....!?"

He was cut off by the floor flying open beneath him, he let out a howl as he fell down the tunnel, frantically trying to grab on to something, but to no avail.

He cried "Ouch" when he landed on a sloped surface, as he stumbled to his feet, he looked around, it looked like some sort of ancient shrine.

There was a stone bridge that stretched over a pool of the clearest water he had ever seen, it attached to a round platform made of marble, and sitting right in the middle of this platform, there was a crystal.

The crystal gave off a faint glow and was humming slightly, Kyte approached the crystal and knew why he had felt like he should have not been there, he turned to run, but slipped and fell, knocking the crystal down, breaking it in half,

"What have I done?" Kyte asked himself, he picked up the two pieces of the crystal and put them in his backpack, then ran out.

As he got to the end of the tunnel again, he started to think, "What was that place?" he thought maybe it was some sort of temple, or maybe a shrine.

He reached the exit where his sister stood, but when he tried to leave, he hit his head on something, but when he looked, nothing was there! He pushed his hands outwards, but they also hit the invisible barrier.

"What now?" he wondered, then he remembered the crystal, he took out the two shards, the strong humming had deafened into a soft murmur by now, and placed them together, they fused instantly, he turned around and ran back to the shrine.

As he placed the crystals in the shrine they started to glow strongly again, but they were glowing a deep red, it was like the crystal was mad at him for disturbing it, then the tunnel started to shake, an earthquake!

He ran out as the tunnel collapsed behind him. He lived out the rest of his life happily, never forgetting but never daring to return to the shrine, which he simply named,

The Crystal Den

Fina

"But what happens if we never find her?" asked Aika.  
"Don't worry," Vyse began, "All day she's been acting strange but her eyes began to glow yellow and then she started talking about a blue gem. If you know her, it's probably just some new fashion decision."

"Ya, probably," answered Aika. "What do you think, Gilder?"  
"I think that she probably fell into a lion trap and might be people are trying to figure out what she is," explained Gilder.

Gilder was as strange as a albino rat. He would believe anything that he heard. If it was that Elvis was on the moon, he would believe it. Then there was Vyse. He was the leader of the foursome. He was brave, strong but not the smartest of the bunch. There was Aika. She loved animals, dirt and mud. She could run like a deer, hop like a rabbit, and was smart too. But of all of these 4, Fina was the strangest. She was as cute as a Kokua, lovely as a rose, could shop till she dropped and still have money left over.

Earlier this day when they were walking home from school, Fina stopped dead in her tracks. The others asked her why she stopped but her eyes began to glow yellow, and then she started to talk about a blue gem. "It's lonely. It needs a friend," she would say, but the others just stared and watched as her body quickly disappeared. A few minutes later, Aika, Vyse and Gilder began to look for her, but they found nothing.

"Gilder, where's Vyse?" asked Aika.

"I dunno," Gilder admitted. "Maybe he fell into..."

"Wait!" Aika screamed. "Look!"

Where Aika was pointing there was a small hole. It looked like a chimney covered in leaves and inside of it was Vyse, slowly but surely going in. Aika, not knowing what to do, quickly followed and soon after Gilder too went in.

Continued on next page

#### Rubric qualities:

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of the events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Dialogue and action work together to advance the plot
- Context and characters are generally developed and sustained throughout story (Gilder's focus on lion traps and midges, people, Vyse as the leader and taking charge)
- Includes descriptive details (description of characters, cave)
- Beginning of story establishes characters (Fina, Gilder, Vyse, and Aika) and problem (Fina is missing)
- Middle develops plot; rising action/events are selected to move the plot forward (finding the cave entrance, leaning on the lever, the collapsing cave, etc.) and connections are established between the actions and events (the 'lonely' gem needing to be returned to the 'switch')
- Ending is connected to actions/events and resolves the story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- Uses precise vocabulary (some new fashion decision, not the smartest of the bunch, huge stalactites hanging from the roof)
- Uses descriptive and figurative language to create desired effects (as strange as an albino rat, If it was that Elvis was on the moon, fresh clear water coming from the top of the walls and flowing into pools in the ground)
- Uses a variety of sentence lengths
- Voice is evident in the organization of ideas (starting with the dialogue piece, interjections by Gilder, implied escape from the cave as an ending)
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader

When they got in, everything was beautiful, there were slabs of rock on the wall that were glowing bright blue, there was fresh clear water coming from the top of the walls and flying into pools in the ground. And huge stalactites hanging from the roof of the cave. It was beautiful.

