

Poetry

Samples 1-6

Poetry is an important genre in student writing. It gives students opportunities to play with language in novel ways, and to incorporate art and graphic design skills, as well. It is important that students understand that it is the message that is important in poetry, not just the format or rhyming. Playing with line breaks and white space, exploring repetition and font choices for emphasis, and focusing on descriptive language that carries meaning are all ways to enhance students' poetic writing skills.

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

In Grade One, students begin to explore simple poems through nursery rhymes, chants, songs, and games. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry. Forms for Grade One students to explore can include (but are not limited to) list poems, sensory poems, comparisons (mostly similes) alphabetic or acrostic poems, the use of onomatopoeia, and free verse.

Bigger/less than



bigger than



smaller than



bigger than



smaller than



bigger than



bigger than



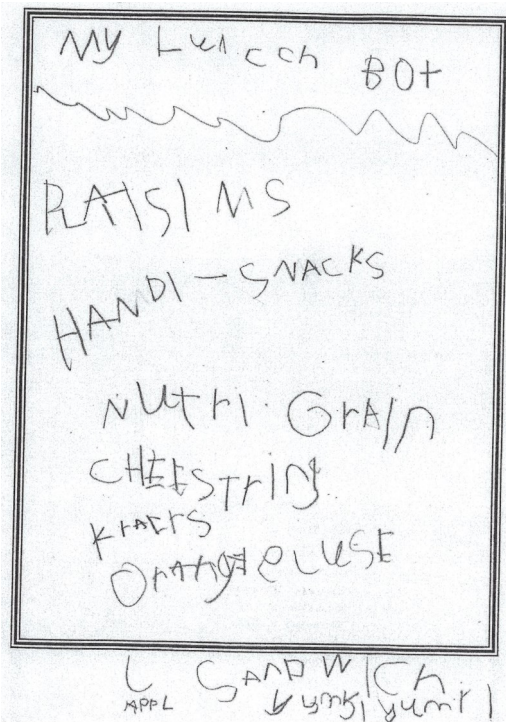
Discussion: This sample combines a text frame (the printed words) with pictures to communicate ideas. The format does not use a consistent pattern, but the comparisons being made are all accurate. The choice of things to be compared (all animals) is consistent.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (modeled pattern)
- uses descriptive words
- writing engages audience

Sample 2

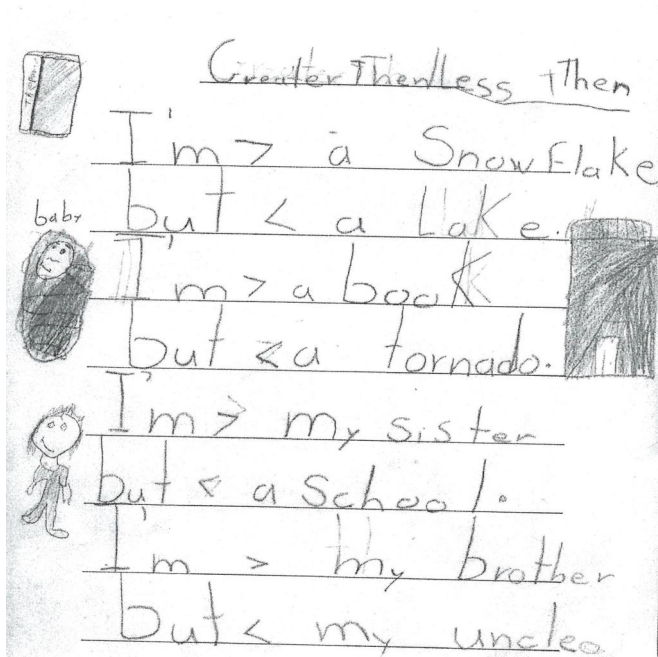


Discussion: This is a list poem, using “found” information (in this case, the contents of the student’s lunch box). It lists the items in the box, but then adds a personal opinion at the end, as a conclusion (“Yummy! Yummy!”). Although the spelling is still approximated, once the context is clear, most of the items are decodable.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses personal experiences as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- models familiar text structure (list poem)
- uses descriptive words (Yummy!)
- writing engages audience



Discussion: This sample uses a "frame" for the poem (greater than/less than) and uses the pattern consistently. Some of the comparisons show good connections (snowflake-lake, brother-uncle), while others are more random (book-tornado, sister-school). However, the overall message is generally meaningful and shows understanding of the word combinations. The use of Math symbols add an interesting detail to the piece.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (modeled pattern)
- writing engages audience
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling

The Orange Fire

Hot

Orange

Nice

Good

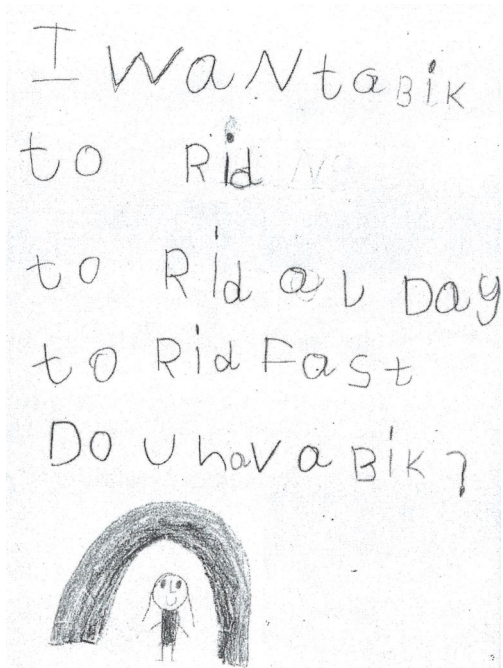
Glows

Discussion: This sample is a list poem, using descriptive words around a key idea. The word choice is quite basic until the end ("glows" stands out as being more precise and descriptive), but all the words are connected to the topic. The idea that the author enjoys the fire is clear.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses personal experience as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (list poem)
- uses descriptive words
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling



I want to a bike
To ride
To ride all day
To ride fast
Do you have a bike?

Discussion: This sample is free verse. Although it's a bit hard to decode, the message is clear. The use of repetition adds emphasis to the idea of "riding", and the last line provides a conclusion, although it is not particularly connected to the rest of the piece.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses personal experiences as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (free verse)
- uses descriptive words
- writing engages audience
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- errors may be distracting but communication is understandable

Sample 6

My Cute Seal

Fuzzy

Icy water

Furry

Aaarrffff

Jumps

Dives

Swims

White

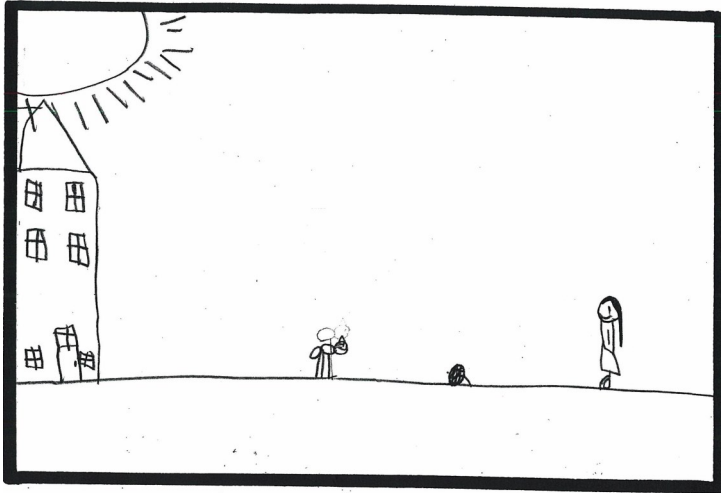
Cute

Discussion: This sample is a list poem. The word choice is descriptive, using physical characteristics, actions, and some onomatopoeia. All the details are clearly connected to the topic..

