



California Standards Tests

Teacher Guide for the 2007 California Writing Standards Test in Grade Four

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For More Information

For more information about the California Writing Standards Tests (CSTs in writing) or the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, consult the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp> or contact the Standards and Assessment Division of the CDE at (916) 445-8765 (phone), at (916) 319-0969 (fax), or at STAR@cde.ca.gov (e-mail).

Acknowledgments

We wish to acknowledge the teachers in California's public schools who continue to promote good student writing in their classrooms. A special thanks goes to the many teachers and administrators who over the past seven years have contributed to the development of the teacher guides for the California Writing Standards Tests (CSTs in writing) for grades four and seven.

Introduction

In February 2000, the Governor signed legislation to add writing assessments to the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program's California Standards Tests (CSTs) to be administered at the elementary and middle grade levels. The California Writing Standards Tests (CSTs) in writing have been administered annually since 2001 in grades four and seven as part of the California English-Language Arts Standards Tests (CSTs in English-language arts).

The CSTs in writing address state Writing Applications content standards for grades four and seven. In grade four, these standards require students to produce four types of writing: narratives, summaries, information reports, and responses to literature. In grade seven, these standards require students to produce five types of writing: narratives, persuasive essays, summaries, responses to literature, and research reports.

The CSTs in writing do not assess information reports in grade four or research reports in grade seven because these writing assignments require extended time for students to select research topics and gather information before writing can begin. In addition, the narrative writing tested in grades four and seven does not include personal or autobiographical narrative. Writing that would invite personal disclosure is not tested in any genre on the CSTs in writing. It is important to note that when readers score the CSTs in writing, they take into account that student responses are first draft writings.

In addition to the CSTs in writing, the 2007 CSTs in English-language arts in grades four and seven contained 75 multiple-choice questions. The writing test in each of these grades may address any of the writing types identified as appropriate for testing at that grade level.

This document is the latest in a series of teacher guides for the CSTs in writing in grades four and seven that have been provided each year since writing assessments were added to the STAR Program's CSTs in English-language arts. Each guide has featured the writing tasks administered that year, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics used to score student responses. The guides for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 CSTs in writing provide multiple sample student responses at each score point for all writing tasks administered. Teacher guides from previous years are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

Writing Tasks and Scoring Rubric

The writing tasks for the 2007 CSTs in writing in grade four are shown on pages 5 and 30. Students in schools, tracks, or programs in session on March 6, 2007, responded to the task administered on that date or on the makeup date, March 7. Students in schools, tracks, or programs not in session on March 6 or 7 responded to the task administered on May 1 or on the makeup date, May 2. Students had time to read the tasks and to plan, write, and proofread their work. The estimated administration time was 75 minutes, including time for directions.

Student responses to the writing tasks administered in 2007 were scored using a four-point holistic scoring rubric, with four being the highest score. Each student response was evaluated by one reader and assigned a score ranging from 1 to 4. Ten percent of the responses were evaluated by a second reader to ensure that the scores were accurate and reliable. The score from the second reader did not count toward the student's writing test score. The score the student received from the first reader was doubled to produce the student's overall score on the writing test.

The scoring rubric for grade four is shown on pages 54 and 55. On pages 56 through 61, the grade four rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all of the scoring criteria are applied to student responses in each genre tested.

In 2007, each student's result on the grade four writing task was reported as a separate Writing Applications score that could range from 2 to 8. This score was combined with the student's multiple-choice score on the CST in English-language arts to determine the student's overall English-language arts performance level. The total score possible for the CST in English-language arts was 83 points if students received the highest rating on the writing test and answered all of the multiple-choice questions correctly.

It is important to note that the score a student receives on the CST in writing does not equate to a performance level. A student can be said to have achieved at a particular performance level only when that student's performance-level result is based on results of the full CST in English-language arts (including the CST in writing).

In spring 2007, students in grade four were required to write a narrative. It should be noted, however, that the type of writing students may be asked to produce can change annually since other genres may be tested in this grade.

Sample Student Responses and Teacher Commentaries

Sample student responses to the writing tasks administered in grade four on March 6 and 7 are shown on pages 7 through 29, along with teacher commentaries. Sample student responses to the tasks administered on May 1 and 2 are shown on pages 31 through 53, along with teacher commentaries. This guide contains three sample student responses that are typically at the mid-range of each score point for the two writing tasks administered in grade four in 2007. Three responses for each score point are provided to illustrate the different types of responses that may receive the same score. Accompanying these student responses are teacher commentaries that illustrate how criteria for each score point were applied during the scoring process.

The sample responses are drawn from field tests and operational tests. Although there are three student responses for each score point, it should be remembered that the range of student work within any of the four score points is broader than even multiple examples can suggest. Furthermore, responses demonstrate differing combinations of strengths and weaknesses within a given score point.

Suggested Uses for This Teacher Guide

The writing tasks, sample student responses, and teacher commentaries in this guide are intended to illustrate how the scoring rubric was used to score student responses on the 2007 CST in writing in grade four. Teachers also can use the information provided as guidance in applying the rubric to their students' writing. Students can familiarize themselves with state content standards addressed on the writing test by using the rubric to score other students' writing. These suggested activities can enable teachers and students to use rubric-based scoring as a diagnostic tool to help identify areas of strength and weakness in student writing.

The list below provides further suggestions for using the teacher guide to inform and improve the assessment and teaching of student writing.