"Wow," noted Aika. "It's so beautiful." "I bet it's the world of midgets and it's a secret to the rest of the earth," added Gilder. "I bet this is what Fina was talking about," replied Vyse. Fina should be around here somewhere, let's go look.

So the 3 of them began to search the cave and 2 hours later Gilder stopped to rest, but when he leaned down to rest on a slab of glowing blue rock he pushed a lever and the wall began to shake and the stalactites began to fall from the ceiling. Aika, Vyse and Gilder were in danger. Suddenly 2 slabs of glowing rock pushed together almost like a tent from the falling debris so the 3 of them ran for cover under the tent like rocks. When everything seemed to stop they stepped out of there shelter and went through the tunnel that the lever had opened. After a few minutes of walking they ran into Fina who was holding a blue crystal and hiding in the corner crying.

"What's wrong?" asked Aika. "O yay!" screamed Fina. "You're here! It's been about 4 hours, I began to lose hope that I ever would get out of here. And as soon as the earthquake I knew that I would never get out but look

Your here!"

"Yes WE are here," added Vyse. "But how are we going to get out and what is that blue rock that you are holding?"

"Oh" Fina exclaimed. "I don't know how to get out, but I think that this blue rock is why we are here. Before I came in here I found this blue rock and eight before the earthquake came I found a switch that this fit perfectly into, so I think that if we find the switch and put this in we will be able to get out."

"OK" Gilder shouted. "At least we don't have to fight an army of midget people with our bare hands."

Sample 8, continued

**Discussion:** This piece is difficult to read because of the numerous convention errors. However, it has very good content and plot development and uses some sophisticated techniques to develop the story. Using the dialogue at the beginning as a kind of foreshadowing is very effective, and sets up the context and the characters. Gilder's fascination with midgets is woven through the story in a consistent way that makes the character seem believable. Vyse, as the leader, is the one who takes charge each time there is a change in the plot. The dialogue moves that action forward, and is generally clear. The piece contains lots of descriptive language, although similes seem to be overused in describing the characters. There is also a lot of repetition in the cave descriptions with the beautiful, glowing blue rock. The sentence structure is sometimes hard to follow because of the problems with punctuation, however there are some good examples of complex construction (*It looked like a chimney covered with leaves and inside of it was Vyse, slowly but surely going in. Aika, not knowing what to do, quickly followed and soon after, Gilder, too, went in.*). This piece really needs an editing conference to clean up the convention errors; if those were fixed it would excel at meeting the outcomes.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

## May Belle's Adventure

There once was a girl named May Belle. She is a girl who loves to play with paper dolls in all shapes and sizes. She also lives in a country side with a lot of farming and flat grasses. She also has two older and more mature sisters, one older brother who is also more mature than her, and one little sister who is the youngest of the whole family. Her two older sisters' names are Ellie and Brenda. Her older brother's name is Jess, and her younger sister's name is Joyce Ann. She also has a mother and a father. And she is in the first grade as well.

They were all a happy family, until one day at school, there was this new boy in school named Guy Bauer. He was in the sixth grade. In his old school, in Orlando, Florida, he picked on any kid he wished. And to start his first month of school, he decided to pick on May Belle.

The next day at school, once everyone got off the bus, Guy followed May Belle to the playground. "Hi," he said. "My name is Guy Bauer. What's yours?"

"My name is May Belle Aarons," she replied. "Nice to meet you Guy."

They were on the swings, so he got an idea. "Want a push?" he asked with a sneer on his face. "Sure, why not," she answered.

May Belle didn't know what he was up to, so when he pushed May Belle, he didn't push her. Instead, he spun her around so fast, by the time she stopped, she started puking on school grounds!

"Are you O.K?" he asked, saying it in a laughing tone. "No, thanks to you, you creepazoid!" she yelled furiously with her fists in the air. Her lips were dripping of some sort of orange.

*Bzzzz! Bzzzz!*

It was the bell. It was time to go in. When she got home from school, it looked like her eyes were going to pop out.