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models a familiar text structure (list poem)
- uses descriptive words
- writing engages audience
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling



Some cats live outside
 Some cats are cute
 Some cats are little
 Some cats see in the night time
 Some cats have white and
 orange fur
 Some cats play with string

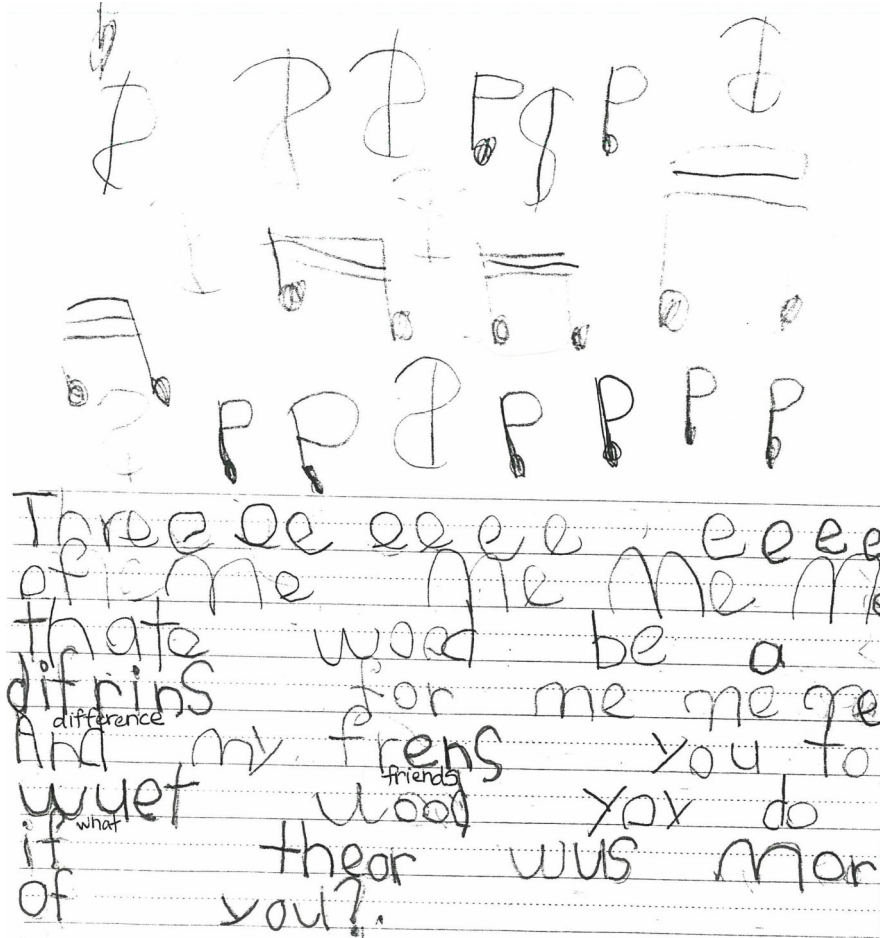
Discussion: This sample was intended to be a poem, but the author struggled with line breaks. Rewriting it in a different format shows the effectiveness of the repetition, as well as the pattern in the poem. There is good descriptive language.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Some cats live outside
 Some cats are cute
 Some cats are little
 Some cats see in the
 nighttime. Some cats
 have white and orange fur.
 Some cats play with
 string.

Rubric qualities:

- uses personal experiences as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (pattern poem)
- uses descriptive words to create an image
- writing engages audience
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable



Three...eee...eee of me
 Me, me, me
 That would be a difference for
 me, me, me
 And my friends, you too
 What would you do
 if there was more of you?

Discussion: This sample is written as a song (note the musical symbols in the illustration). It demonstrates an understanding of rhythm and rhyme. It is clearly attempting to communicate an idea. The author uses repetition and pattern for emphasis, and actively tries to engage the audience.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses personal experience as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (song)
- uses descriptive words
- writing is individual
- writing engages audience
- uses a mixture of approximated and conventional spelling
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

In Grade Two, students continue to explore simple poems through rhymes, chants, songs, and games. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry., including lots of play with sounds and words. Forms for Grade Two students to explore can include (but are not limited to) list poems, sensory poems, comparisons (mostly similes) alphabetic or acrostic poems, the use of onomatopoeia, shape or concrete poems, rhyming couplets, and free verse.

Bread! Bread! Bread!

hot

Cheesy

salty

baked

yummy

eggy

sweet

brown

black

soda

Discussion: This sample is a list poem. Some of the descriptors are kinds of bread while others describe tastes. The descriptors are common words, but make an interesting list

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes facts
- models familiar text structure: list poem
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

Sample 2

Ball

Discussion: This sample is a free verse poem. It uses repetition for emphasis, as well as alliteration, and makes effective use of line breaks and white space. The final line is an attempt at imagery.

MEETING STANDARDS

Ball

Ball bounces

Ball bounces

It goes up and down

and

it touches the sky

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes observations
- models familiar text structure: free verse
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- writing engages audience
- may show emphasis by using repeated words or phrasing,
- may show emphasis by using line breaks
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words

Berries! Berries! Berries!
 black berries
 blue berries
 I like berries!
 Straw berries
 rasp berries
 yummy in my tummy
 cran berries
 chocolate berries
 yummy! yummy! yummy!

Discussion: This sample is a combination of a list poem and a common pattern ("I like..."). The repetition of "yummy in my tummy" and "yummy! yummy! yummy!" adds interest to the piece. The word choice is basic, but effective

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (list poem)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- writing engages audience
- shows emphasis by using repeated words and phrases
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

Quiet

I feel quiet
 snake slithering
 hawk flying
 eagle circling
 giraffe stretching
 quiet.

Discussion: This sample follows a familiar pattern. The descriptors all relate to the main idea ("quiet") and are consistent in grammatical structure. The imagery in the four descriptors is effective, and the word choice is quite sophisticated.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details and observations
- models familiar text structure (pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words that include adjectives to create an image
- writing engages audience
- shows emphasis by using repeated words and phrasing
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

Sample 5

Grade 2

by myself

upstairs

in my room

horror movie

all alone

music crescendos

by myself

by myself

by myself

by myself

by myself

I

can't

look!!