Using the Teacher Guide for School District or School Assessments

Some suggestions for using the teacher guide to help improve school district or school assessments include the following activities:

- Use the contents of the guide to become familiar with the key components of writing assessments (i.e., writing task, scoring rubric, student responses).

- Examine the released writing tasks to identify distinguishing elements of each writing genre.
- Examine the scoring rubric to ascertain critical features of a holistic rubric.
- Analyze sample student responses in conjunction with teacher commentaries and criteria in the scoring rubrics to determine grade-level-specific writing expectations. This information can inform decisions about areas of focus for writing programs.
- Compare the state writing tasks and scoring rubrics with those that accompany the school's existing curricular program. This information can help identify areas in writing programs that may need to be strengthened. It could be determined, for example, that a particular writing program may not provide students enough opportunities to write in a particular genre. It also could be determined that the characteristics of a writing genre in a particular curricular program do not align well with the characteristics of that genre as defined by the state content standards.

Using the Teacher Guide for Classroom Assessments

Some suggestions for using the teacher guide to help improve classroom assessments include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Use the writing tasks, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics to help teachers identify the knowledge and skills required by the specific state content standards that are the focus of the writing tests. This information should become the focus of writing instruction.
- Use the writing tasks and scoring rubrics to help teachers understand the advantages and benefits of writing tests:
 - The tasks and rubrics engage students in cognitively complex activities, and
 - They give students an opportunity to create rather than select a response.
- Encourage teachers to study the scoring rubrics to understand the criteria that should be used to assess student writing.
- Encourage teachers to use the writing tasks, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics to help their students understand what is expected of them on the CST in writing.

Grade Four Narrative Writing Task

Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

The writing task below was administered to students who took the CST in writing in grade four on March 6 or 7, 2007. The writing task used for the May 1 and 2 administration is shown on page 30. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are included for both tasks.

Narrative Writing Task

Directions:

- In this writing test, you will respond to the writing task on the following pages.
- You will have time to plan your response and write a first draft with edits.
- Only what you write on the lined pages in this booklet will be scored.
- Use only a No. 2 pencil to write your response.

Scoring:

Your writing will be scored on how well you

- include a beginning, a middle, and an end
- use details
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

Read the following writing task. You must write a narrative about this topic.

Writing a Narrative

One day while you are out on a walk with a dog, the dog suddenly starts talking about where he used to live and how he would like to visit that place again. Write about what happens that day.

When you write about this experience, remember

- to include a beginning, a middle, and an end
- to use details to describe the experience
- to use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

Narrative Writing Task—Grade Four

Student responses to the narrative writing tasks on pages 7 through 29 and on pages 31 through 53 were scored using the Grade Four Scoring Rubric shown on pages 54 and 55. This rubric contains criteria adapted from the state Writing Applications content standards that speak to genres and their characteristics for grade four, including the Writing Applications content standard for grade four narrative writing (shown below). In addition, this rubric incorporates portions of the English-language arts content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions that address writing in general.

Standard

Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

2.1 Write narratives:

- a. Relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
- b. Provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience.
- c. Use concrete sensory details.
- d. Provide insight into why the selected event or experience is memorable.

Grade Four Focus

For the writing tasks in grade four, students were expected to tell a complete story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Students who did well incorporated concrete details, maintained a clear focus, and demonstrated a sound grasp of written conventions. Effective narratives exhibited a range of writing strategies such as descriptive detail and, sometimes, dialogue.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample One

“Lucy!” I say, “you can talk!” “Yep,” says Lucy. “I’ve been able to talk for years, guess I just needed someone I can trust and who won’t make a big deal out of it.” I couldn’t believe it. I pinched myself and no, it wasn’t a dream. You see Lucy isn’t my dog she’s my friend Katie’s dog, and Lucy just said she was born in San Diego and lived there for the longest time. But once she got bigger there wasn’t anymore room in the tiny apartment in San Diego, so Katie bought Lucy on her vacation and now she lives in Long Beach. “Please, the last time I saw my mother was four years ago, and I would love to freshen my eyes with my mother’s beauty.” I thought about it. I didn’t have anything to do today and now that I’m 16 1/2 I can drive anywhere I want too. “Okay Lucy, just give me one more good reason and I’ll take you.” Hmmm... “Oh I got it,” she says. “My mother doesn’t know I can talk to humans.” “Okay, good enough.” I whisper.

“Oh, do I hate Saturday traffic,” I say grumpily. We (me and Lucy) had been in the car for 3 hours! “Okay, we must be getting close.” I say for the 3rd time. “Yep,” says Lucy “Next exit on Magnolia Street.” I turn to the farthest right lane and slow down when I get to the exit ramp.

“Right or left?” I ask. “Right.” Lucy says like an ESPN announcer. “Then another right on Church Ave. and a left on Ashland Road and finally a left on Sea Lion Way. The address is 2943, Apartment L13.” We turn right,

Commentary

This writer clearly addresses the writing task by describing what happens when the narrator learns her friend’s dog can talk. The response demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by using vivid descriptive language and sensory details to provide a thoroughly developed sequence of significant events.