"What's the matter, May Belle?" everyone said in shock. "What's the matter? I'll tell you what's the matter! Everything's the matter! There's this new boy in school in the sixth grade named Guy Bauer who was picking on me today, I couldn't concentrate in school, I didn't complete my work, and, *UURGH!*"

She was so mad, that there was steam coming out of her ears. "Honey," her mom started saying, "Why don't you talk with your school principal? You know how he is about boys picking on girls."

"Hey yeah," Jess said. "Guy would get kicked out of school for sure, May Belle."

"You could even get mom or dad to talk to the principal about it themselves," Ellie put in.

"Or you could just walk away," said Brenda. All Joyce Ann said was "Woo waa."

"Thanks, guys. You're the best," she told them.

Continued on next page

The next day at school, May Belle had her own idea for Guy. Guy was following her, not knowing what May Belle had up her sleeves.

"Hi Guy. Wanna play?" she asked him.

"Sure," he replied in an evil tone.

"Can I push you on the swing?" she asked with a snicker.

"No, you may not," he replied, thinking that she'd want to copy what he did to her yesterday. Well, she did.

"Well, how 'bout I push you down the slide, then?" she asked with another snicker.

"Sure, but I get to push you down first," he said in a low voice.

"No, you can't, 'cause I get sick if I go first. I'll push you down first," she replied.

"Fine. You push me down first, then," he said to May Belle.

This was her plan to get back at Guy. She knew that the slide was being repainted. But Guy didn't know.

"Here we go!" she yelled. She knew what was going to happen, he was going to get paint all over his butt!

"That was fun, but now it's your turn to go!" he yelled to May Belle.

"Why would I want to go if you already have wet, white, glossy paint on your butt?" she giggled.

When he saw what was on him, he really freaked out big time. "Ahh! My pants! My beautiful pants! look what you did to me!"

*Bzzzz! Bzzzz!*

It was time to go in to classes.

That day when she got home from school, she was so happy. "Whew. What an adventure I had today!" she yelled happily. And from that day on, Guy never picked on her again.

**Discussion:** This piece has strong content and organization, and shows the development of the author's voice. The topic is familiar to most students. The author's attempt to write from the perspective of a grade one student is interesting; the age of the character is not convincingly sustained throughout, but there is an effort to do so. The older brother and sisters offer good advice, along with the parents, but May Belle eventually solves her own problem, making the story appealing. The beginning of the piece gives a lot of detail, not all of which is connected directly to the story problem, although the author does make the point that the older siblings are "more mature", which fits with the advice they give her about the bullying. The dialogue in this piece is well crafted, using natural "student" language, and it helps to move the action forward. Word choice is interesting in the piece. Some sections are very well done, while others have imprecise descriptions (*It was the bell, It was time to go in, You're the best*) Paragraphing skills are not applied consistently; the paragraph breaks are there, but spacing and indenting are inconsistent. This is a formatting issue that could be addressed in an editing conference. Punctuation (particularly commas and periods) also are used inconsistently and would benefit from an editing conference.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

**Rubric qualities:**

- Content is developed for a specific audience/purpose
- Majority of events in the story are connected to the story problem
- Integrates ideas from personal experiences and different sources into fictional account (*bullying on the playground, how to deal with bullies*)
- Dialogue and action work together to advance the plot
- Context and characters are generally developed and sustained throughout the story
- Includes descriptive details
- Beginning of story establishes context (*schoolyard bullying*) and problem (*what to do about the bully*)
- Middle develops plots and establishes connections among actions/events
- Ending is connected to actions/events and resolves the story problem
- Word choice is appropriate for audience (*how 'bout I push you, 'cause I get sick, really freaked out big time*)
- Uses descriptive and figurative language to create desired effect (*with a sneer on his face, you creepazoid, her lips were dripping some sort of orange.*)
- Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences effectively
- Uses a variety of sentence lengths
- Voice is evident through organization of ideas (*strong use of dialogue and telling the characters' thoughts, combined with action*) and formatting (*Bzzzz! Bzzzz!, UURGH!*)
- Writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- Uses correct capitalization
- Spells most words correctly; errors do not significantly impede meaning