Discussion: This sample has very effective line breaks and placement on the page. The large amount of white space in the centre adds to the image of the author being alone. Although the word choice is quite basic, it is still effective in building to the final image.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details and observations
- models familiar text structure (pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- writing engages audience
- shows emphasis with line breaks and white space
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

Sample 6

I am wolf
on top of a mountain.
I stop.
My pack is till trying to get up.
I go down to help them.
We get up to the top
and walk down the other side.
We find food on this side and stay over night.
Our pups
will be born
the next day

Discussion: This sample is in free verse. It use phrase length to increase and decrease reading speed, as well as to add emphasis. The word choice is this is basic; the beginning and ending develop stronger images than the middle section.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details and facts
- models familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- shows emphasis with line breaks
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

The Shell?

I see the shell blink

It is an eye

It stares at me with a curious look.

Discussion: This sample is a free verse. It develops a strong image, using the metaphor of an eye. The word choice ("blink", "stare", "curious", "look") all add to the image.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes observations
- models familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for audience
- uses descriptive words (metaphor) to create an image
- writing engages audience
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar and high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

Sample 8

The Greatest Thing

It moves,

It talks,

It jumps,

It feels,

It hears,

It sings,

It plays,

It smiles,

It dances,

It cries,

It thanks,

It loves,

It's you.

Discussion: This sample is a list poem, using a predictable pattern. The verbs are all consistent in format and are all connected to the main idea ('you'). The word choice is basic, but the image being developed, along with the message, is effective.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (list poem)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words to create an image
- writing engages audience
- shows emphasis by using repeated phrasing
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar and high frequency words

Silly

I feel silly!

Up and down jumping

Forward-back running

Bike riding

Pool playing

Silly!

Silly

Silly

Silly!!

Discussion: This sample also uses a familiar pattern. The first two descriptors are unique ("up and down jumping", forward-back running") and provide a very interesting image when connected with the main idea ("silly"). The second two descriptors are not as effective. The repetition at the end, along with the placement on the page, add to the first image, and make a good conclusion to the piece.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- uses familiar events and ideas as a starting point for writing
- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words (adjectives) to create image
- writing is engaging
- shows emphasis by using repeated words and phrasing; white space
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

My World

An enchanted world,

A world with magic,

A dream world,

An amazing world,

An incredible world,

That has wizards and witches.

That is a magical world for you and me.

Discussion: This sample uses free verse. The word choice is strong and helps to develop an image. The repetition keeps the reader focused on the main idea.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details
- models familiar text structure (pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words that include adjectives
- writing engages audience shows emphasis by using repeated words and phrasing
- uses conventional spelling for most familiar or high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

I am WOLF,
loping
across the frozen lake
in the freezing, frosty air.
Wait...
what's that sound?
On the wind,
I catch a scent of bison.
I point
my nose
to the moon
and howl
to call
my pack.

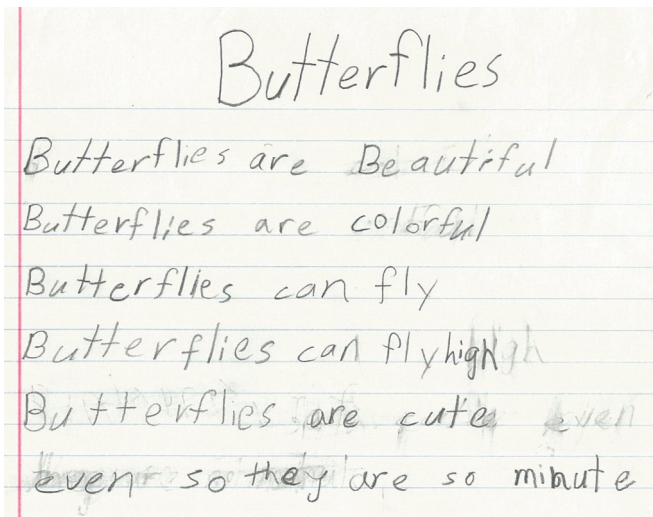
Discussion: This sample is a free verse. It makes good use of font size, punctuation, and line breaks to develop an image. It also uses alliteration ("frozen...freezing, frosty air"). There is some strong word choice (loping, frozen, scent). The overall effect is powerful communication.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing includes details and facts
- models familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words to create an image
- writing engages audience
- shows emphasis by using line breaks and white space
- uses conventional spelling for familiar and high frequency words
- errors may be distracting but basic communication is understandable

In Grade Three, students continue to explore more sophisticated poems that include humour and word play. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry, including lots of play with the sounds of language—using repetition and sound combinations for emphasis and to create images. Forms for Grade Three students to explore can include (but are not limited to) list poems, sensory poems, comparisons (mostly similes) alphabetic or acrostic poems, the use of onomatopoeia, shape or concrete poems, rhyming couplets, diamantes, cinquains, and free verse.



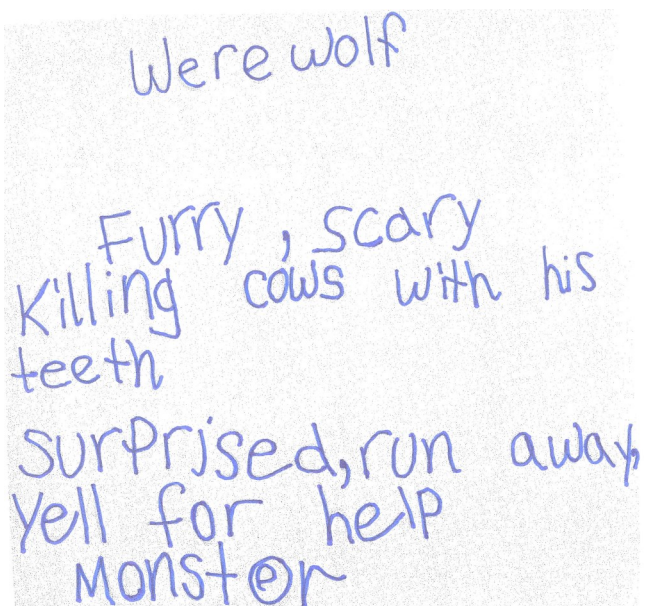
Discussion: This sample is based on a familiar pattern, using descriptive words. There are also rhyming couplets (the final words rhyme although the rhythm is uneven). The word choice for the descriptors is basic. The word "minute" is more sophisticated; it does not really fit with the rest of the poem and may have been chosen more for its rhyme than its meaning.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- an image is stated
- uses familiar objects and observations to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (list poem and rhyming couplets)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 2



Discussion: This sample is a variation on a cinquain or diamante. It uses a single word at the top and bottom, two words on the next lines, and longer phrases in the middle. The pattern is not followed exactly, but the organization is effective. The word choice is interesting and engages the audience.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses details to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (cinquain)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words
- voice is evident
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

ICE

ICE IS
COLDER THAN THE
EMPTY NORTHERN PLAINS.