The response maintains a consistent focus on the narrator’s efforts to accommodate the dog’s wishes and a mostly consistent point of view. It begins in the present when the narrator discovers the dog can talk (“Lucy! I say, ‘You can talk!’”). The writer uses a conversational transitional phrase (“You see...”) to signal a shift to background information (“... Lucy just said she was born in San Diego and lived there for the longest time.”). Although shifts between past and present are mostly consistent, the writer sometimes shifts verb tenses inadvertently (“I thought about it. I didn’t have anything to do today and now that I’m 16 1/2 I can drive anywhere I want too.”). The organization also would be strengthened with additional paragraph breaks to clarify the shifts in time.

The response conveys the central idea that the experience was amusing for the narrator. This idea is conveyed through the tongue-in-cheek tone of much of the dialogue (“Lucy! I say, ‘You can talk!’ ‘Yep,’ says Lucy...”; “Okay Lucy, just give me one more good reason and I’ll take you.’ ‘Hmmm...’ ‘Oh I got it,’ she says. ‘My mother doesn’t know I can talk to humans.’ ‘Okay, good enough.’ I whisper.”; “Oh, do I hate Saturday traffic,’ I say grumpily”; “Cookie Lips? [asks the narrator] ‘Don’t rub it in.’ Lucy said with a cute dog smile.”) and by the old lady’s sugary names for Lucy and her mother (Sugar Plum and Cookie Lips).

In addition to crisp dialogue, the writer makes good use of descriptive language and sensory details. She

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

right, left, left and trudge up the stairs to apartment L13. I whisper, "Remember, don't speak English, you don't want your secret revealed."

I ring the doorbell, "Ding-dong." An old woman about the age of 70 appears at the door and says, "How may I help you young lady?" "Hi. My friend bought this dog about um, 4 years ago and I assume this is the apartment she was born in and I was wondering if this dog's mom still lived here?" "Oh," the old lady said. "Why yes, yes she does. Sugar Plum, come here." So, Lucy's mom came to the door. "Sugar Plum, guess what? Cookie Lips is here." So Lucy and her mom had a little reunion and Mrs. Salom (the old lady) and I talked about how Lucy (Cookie Lips) was Katie's dog and how she had grown, a lot. When Lucy and I got in the car to go home, I said, "Cookie Lips?" "Don't rub it in." Lucy said with a cute dog smile.

Commentary

uses active verbs, for example ("[We] trudge up the stairs..."; "Okay good enough.' I whisper."), and well-chosen adverbs ("... I say grumpily.") to convey characters' states of mind, and she uses sounds ("Ding-dong") and titles (Long Beach, Sea Lion Way, Magnolia Street) to create a sense of place.

The writer incorporates sentence variety by mixing fragments of dialogue with more formal sentences to move the reader swiftly through the narrative ("We (me and Lucy) had been in the car for 3 hours! 'Okay, we must be getting close.' I say for the 3rd time. 'Yep,' says Lucy. 'Next exit on Magnolia Street.' I turn to the farthest right lane and slow down when I get to the exit ramp. 'Right or left?' I ask. 'Right.' Lucy says like an ESPN announcer. 'Then another right on Church Ave. and a left on Ashland Road...").

Although conventions are generally sound, the response contains some errors. These include use of an objective pronoun where a subjective pronoun is needed ("We [me and Lucy]"), a shift from present to past tense in the final paragraph ("I ring the doorbell. ... So Lucy's mom came to the door."), and spelling errors ("adress," "too" for "to"). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Demonstrating a clear grasp of purpose and excellent word choice, dialogue, and transitions, this response is an impressive score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Two

One sunny morning I was walking down main street whith my dog. Then suddenly, my dog starts talking! I was soo amazed but yet puzzled! This has never ever happened before. I screamed and jumped behind a trash can. I sat there in amazement, that dog was talking to me! I rubbed my eyes, checked my ears and smacked myself in the head. But that dog kept on talking! "I must be dreaming," I said, "Yeah! That's it, I'm dreaming." I looked at him. Then I picked up a piece of wood and, "Smack"!! I hit myself so hard that I got dizzy and fell down. I looked at my dog, he was talking about his homeland. "Gee can I finish now"? He said. "No," I am going to take you home!" I said.

On the way home I stopped at the pet shop to get some dog treat's. He was hungry becaus he hasn't eaten since this morning and it was almost diner time. "Hey kid" he shouted "do you think that your folks would still like me because I talk"? "I don't know," I said, "they might". "good" he said.

When we got home it was diner time. "Go wash up" Said mom. When I went up stairs to wash up I heard my mom scream, Aghhhhh! I knew what the problem was already. My dog was talking to her. "What in tarnation is going on here," shouted dad. "That dog can talk" shouted mom. "Son" said dad, "I'm afraid we're going to have to take him back." "What!" I said, "you cant do that". I shouted, "I promise to take care of him and keep him quiet. Oh pleese, oh plese, oh please!" "OK fine"! said dad "Oh thank you. I said. "Hey

Commentary

Although this response does not describe a visit to a dog's former home, it addresses the writing task by describing what happens on the day the narrator learns his dog can talk. It demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by presenting a sequence of significant events that are thoroughly developed with vivid descriptive language and sensory details to enable the reader to imagine the narrator's experience.

Although events are organized in a clear sequence, this sequence is disrupted by shifts between past and present points of view in the first paragraph ("Then suddenly, my dog starts talking! I was soo amazed but yet puzzled! This has never happened before.") and in the third paragraph ("He was hungry becaus he hasn't eaten since this morning...").