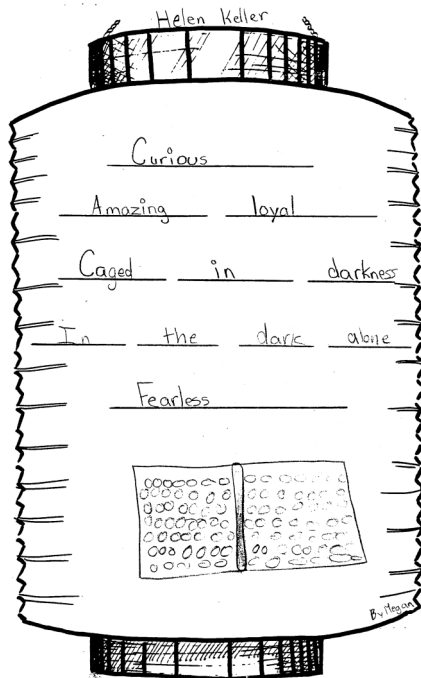
Discussion: This sample is a variation on an acrostic poem, building the lines into a meaningful sentence. The imagery in the sentence is powerful. The word choice is basic, but effective.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- an image is stated
- uses observations and familiar objects to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (enhanced acrostic)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high frequency words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 4



Discussion: This sample is a cinquain (four lines, building in length, then a final synonym as the fifth line). It is based on true information (Helen Keller) but is a poetic interpretation ("caged in darkness"). The word choice is strong and the image created is powerful.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- a message is stated
- uses facts to develop the message
- uses familiar text structure (cinquain)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words
- uses expressive language
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communications

There was a doggy his name was Al all people treated him well with steak and pork and some beef it was delicious especially the beef sometimes he picked off bread as you can tell he was fed every day he got a bone his life was very pleasant as you can see it was very happy his family took him to the fair and cotton candy did they share that's the story of Alexander who's life could not be dander

THE END

Al

There was a doggy his name was Al
all people treated him ^{very} well
with steak and pork and some ^{times} beef
it was ^{delicious} ^{especially} the beef
sometimes he picked off some ^{bread} beard
as you can tell he was fed
every day he got a bone
his life was very ^{pleasant} present as you can see
it was very happy
his family took him to the fair
and cotton candy did they share
that's the story of Alexander
who's life could not be dander

THE END
closer together

Al

May 22, 2003

There was a doggy his name was Al

all people treated him very well

with steak and pork and sometimes beef

it was delicious especially the beef

sometimes he picked off some bread

as you can tell he was fed

every day he got a bone

his life was very pleasant as you can see

it was very happy

his family took him to the fair

and cotton candy did they share

that's the story of Alexander

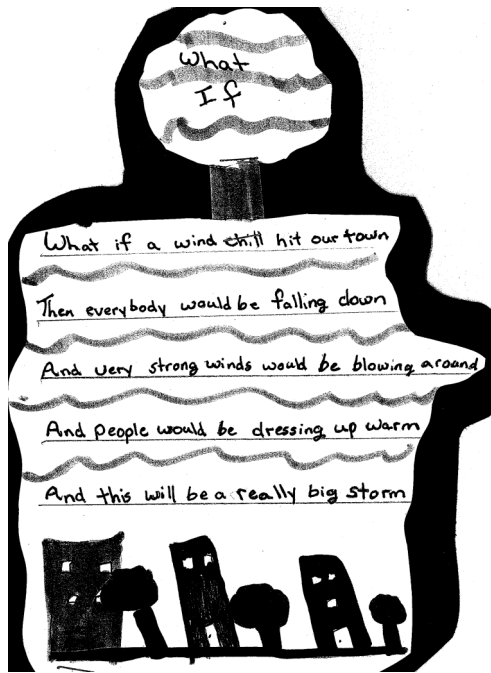
who's life could not be dander

Discussion: This sample shows revisions and a final copy of poem made up primarily of rhyming couplets. The pattern falters in a couple of places, with uneven rhythm and missing rhyme, but it is good attempt. There are some misused words ("breef", "dander") but generally the word choice is effective. The poem attempts to tell a story, but in trying to create the rhyming pattern, some of the information seems less connected to the main idea.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses familiar objects to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyming couplets)
- uses descriptive words
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with meaning



Discussion: This sample uses rhyming combinations to create an image. The rhythm and rhyme scheme are consistent, but the word choice is quite basic. Neither the images nor the message are strong, but it does engage the reader with the rhythm.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses familiar objects to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (patterned rhyme)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create an image
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the writer
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

WOLF

Wolves come

Out of their dens to find

Large

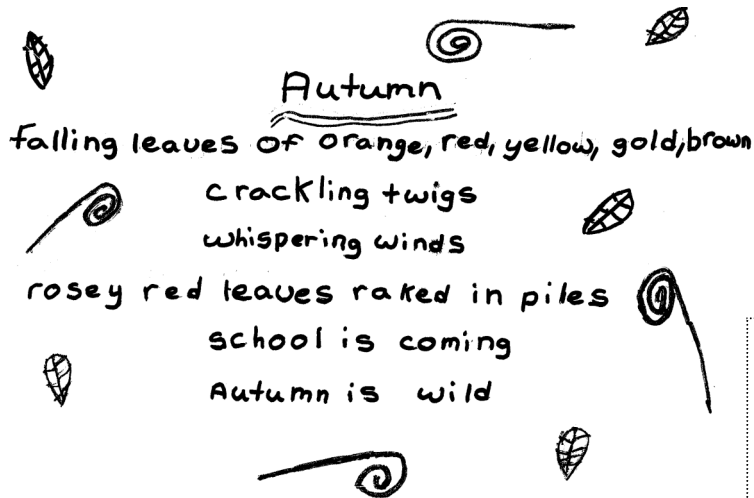
Food such as deer, caribou and muskox.

Discussion: This sample is a variation on an acrostic poem, building the lines together into a meaningful sentence. This piece seems to reflect an expository theme. The word choice is basic, as is the image, but effective.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- image is stated
- uses facts to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (enhanced acrostic)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication



Discussion: This sample uses a familiar pattern, combined with lots of alliteration (“whispering winds”, “rosy red ... raked”) and onomatopoeia (“crackling”, “whispering”). The structure is nicely balanced and the word choice creates a very effective and specific image.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- image is stated
- uses familiar objects and observations to create an image

- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words
- uses expressive language to create an image
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Boys
 immature noisy
 annoying Burping laughing
 arcade video games mall salon
 giggling flirting shopping
 beautiful shy

Girls

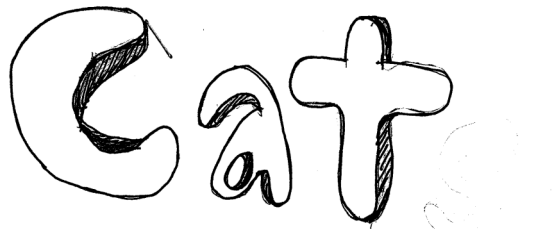


Discussion: This sample is a diamante (building by one word on each line to four, then decreasing again to an antonym of the first word, creating a poem of opposites). The author does a good job keeping the descriptors balanced (“noisy/shy”, “arcade/salon” “laughing/giggling”), and the word choice is effective. The illustrations add detail to the piece and are well placed

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- an image is stated
- uses familiar objects and details to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (diamante)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words including adjectives to create an image
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings consistent with topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication



Snoring, Sleeping
bouncing, leaping.
Purring in my ear
drinking from the toilet.
It's a great cat!

Discussion: This sample uses rhyme and a familiar pattern. The word combinations are effective, using some alliteration and rhyme to build the pattern. The surprise in line four adds interest.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- an image is stated
- uses observations and details to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyme and pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words to create an image
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings consistent with topic (line breaks and layout)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Dog

Barking, biting,
Panting, wagging,
Running, jumping,
Catching, fetching,
Cold nose, soft hair,
He is a good dog.

Discussion: This sample builds on a familiar pattern. The repetition builds energy in the piece, then the last two lines slow it down. The tempo and the word choice work together to develop the image of a "good dog".

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- a feeling is stated (good dog)
- uses observations and details to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words to create an image and a feeling
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- voice is evident
- creates one that reflects feelings consistent with topic, using line breaks, rhythm, repetition of syntax pattern, and tempo
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

In Grade Four, students continue to explore more sophisticated poems that include humour and word play. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry, including lots of play with the sounds of language—using repetition and sound combinations for emphasis and to create images.— as well as starting to explore poems that tell stories. Forms for Grade Four students to explore can include (but are not limited to) list poems, sensory poems, comparisons (mostly similes) alphabetic or acrostic poems, the use of onomatopoeia, shape or concrete poems, rhyming couplets, diamantes, cinquains, spoonerisms, and free verse.

Winter

Deadly blizzard and
freezing snow your
only food is on the
Go.



Discussion: This sample is a rhyming couplet. It incorporates humour to convey the message. The word choice is basic, but effective.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- uses familiar objects to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyming couplet)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 2

Kittens

Kittens pounce and run and play,
 They are cute pets,
 I'd like to say,
 That they are sweet through night and day.
 They pounce and play and also run,
 Kittens are nice,
 And lots of fun!

Discussion: The sample attempts to build a rhyme scheme and to follow a consistent rhythm. Some of the phrasing structure sounds contrived. The repetition of "pounce, run, and play" is not particularly effective; it just seems repetitive.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses observations to develop an image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyming)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive words to create an image
- voice is evident
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

My World

A helpful world,

A world with loving families

A safe world,

A clean world.

A colorful world.

That is faithful through prayer

That is a powerful world.

Discussion: This sample is written as free verse. It uses repetition for emphasis. There is some interesting phrasing (“a helpful world”, “faithful through prayer”) and some clear adjectives (“loving”, “safe”, “clean”, “colourful”, “powerful”). The line breaks and page layout support the message, as well.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear message
- uses details to develop the message
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic (line breaks, white space, repetition)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 4

Peace is white like a bright light
twinkling in the night, ain't I'm right,
It runs in my head like a snowflake
tickling my eyelid. It makes me feel joyful
like being a nice person to someone I do not
know. Or it makes me want to help someone do their
homework,

Discussion: This sample starts out using rhyme, but moves to free verse. The images are powerful (“white like a bright light”, “snowflake tickling my eyelid”). The piece would benefit from revision to look at line breaks and phrasing; this might enhance the clarity of the message.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details and observations to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Spring

Spring is slushy
When snow melts

New born baby
Animals arrive

A bright sun
When birds sing

The grass
is getting
green and
flowers are blooming

Days are getting
longer and wonderful

When snow melts
it gets muddy
and Spring break
is coming

Discussion: This sample is free verse; in some ways, it also follows the format of a list poem, only with phrases instead of single words. The piece contains good descriptive language ("slushy", "blooming", "wonderful", "muddy").

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse/list poem)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic (line breaks, white space)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Discussion: This sample is a diamante. It uses good descriptive language and the "opposites" mirror quite well. The word choice is good and some ("crackling", "sizzling", "seeping") help to create images..

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (diamante)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic (line breaks, white space, repetition)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 6

Fire

red hot

burning crackling sizzling

flame spark wave ripple

flowing dripping seeping

blue cold

water

A Winter Day
 Cold snowflakes, Cold cheeks,
 Cold snowmen, Cold igloos.
 Frosty eyelashes
 Stinging cheeks.
 Icy, cold fingers.
 Numb toes.
 Rub hands.
 Light a fire.
 Stamp feet.
 A H H H H H !



Discussion: This sample is a variation on a list poem, using phrases. The piece stays focused on the topic and creates a vivid image. It uses repetition well, along with variations in print and layout.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (list poem)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic (line breaks, white space, print changes, and layout)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 8

Energetic, fun, generous and fearless,

Brother of Chloe,

Lover of trampolines, trout and Game Cube,

Who feels excited, bored and hyper,

Who needs chocolate, winter and entertainment,

Who gives time, fun and gifts,

Who fears cleaning up dog vomit, being pulled by the hair
and showers,

Who would like to see Australia, lizards and ice cream,

Who lives up north in Yellowknife, NT,

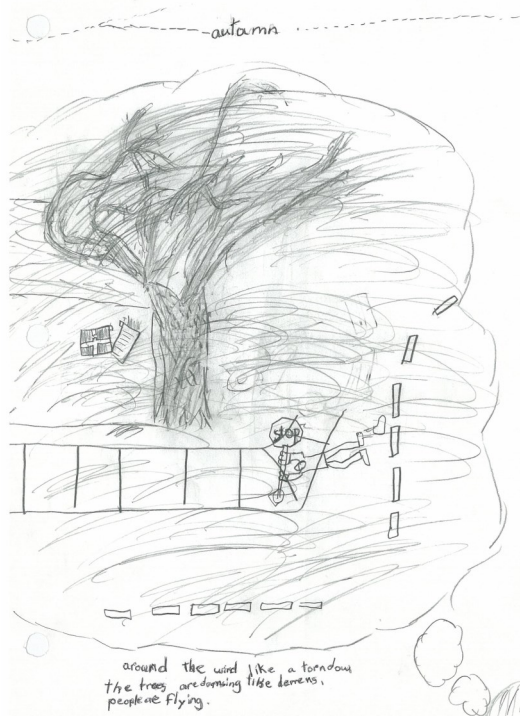
Discussion: This sample is autobiographical and follows a template. The descriptors are effective, but do not necessarily work well together to create a single image or a person. The layout (having the piece centred) is effective, and makes good use of spacing.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses details, memories, and observations to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (template)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- creates tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic (line breaks, white space, repetition)
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most high-frequency words correctly; unfamiliar words are spelled phonetically
- errors do not interfere with communication

In Grade Five, students explore more sophisticated poems that include humour and word play. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry, including lots of play with the sounds of language - using repetition and sound combinations for emphasis and to create images - as well as starting to explore poems that tell stories. Forms for Grade Five students to explore can include (but are not limited to) sensory poems, comparisons (similes and metaphors), the use of onomatopoeia, shape or concrete poems, rhyming couplets, spoonerisms, puns, and free verse.