Vivid descriptive language conveys the central idea that the narrator's experience is amusingly bizarre. This idea is suggested in the first paragraph when the narrator describes his reaction to the talking dog ("I rubbed my eyes, checked my ears and smacked myself in the head. But that dog kept on talking!"). Later, this idea is conveyed through vivid dialogue ("When I went up stairs to wash up I heard my mom scream, Aghhhhh! I knew what the problem was already. My dog was talking to her. 'What in tarnation is going on here,' shouted dad. 'That dog can talk' shouted mom.>"). The dog's rendition of "row, row, row your boat" carries the central idea through to the conclusion.

Sentence variety produces a smooth narrative flow. In the third paragraph, for example, the writer begins the first sentence with a transitional phrase, uses a compound-complex second sentence, follows with a sentence of interrogatory dialogue, and follows that with dialogue of simple sentences ("On the way home

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Where is he" said mom. "I don't know, I'll go check."

I searched every where, finally I found him in my mom's studio, he was singing in the microphone. He was singing, "row, row, row your boat gently down the stream, merily, merily, merily, merily life is but a dream." Then he looked at me and said, "You have to try harder than that if you are going to keep me quiet."

Then we all laughed and enjoyed diner together.

Commentary

I stopped at the pet shop to get some dog treat's. He was hungry because he hasn't eaten since this morning and it was almost diner time. 'Hey kid' he shouted 'do you think that your folks would still like me because I talk?' 'I don't know,' I said. 'They might.' 'good' he said.')

The response contains some errors in conventions. Sometimes, the writer neglects to include commas to separate speaker from dialogue and quotation marks to indicate dialogue ("Hey kid' he shouted 'do you think that your folks would still like me..."). At other times, the writer splices independent clauses together with a comma ("I sat there in amazement, that dog was talking to me!"; "I looked at my dog, he was talking about his homeland.'). The response contains occasional spelling errors, as well ("diner" for "dinner," "because," "merily" for "merrily.'). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Although this response includes errors in verb tense and conventions, the writer's use of vivid descriptive language and dialogue in swiftly moving sentences helps make it a score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Three

The Talking Dog

One day I was taking my dog, Spencer, for a walk, and for ice cream, he jumped up and started walking like a human. I screamed and started backing away, and getting ready to run, and he started talking to me. I stopped and stared with big, wide eyes. My eyes were so wide you could see the white all around. "I used to live in a dog's world. It was wonderful there. It was full of life, excitement, and there was tons of food. Unfortunately, I got dognapped and I was taken to the pound. I hated that place. The dogs there were mean. Then you came along and adopted me. Will you take me to my old home? Please?" he stared at me with big eyes and whimpered. "Oh, okay." I said.

"Yahoo!" he said. He started running and I followed. We went through big, iron gates and when I saw where we were I gasped and said, "You lived in an amusement park?" "That's right. It's the perfect place for a dog to live." said Spencer. We went on the Brain Bumper, The Heart Stopper, and the Spleen Scream. We ate churros, pizza, ice cream, cotton candy, popcorn, hot dogs, and hamburgers. Spencer didn't eat hot dogs though. After that, we started to walk home.

We took a short-cut home. It was a spooky short-cut and we turned back but we couldn't get out that way. "We're lost." I said hopelessly. "No, we aren't." Spencer said. "I have my detective nose with me." Within an hour,

Commentary

This response clearly addresses the writing task by presenting a thoroughly developed narrative about what happens when the narrator's dog asks to return to his old home. The writer demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by using vivid descriptive language and sensory details to enable the reader to imagine the narrator's experiences.

The consistent organizational structure includes a well-developed beginning and end and a middle that describes in vivid detail the narrator's experiences in the dog's old home, an amusement park. Although the point of view is mostly consistent, it wavers briefly early in the response when the narrator shifts from a first person to a third person perspective ("My eyes were so wide you could see the white all around.").

The response suggests the central idea that the narrator's life with Spencer, his dog, is exciting and eventful. This idea is suggested in the body of the response where vivid descriptive language documents the rides and food in the amusement park ("the Brain Bumper, The Heart Stopper, and the Spleen Scream" and the "churros, pizza, ice cream, cotton candy, popcorn, hot dogs, and hamburgers") and where Spencer's "detective nose" extricates the two from a "spooky short-cut" and in the conclusion when the narrator chooses to follow Spencer and live in the amusement park.

The writer also conveys the characters' moods effectively through dialogue ("Will you take me to my old home? Please." he stared at me with big eyes and whimpered. "Oh, okay." I said. "Yahoo!" he said.) and through well-chosen, active verbs ("... when I saw where we were I gasped..." "We ran upstairs, grabbed some suitcases...").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

we were out.

“We’re back, Mom.” I yelled when we got into the house. We ran upstairs, grabbed some suitcases and started packing our things. When we came downstairs, my mom asked, “Where are you two going?” “We’re moving out!” I said. “Okay,” said Mom. We ran out of the house and to the amusement park. We found nice places to sleep and lived happily ever after.

Commentary

The response demonstrates sentence variety. A typical passage, for example, employs simple and complex sentences, longer and shorter sentences, and sentences that begin with a mixture of independent and dependent clauses to create a swiftly moving paragraph (“We’re back, Mom.’ I yelled when we got into the house. We ran upstairs, grabbed some suitcases and started packing our things. When we came downstairs, my mom asked, ‘Where are you two going?’ ‘We’re moving out!’ I said. ‘Okay,’ said Mom. We ran out of the house and to the amusement park.”).

The response contains few errors in conventions of the English language. The first two sentences, however, contain a comma splice and an unnecessary comma (“One day I was taking my dog, Spencer, for a walk, and for ice cream, he jumped up and started walking like a human.”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

A swiftly moving narrative with effective detail and dialogue and few errors in conventions make this response a score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample One

One day, I was walking with my dog in the park. When we try to rest on a beautiful tree, the dog started to talk about his life.

The dog said that when he lived with someone else, they had a beautiful tree like this in the front yard. I listned and he said that it was a grandma with a big white house. Then I had an idea. I went to our house looked into the internet trying to search that house. One hour later, I found a big house with a beautiful tree in the yard. It was 9:00 pm. I decided to go tommorow morning. In eight O'clock we went searching for the house. When we got there, a young women came to the door. When we asked about the grandma that lived here, the women said that she moved to a new house. The women gave the address to us. When we were walking there we saw someone and the dog started to bark on that person. The person was getting closer so I tried apolizize to the person but when I looked closer to the face, it was a grandma. When I asked her if she was the owner, she said she was.

We went to her house and said that we will visit her every weekend. The dog was very happy now.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task by describing an experience with the writer's dog after it starts talking. It demonstrates a general understanding of purpose by providing a sequence of events that is adequately developed with descriptive language and sensory detail.

The writer maintains a mostly consistent organizational structure. The final sentence of a brief introductory paragraph leads effectively into the body of the narrative ("When we try to rest on a beautiful tree, the dog started to talk about his life."), and the body focuses on the narrator's attempt to locate the dog's former home. The organization of the body becomes inconsistent, however, when the writer squeezes the events of the first and second days into the same paragraph ("One hour later, I found [on the Internet] a big house with a beautiful tree. It was 9:00 pm. I decided to go tommorow morning. In eight O'clock we went searching for the house."). Although the response contains a separate concluding paragraph ("We went to her house and said that we will visit her every weekend. The dog was very happy now."), this abrupt conclusion seems anticlimactic after the narrator's painstaking search to locate the dog's former owner.

The writer adequately develops a sequence of events that takes place over two days. On the first day, the narrator and the dog rest in a park, the dog describes his former home, and the narrator tries to find the dog's home on the Internet. On the second day, the narrator finds the dog's home, discovers that the dog's former owner has moved, and serendipitously meets the former owner. These events suggest the central idea that the narrator went to considerable effort to find the dog's former home.

The writer provides some descriptive language to enable the reader to imagine a sequence of events.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

Probably the most effective language describes the dog's former home (a "big white house" with "a beautiful tree . . . in the front yard"), the narrator's Internet search for the dog's home ("Then I had an idea. I went to our house looked into the internet trying to search that house. One hour later, I found a big house with a beautiful tree. . . ."), and the "young women [who] came to the door" at that home. As noted earlier, however, other portions of the narrative, such as the conclusion, would benefit from more detailed development.

The response demonstrates some variety in sentence length and structure. In one sequence, for example, the writer mixes longer and shorter as well as simple, complex, and compound/complex sentences ("One day, I was walking with my dog in the park. When we try to rest on a beautiful tree, the dog started to talk about his life.

The dog said that when he lived with someone else, they had a beautiful tree like this in the front yard. I listned and he said that it was a grandma with a big white house. Then I had an idea. I went to our house looked into the internet. . . .").

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include mistakes in verb tense ("When we try to rest on a beautiful tree, the dog started . . ."; "When we asked about the grandma that lived here, the women said that she moved [rather than 'had moved'] . . ."), misuse of prepositions ("In eight O'clock"; ". . . when I looked closer to the face . . ."), confusion between singular and plural (" . . . the owner was a young women."), and errors in spelling ("tomorrow"; "apolizize"). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Although this response would benefit from a more consistent organizational structure, the sequence of events developed with some descriptive language and some sentence variety make it a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Two

My name is Shaggy and my best pal Scooby-Doo. One day Scooby was acting really wierd, and he kept on putting his head into my side and didn't eat my double quadrupal stacked sandwich. I knew something was going on and I had to stop it. The next day I took him to the vet.

He always hated cats. He was pulling on his leash so hard that I could not feel my hand. "Shaggy" the nurse said "Cummon Scoooooob" I said yanking on his leash. Finally he commed down and I took him to the vet. He hopped up on the table and he was shaking.

Right away the nurse said "he needs to go on a walk. Then I payed and we left. When we got home I took him on a walk and then Scoob started to talk.

He said "Rie riss ry rold rowner Rreddy," "OH you mean Freddy." "Ra Ra" he said. Okay lets finish our walk first. "Roray" he said.

Once we got home, I called him and he said to come on over. We drove the Mystery Machine over to his house in blue oaks. When we got there he was waiting for us on the front porch.

"Hi Fred" I said. "Hi Shag and Scooby." Long time no see", I said. "Come on in" he said. When Scoob and I walked in he had a hot tub, a big plazma TV in his wall, 3 king sized beds and a big bathrowm, and a kitchen. "So why did you come over," he said.

"Oh Scoob told me to take him hear" I said. Fred said "he actualy talked. "Res" he

Commentary

This response addresses most of the writing task by describing the narrator's experience with a dog that wants to visit its former owner. The writer demonstrates an understanding of purpose by adequately developing a sequence of events with descriptive language and sensory detail.