Around the wind like a tornado
The trees dancing like demons
People are flying

Discussion: This sample is an example of free verse. The descriptions create an effective image ("dancing like demons"). The tiny print and convention errors make the piece difficult to read, but there is voice in the content, and a message.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details and familiar objects to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader

My World

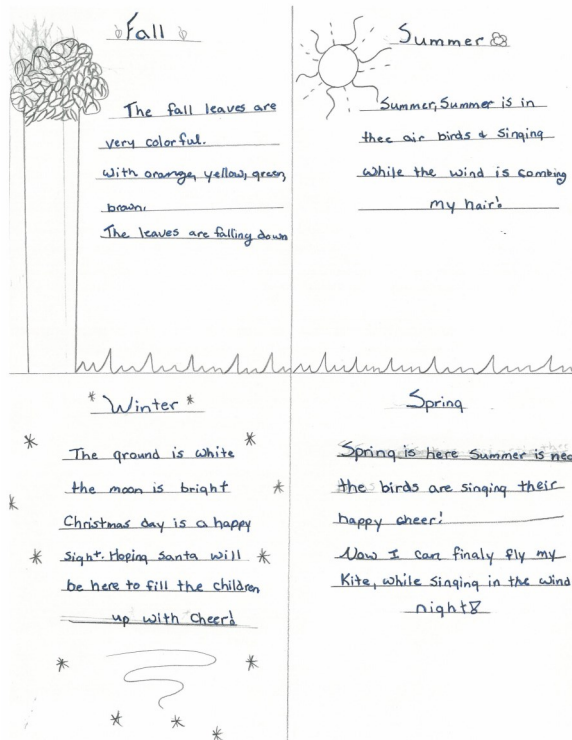
A safe world,
A world with peace,
A kind world,
A sensitive world,
A loving world,
That has no fights
That me and you can share.

Discussion: This sample is a variation on a list poem. It uses phrases and repetition. The first five lines set up the last two, and create an effective image. The word choice is generally basic; "peace", "loving", and "sensitive" make the piece more interesting. The layout makes the poem easy to read.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- voice is evident
- uses line breaks and repetition to create a tone that reflects feeling emotions consistent with the topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication



Discussion: This sample is a set of poems relating to the four seasons of the year. It attempts to use rhyme, but the rhythm and rhyme schemes are not consistent within or among the poems. This makes the pieces seem rather forced, and the message less clear.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses layout and repetition to create a tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with the topic
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 4

Northern Lights # 2

Northern lights, Northern lights,
What a sight to see lights.

They dance above your head,
Even when you're in bed.

They come in many colors red, green, blue, pink and
white,
Every night they are very, very bright.

It's always amazing to see the northern lights shine,
I wish all those lights could always be mine.

People come from all over the world to see the northern
lights even the Japanese,
The Japanese come to Yellowknife to see all those lights
with ease.

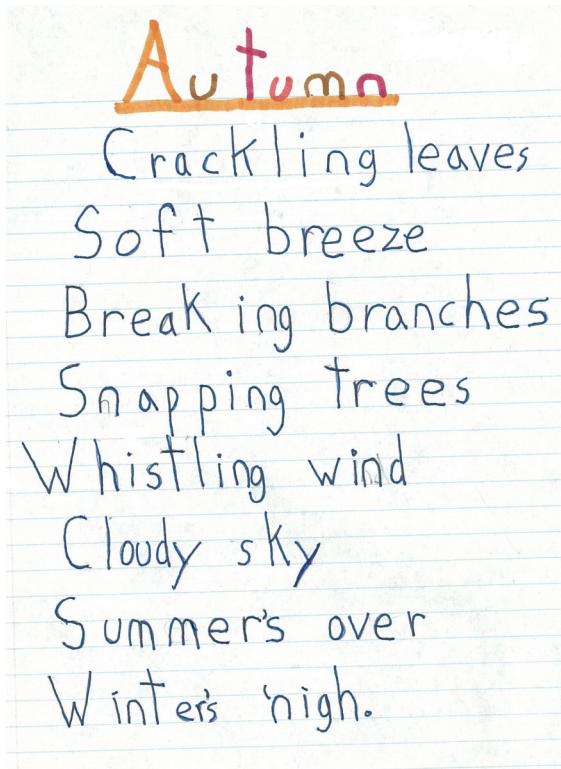
Northern lights, Northern lights,
What a sight to see lights.

Discussion: This sample uses rhyming couplets to describe the northern lights. The first line in each couplet is more effective than the second one; finding a rhyming word seemed to be more important than the message in the poem. The rhythm of the two lines in each couplet is not consistent. This makes the piece seem awkward and hard to read. There is some good word choice (dance, amazing) but the overall effect is not strong.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyming couplets)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication



Discussion: This sample uses a combination of phrasing and rhyme to create an image of autumn. The piece also uses alliteration (breaking branches, whistling wind) and onomatopoeia (crackling, whistling, snapping) to add descriptive detail.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear image
- uses details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language to create images
- voice is evident
- uses line breaks and syntax pattern to create a tone that reflects feeling/emotions consistent with the topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 6

My wish is for peace.
 It will start inside me and go on
 to you.
 So,
 No more wars
 No more tears
 And a smile on everyone's face

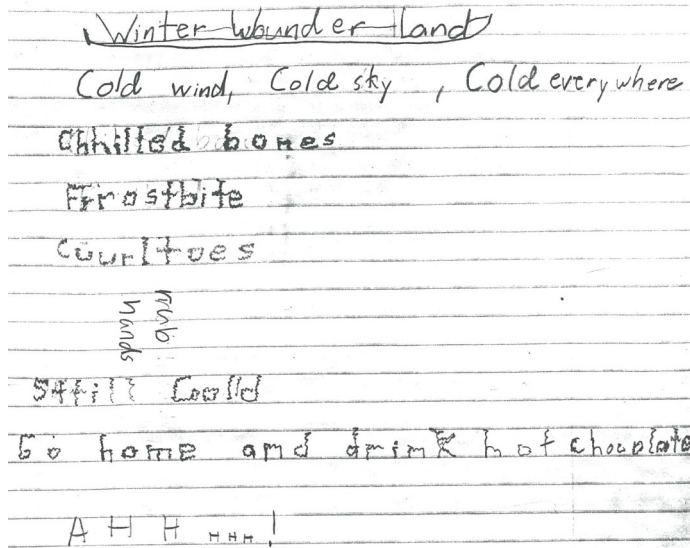
Discussion: This sample uses free verse. It makes good use of line breaks and varied phrase length to give rhythm to the piece. Repetition of "No more" gives emphasis to the ideas at the end of the poem. The word choice is basic, but effective.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing presents a clear message
- uses details to develop the message

- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- voice is evident
- uses line breaks and repetition to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication



Discussion: This sample is a variation on a sensory poem; it shows the use of a format from the primary grades in a new and inventive way. The variation in print, spacing, and orientation all contribute to the overall image and message being conveyed. Repetition of words ("cold") and letters ("Chilled", "curl") also adds interest.