The organizational structure is mostly consistent. The writer describes a logical sequence of events that begins when the narrator's dog, Scooby, becomes uncharacteristically listless and ends when the dog reverts to his lively old self. Connections between events, however, are not always clear because transitional material is sometimes lacking and explanations are not adequately developed. Paragraph two, for example, begins abruptly ("He always hated cats."). It is not until the subsequent sentence that the reader, with some effort, might correctly guess that it is a cat in the veterinarian's office that makes Scooby "[pull] on his leash." Similarly, at the beginning of paragraph three, it is not clear why the nurse recommends that Scooby go for a walk. Finally, the paragraph break between the next-to-last and final paragraphs is randomly placed.

The writer provides some adequate descriptive language and sensory details to convey the central idea that Scooby misses his former owner. The opening paragraph, for instance, provides an effective description of Scooby's melancholy ("... he kept on putting his head into my side and didn't eat my double quadrupal stacked sandwich."). Later, when Scooby gets to visit his former owner, the writer conveys the dog's excitement ("[Scooby] said 'Rie riss ry rold rowner Rreddy.' 'Oh you mean Freddy.' 'Ra Ra' he said. Okay lets finish our walk first. 'Roray' he said."). The writing is less effective later in the response when the writer hurries the action with minimal description ("Oh Scoob told me to take him hear" I said. Fred said 'he

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

*said. Freddy said, "we should have a party".
"Roray" Scooby said. They drove to get dafny
then velma and come back to Freddy's house
and They had a wounderful time.*

Commentary

actually talked.' 'Res' he [Scooby] said. Freddy said, 'we should have a party'.") In addition, the writer sometimes uses descriptive language for no particular purpose ("... he had a hot tub, a big plazma TV in his wall, 3 king sized beds and a big bathrowm, and a kitchen.").

Although the response consists largely of short independent clauses loosely connected by "and" ("Finally he commed down and I took him to the vet. He hopped up on the table and he was shaking."), mixtures of simple, complex, and compound-complex sentences sometimes create a more graceful flow ("Once we got home, I called him and he said to come on over. We drove the Mystery Machine over to his house in blue oaks. When we got there he was waiting for us on the front porch.").

The response contains errors in the conventions of the English language. These include errors in spelling ("realy," "finaly," "actually,"), errors in capitalization ("blue oaks," "dafny," "velma"), lack of an apostrophe ("lets"), and commas omitted in compound sentences ("I knew something was going on and I had to stop it."). These errors are to be expected in a first draft. Most do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Although this response would be strengthened by a clearer organizational structure, some effective description to convey the central idea and some sentence variety help make this response a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Three

I thought a walk with my dog, Buster, today would be a normal one, but I was sure suprized. It started out as a normal walk just around the neiborhood. We were two blocks away from our house. I had Buster on the leash. I said to Buster, "Wow, slow down!" He said, "OK." I said back, "Did you just talk?" Then he says, "Yeah." I was so confused. All of these years I had Buster he had never talked before. I asked him a few questions, like if he liked his new dog chow and if he had a home before he came to live with us. He said no to the first question and yes to the second question. He started talking about how great his old house was. He wanted to go see his old owners, that was good for us because his owner only lived 5 blocks away from Rock Fort street. We ran all the way there. We knocked on the door and a boy answered the door. He was about 11 years old. I was 9 when I got Buster now I am 13. This boy must have had Buster for 2 years. He looked like the old owner of Buster. Then Buster says, "Ha, you aren't my old owner." The boy says, "Oh the old owners of this house moved to Utah." Me and Buster went back to our house. I told my mom we needed to go to Utah to see Buster's old owners. The next day we packed and got ready to go to Utah to see Buster's old owners. When we got to the air port we got on own plane and took off. It took 2 hours to get to Utah. When we finally get off the plane we rented a car and looked for them. Buster saw them in a car when we were div-

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task by describing a two-day experience when the writer's dog, Buster, starts talking. The response demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of narrative by presenting a sequence of events with descriptive language and sensory details.

The writer maintains a consistent focus on the narrator's search for Buster's former home and a mostly consistent sequential organization that proceeds from the narrator's discovery that Buster can talk, through the search for Buster's former owner, to their eventual meeting with that owner. The organization is weakened, however, by the writer's failure to provide separate paragraphs when scenes shift from the narrator's walk with Buster around their neighborhood, to their hunt for Buster's former home a few blocks away, then back to the narrator's home, then to their flight to Utah, and so on. The organization is also disrupted by an extraneous discussion of ages ("... a boy answered the door. He was about 11 years old. I was 9 when I got Buster now I am 13. This boy must have had Buster for 2 years.").

This response conveys the central idea that Buster is "one lucky dog." This idea is communicated mainly by events such as spotting his former owner driving down a street and then meeting his former owner, and to some extent by the narrator's readiness to help Buster locate this owner.

A sequence of events is adequately developed with descriptive language and details. The description, mostly in the form of dialogue, is most effective early in the response where the writer describes in some detail the discovery that Buster could talk ("We were two blocks away from our house. I had Buster on the leash. I said to Buster, 'Wow, slow down!' He said, 'OK.' I said back, 'Did you just talk?' Then he says,

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

ing down, Winton street. We followed the car to a big mantion. We knocked on the door. The old owner answered the door. So he got to see his old house and owners. He asked them a few questions. When we finally got home Buster was so happy, I was too. He was sure one lucky dog.

Commentary

'Yeah.' I was so confused. All of these years I had Buster he had never talked before. I asked him a few questions, like if he liked his new dog chow and if he had a home before he came to live with us."). The use of names ("Rock Fort street"; "Winton street") and numbers ("... 5 blocks away ..."; "It took 2 hours to get to Utah.") helps establish settings. The description is less effective later in the response where the writer resorts to summary writing ("The old owner answered the door. So he got to see his old house and owners. He asked them a few questions. When we finally got home Buster was so happy ...").

The response contains some sentence variety. It opens, for instance, with a rhythmic compound sentence ("I thought a walk with my dog, Buster, today would be a normal one, but I was sure suprized."). Soon, however, the writing slips into a pattern of shorter, choppier sentences ("It started out as a normal walk just around the neiborhood. We were two blocks away from our house. I had Buster on the leash."). This pattern continues elsewhere in the response ("We ran all the way there. We knocked on the door and a boy answered the door. He was about 11 years old. I was 9 when I got Buster now I am 13. This boy must have had Buster for 2 years. He looked like the old owner of Buster.").

The writer uses many conventions well, especially when introducing quotations, but makes occasional errors. These include unnecessary commas ("Buster saw them in a car when we were diving down, Winton street."), comma splices ("He wanted to go see his old owners, that was good for us because his owner only lived 5 blocks away from Rock Fort street"), mistaken shifts in verb tense ("When we finally get off the plane we rented a car ..."), and use of an objective pronoun where a subjective pronoun is needed ("Me and Buster went back to our house."). There also are

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

misspelled words (“supprized,” “neiborhood,” and “diving” for “driving”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this response demonstrates some organizational flaws and repetitiveness in sentence structure, the writer’s effective use of detail and generally sound conventions help make it a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample One

Well, it started in the morning, then the dog starts talking. The people only heard him barking. But I can hear him talking. Everyone stared at me because I was talking to my dog. Then, the dog started talking about how he lived and everything. So I ignored him so the people would stop staring at me and the dog. Last, we went home to have a rest, but I left the dog at the backyard so he would stop talking to me. Then I still hear him talking to me so I couldn't go to sleep. So I tried go in bed in the room so he is quiet.

Commentary

The response addresses some of the writing task by presenting a sequence of events that describes the narrator's experience with a talking dog. Events are minimally developed with limited descriptive language and sensory details, however, demonstrating a limited understanding of purpose.

The organizational structure is inconsistent. The writer sets the scene early by noting that the narrator is the only person who can hear the dog barking, but the third and fifth sentences repeat information presented in the first sentence ("Well, it started in the morning, then the dog starts talking. The people only heard him barking. But I can hear him talking. ... Then, the dog started talking about..."). The final sentence ends the response abruptly ("So I tried go in bed in the room so he is quiet.").

The response suggests the central idea that the narrator feels embarrassed and harassed by the dog. This idea is suggested by summaries of events rather than by descriptive language or sensory details ("Everyone stared at me because I was talking to my dog. ... I ignored him so the people would stop staring... I left the dog at the backyard so he would stop talking to me. Then I still hear him talking to me so I couldn't go to sleep.") The only concrete language that might help a reader imagine the narrator's experience is the dog's "barking" and a reference to the narrator's "backyard."

The response mostly consists of simple and complex sentences ("The people only heard him barking. But I can hear him talking. Everyone stared at me because I was talking to my dog. Then, the dog started talking to me about how he lived and everything."). The repeated use of "then" and "so" as transitions makes the sentences seem especially simplistic ("Then, the dog started talking about... So I ignored him so the

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

people would stop staring at me. . . . Then I still hear him talking to me so I couldn't go to sleep.”).

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include a comma splice (“Well, it started in the morning, then the dog starts talking.”), unintentional shifts in verb tense (“Then I still hear him talking to me so I couldn't go to sleep.”), and an inaccurate choice of preposition (“. . . but I left the dog at the backyard. . .”). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Repetitiveness in the organizational structure, general rather than sensory language, and simplistic sentences make this limited response a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Two

On Monday we went to visit the place were we used to live. My dog said "I want to live there again." So I told my mom if we could go back were we used to live. My mom said "no". I told her that why couldn't we move; and she said no because she didn't have any money. My dog and me were very sad about it. The next day my mom said that we could visit the house any day and any hour we want.

Commentary

This writer addresses some of the writing task by producing a sequence of events about a talking dog. The response demonstrates little understanding of purpose, however, because events are minimally developed with limited descriptive language and sensory details.

The organizational structure is inconsistent. The first sentence is too abrupt to adequately orient the reader ("On Monday we went to visit the place were we used to live."), and the final sentence simply stops rather than concludes ("The next day my mom said that we could visit the house any day and any hour we want."). The middle of the response presents a limited plot in which the narrator's dog asks to move to his former home, the narrator asks if the family can move back there, the mother says they cannot afford to, the boy and dog are disheartened, and the mother resolves the problem by permitting the family to visit their former home. The writer's discussion of these events is minimal, consisting of only a few sentences with two snippets of dialogue ("My dog said 'I want to live there again.'" and "My mom said 'no'.",) and is otherwise devoid of descriptive language and sensory details.