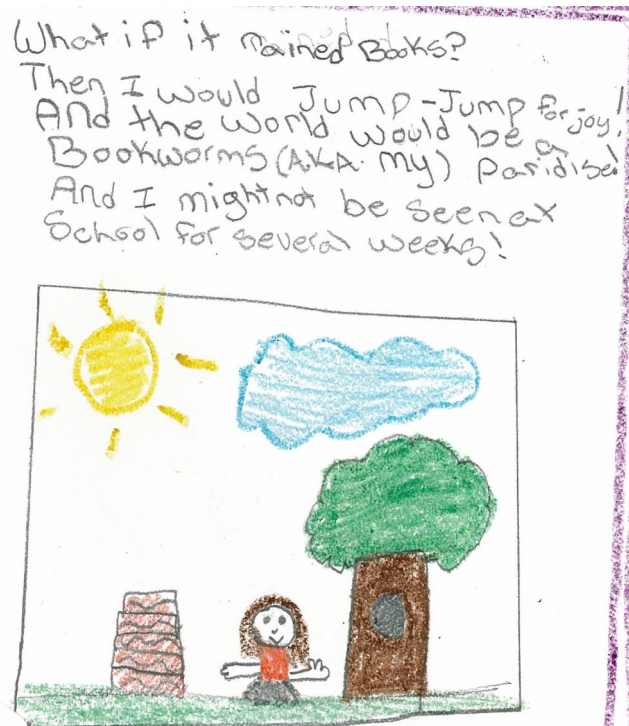
MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses familiar objects and details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (sensory poem/free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic

- voice is evident
- uses line breaks, white space, repetition of letters and words, different sizes and styles of print, and layout on page to create tone that reflects feelings consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly; spelling errors show incorrect use of spelling rules and patterns
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 8



Discussion: This sample uses free verse to communicate a message, using a "What if..." starting prompt. The three lines of response to the "What if" question each have their own style and rhythm. The first uses a dash to add emphasis to "jump". The second uses parentheses to add an aside; the uses of AKA is also effective. The third line starts with "And", which also adds interest to the structure. None of the items are particularly strong on their own, but work well together.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing presents a message
- uses details to develop the message
- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- voice is evident
- tone is easy to describe

- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly; spelling errors show incorrect use of spelling rules and patterns
- errors do not interfere with communication

Outdoor Cat

I walk down the street,
 The sidewalk hard as stone,
 I look around this exciting place,
 As around the streets I roam,
 There are peaches in the baskets,
 I race to chase the rat,
 How great it is to be,
 An Olympic Outdoor cat!

Discussion: This sample uses descriptive language and rhyme and rhythm to create an effective image. The consistent rhythm and well-managed rhyme show well-developed control of these techniques. Descriptive words and phrases ("hard as stone", "around the streets I roam", "Olympic outdoor cat") bring voice to the piece. There are some minor convention errors (overuse of commas and incorrect use of "their") but they do not interfere with the message being communicated.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses familiar objects, observations, and details to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (*abcb* rhyme pattern)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses specific expressive language including adjectives and similes to create images
- voice is evident
- uses line breaks to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly; spelling errors show incorrect use of spelling rules and patterns
- errors do not interfere with communication

In Grade Six, students continue to explore more sophisticated poems that include humour and word play. Students should have lots of opportunities to hear a wide variety of poetry, including lots of play with the sounds of language using repetition and sound combinations for emphasis and to create images, as well as exploring poems that tell stories. Forms for Grade Six students to explore can include (but are not limited to) comparisons (similes and metaphors), simple rhyme schemes, lyrics, and free verse.

RED-EYES BLACK DRAGON
 Fierce Mighty Ruler of the
 West. His Molten Fire ball attack
 Is matched By No Other. The
 West and the North rulers Are
 Good friends. Together they
 Are Invincible. Together
 Their Attacks combined Make
 Ultimate fire lighting ball

Discussion: This sample uses descriptive language in free verse to create an image of power. Although the layout of the poem is weak because the ideas all run together rather than being separated by line breaks, the language makes it effective ("fierce", "molten", "invincible", "ultimate"). The piece would likely be easier to read if each phrase was a separate line; this is a possible area of development for a writing conference. The irregular use of capitalization also makes the piece harder to read.

APPROACHING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses familiar structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly

Sample 2

World No Tobacco Day

May, 2005

*Why do you do this?
 Why do you do it?
 Why don't you tell us,
 that you're going to quit?*

*The pain of a killing
 will soon hurt us.
 The thing called between us,
 the circle of trust.*

*I can't trust you
 because of your lies.
 And I can't stop asking you
 all of these why's.*

*Why do you do this?
 Why do you do it?
 Why don't you tell us,
 that you're going to quit?*

Discussion: This sample attempts to convey a strong message in a "show, not tell" manner. It never directly names the issue (smoking) but shares a message using questions directed at a loved one. The use of stanzas and a simple rhyme scheme, as well as the repetition of the first stanza at the end, give structure to the piece and add emphasis to the message. There are some places where the wording becomes a bit confusing ("The thing called between us, the circle of trust"), but overall the message is clear.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear message
- uses social issue and personal feelings to develop the message
- uses familiar structure (rhyme and stanzas)

- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

When the sun shines,
 The swallows start singing,
 one lovely song just like bells wringing,
 The song can be heard all over town
 Who would not want to hear such a wonderful sound,
 the rooster might crow,
 The floor might rattle.
 But the music is heard through the rattle and crattle,
 It will be heard through the paddle and maddle
 So hear it while you get to hear it
 cause in after noon sunset you won't again hear it.

Discussion: This sample shows both a first and second draft, with some revisions. The piece uses rhythm and rhyme to enhance the message of the poem; varied phrase lengths also add interest ("Who would not want to hear such a wonderful sound", "The rooster might crow"). Some of the vocabulary is not used correctly ("paddle and maddle") which does interfere a bit with the meaning (although it does support the rhyme scheme). Some of the phrasing structure is also a bit awkward (likely through trying to maintain rhyme and rhythm), but the message is still clear.

MEETING STANDARDS

When the sun shines,
 The swallows start singing,
 One lovely song just like bells ringing.
 The song can be heard all over the town
 Who wouldn't want to hear such a wonderful
 sound?
 The rooster might crow,
 The floor might rattle,
 But it will be heard through out the
 paddle and maddle,
 So hear it while you get to hear it
 cause in after noon sunset
 You won't again hear it.

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses observations to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyme)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly; spelling errors show incorrect use of spelling rules and patterns
- errors do not interfere with communication

HOCKEY

The flaming puck,
as it goes into the net,
the players crashing into the boards,
saving shots, scoring goals.
Skating slowly into the box
the puck laughing as it went in the
net, the whispering wild talking to
you as you skate you could hear chip
the husky chasing for us.

Discussion: The sample is an example of free verse. It contains strong descriptive words and phrases ("flaming puck", "crashing into the boards", "the puck laughing", "the whispering wild"). Experimenting with line breaks and white space might make the poem easier to read and add emphasis to certain key ideas and images. The author appears to have personal experience with the topic and shares a feeling of enjoyment with the reader.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses personal feelings and memories to develop the image

- uses familiar text structure (free verse)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- tone is easy to describe

- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 5

How do you write a poem?

I know. But I don't
have one.
I search
my mind,
it's
a
frustrating
experience.
nothing
no results
There must
be an
idea
some
new
one

Discussion: The sample is presented as a shape poem, but also shares a personal response to a given task. The piece uses some good descriptive words ("search", "frustrating", "results") and phrasing that would appeal to an audience of peers. It is likely that peers would also have shared the author's opinion at times, so there would be a good connection with the reader.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on a topic
- writing presents a clear message
- uses personal feelings to develop the message
- uses familiar text structure (shape poem)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses descriptive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

eminem pain

eminem has lots of pain
he says it in his songs
like many of us
the world revolves around pain and love
but some people take it bad
eminem takes it into a song
this is a poem about eminem
and the world we have forgotten about
we all have pain
we just dont know how to use it

this is poem about eminem
and many things
oh yeah

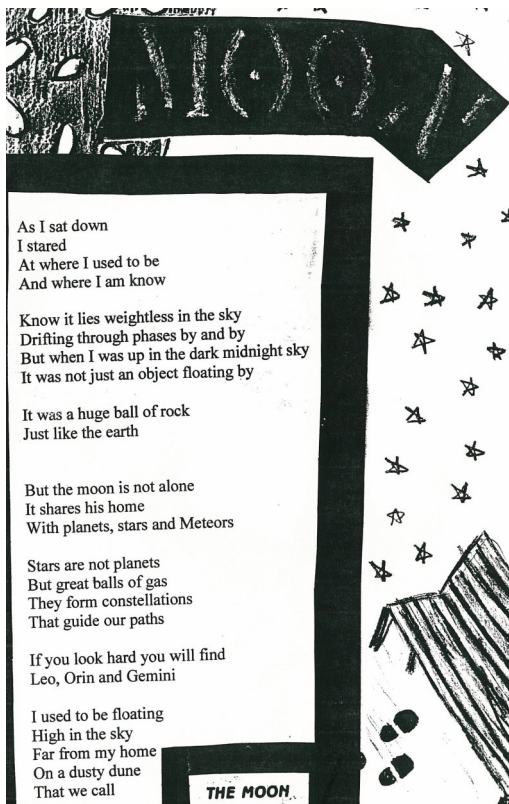
Discussion: This sample is written in free verse, although it does contain some features of rap lyrics (short phrases, personal connection, repetition). It draws on the theme of "pain and love" in a more mature way, making this piece sound more abstract and the context more sophisticated. The ending ("oh yeah") is similar to other lyrics.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing presents a clear personal opinion
- uses social issues and personal feelings to develop the opinion
- uses familiar text structure (free verse, stanzas)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses organization of ideas and formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 7



As I sat down
I stared
At where I used to be
And where I am know

Know it lies weightless in the sky
Drifting through phases by and by
But when I was up in the dark midnight sky
It was not just an object floating by

It was a huge ball of rock
Just like the earth

But the moon is not alone
It shares his home
With planets, stars and Meteors

Stars are not planets
But great balls of gas
They form constellations
That guide our paths

If you look hard you will find
Leo, Orin and Gemini

I used to be floating
High in the sky
Far from my home
On a dusty dune
That we call

THE MOON

Discussion: The sample uses stanzas to organize ideas, and uses intermittent rhyme, although there is no consistent pattern. The poem presents factual information. There is no clear message in the piece, but it does contain some interesting imagery.

MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses facts to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (rhyme, stanzas)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses organization of ideas and formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Spring Time Poem

The white blanket spread across the land yawns
 Letting itself slowly melt away-
 The trees like waking people stretch their branches
 Happy to let their leaves grow back

The animals awake from their long winter sleep
 Glad to see the sun again-
 For those holes and dens are darker than night-
 But they are warmer than the
 Cold winter blanket outside

The icicles on houses drip then
 Fall to the ground with a glass breaking smash-
 The paths and trails become wet and
 The snow from the evergreens turns to water
 And drips off the branches slowly-

As you walk through the woods
 You will always hear every animal in the forest
 Celebrating the arrival of spring-
 The birds all singing different songs
 The squirrels chattering, but never wasting any time
 Because the squirrel knows that spring
 Will be over very soon,
 And it will be back to the white blanket

Discussion: This sample uses stanzas to organize the ideas and is an example of free verse. The are strong descriptive words and phrases ("white blanket spread across the yard yawns", "darker than night", "cold winter blanket outside"). The pattern is line lengths is varied but alternates in a general pattern.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses facts and observations to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse, stanzas)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses organization of ideas and formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

Sample 9

Spring Poem

Discussion: This sample is organized in stanzas and uses a common grammar structure in each verse. It also uses repetition ("turns", "come back", "like", "become"). The content is a description; it does not convey a message but it does create excellent images. The structure is quite sophisticated. The final stanza is a bit contrived, but still effective.

EXCELLING AT MEETING STANDARDS

Rubric qualities:

- writing focuses on topic
- writing evokes an image
- uses facts and observations to develop the image
- uses familiar text structure (free verse, stanzas)
- word choice is appropriate for intended audience
- uses precise vocabulary related to topic
- uses expressive language to create desired effect
- voice is evident
- uses organization of ideas and formatting to create tone that reflects feelings/emotions consistent with topic
- tone is easy to describe
- writing evokes a feeling or response in the reader
- spells most words correctly
- errors do not interfere with communication

In the spring, the darkness turns to light
 The cold turns to warmth,
 The snow turns to water, and
 The ice disappears.

In the spring, the birds come back and chirp,
 The bugs come back and bite,
 The leaves come back and bloom, and
 The earth reappears.

In the spring, the earth warms like an oven,
 The sun shines bright like a 1,000-watt bulb,
 The rain pours like a shower, and
 The grass grows.

In the spring, mud is stickier than glue,
 Dust is thicker than fog,
 Flowers pop more than popcorn, and
 The trees bud.

In the spring, bicycles become racers,
 Mosquitoes become the enemy,
 Street-sweepers become the janitors, and
 The rivers flow.

In the spring, I ride my bike,
 I plant the garden,
 I play outside, and
 Spring is here!