The response faintly suggests the central idea that the wishes of the boy and the dog are accommodated because the mother is flexible enough to compromise.

The response consists largely of simple sentences but contains one compound sentence ("I told her that why couldn't we move; and she said no because she didn't have any money.")

The response contains many errors in the conventions of English. These include grammatical errors ("So I told my mom if we could go back..."; "I told her that why couldn't we move;"), lack of commas

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

to introduce quotations (“My dog said ‘I want to live there again.’”), the use of an objective pronoun where a subjective pronoun is required (“My dog and me were very sad about it.”), and a spelling error (“were” for “where”). The grammatical errors, particularly, may interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

The inadequate organizational structure, lack of development, simplicity of sentence structure, and errors in conventions make this response a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Three

One day I decieded to walk my dog. Out of the clear blue he starts to tell me about when he used live in the pet shop. I stoped and looked then ran, but every where I went a new animal would talk to me. Soon enough my dog caught up to me. Then I sceamed and ran home but as soon as I got home every thing was normal.

Commentary

The writer addresses the writing task by explaining what happens after the narrator's dog talks to the narrator. Minimal development of events and limited use of descriptive language and sensory details, however, demonstrate that the writer has little understanding of purpose.

The organizational structure is partially consistent. The paragraph begins with an appropriate opening sentence ("One day I decieded to walk my dog.") and then focuses consistently, if briefly, on the narrator's shock when the dog and other animals talk to him ("I stoped and looked then ran... Soon enough my dog caught up to me. Then I sceamed and ran home..."). The response ends on a confusing note, however, when the writer fails to indicate why "everything was normal" once the narrator got home.

The response suggests the central idea that the narrator is frightened by the dog and the "new animal(s)" that "would talk to me," but this idea is implied only by the narrator's statements ("I stoped and looked then ran..."; "Then I sceamed and ran home..."). The sequence of events is too limited and the descriptive language and sensory details too minimal to help the reader imagine the narrator's apprehension. The narrator's statement that "... every where I went a new animal would talk to me" is somewhat mysterious and calls for further explanation.

The response demonstrates some variety of sentence types. These include simple sentences ("Soon enough my dog caught up to me."), complex sentences ("Out of the clear blue he starts to tell me about when he used to live in the pet shop."), and compound sentences ("Then I sceamed and ran home but as soon as I got home every thing was normal.").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

The response contains many errors in the conventions of English. Errors include misspellings (“decided”; “stoped”; “every thing”), the absence of commas after introductory phrases (“Out of the clear blue he starts to tell me . . .”) and between independent clauses (“Then I screamed and ran home but as soon as I got home . . .”), and a mistaken shift from past tense in the first sentence to present tense in the second sentence (“One day I decided to walk my dog. Out of the clear blue he starts to tell me . . .”). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this short response demonstrates some organizational consistency and sentence variety, the absence of explanation and description to develop its central idea makes it a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample One

The dog that talked about his place that he use to live in the dog probabally went to go for a visit at his old house with his new owner and then went back home after a long walk and visit.

Commentary

The writer addresses the requirement that students write about a dog that asks to return to its original home but does not produce a sequence of events about the writer-narrator and the dog. Although the writer briefly speculates about events that occur, the generality of these speculations and the absence of descriptive language and sensory details indicate that the writer has no understanding of purpose.

This one-sentence response demonstrates no clear organizational structure. The first half of the sentence simply repeats part of the prompt (“The dog that talked about his place that he use to live in ...”). The rest of the sentence repeats part of the prompt in the form of speculation and relates two events (“... the dog probabally went to go for a visit at his old house ... and then [the dog] went back home”).

The language of the response is uniformly general rather than specific. The response suggests no central idea about the dog’s visit to his previous owner.

The response consists of a single rambling sentence composed of clauses loosely patched together and demonstrates no sentence variety.

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of English. Errors include an opening sentence fragment fused to an adjacent clause (“The dog that talked about his place that he use to live in the dog probabally went to go for a visit...”) and misspellings (“use” for “used” and “probabally”). The fragment and rambling clauses interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Lacking an organizational structure, central idea, and sentence variety and plagued by conventions errors, this response is a score point one.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Two

When the dog told me about were he lived befor. I said that dogs couldn't talk but my dog did. I didn't now what to say and I penched myself but it wasn't a drem. The dog cept on talking intel he was finished talking. The dog asked me if a could tack hem to were he lived befor and a didn't know what to say.

Commentary

This writer addresses one part of the writing task by writing about a talking dog but fails to describe what happens after the dog asks to visit his former home. Since the response relates no events beyond a repetition of those described in the prompt, it demonstrates no understanding of purpose.

The response lacks a clear organizational structure. It begins with a fragment that conveys no information ("When the dog told me about were he lived befor.") and continues with repetitive statements that register the narrator's bewilderment ("I said that dogs couldn't talk but my dog did. I didn't now what to say and I penched myself but it wasn't a drem."). Rather than concluding, the response simply stops by reiterating information presented in the prompt ("The dog asked me if a could tack hem to were he lived befor and a didn't know what to say.").

Although it lacks descriptive language and sensory details, the writer's repetitive statements suggest the central idea that the narrator is baffled upon discovering that the dog can talk.

Sentence variety is minimal. The writer's first attempt at a sentence is a fragment. Except for one complex sentence ("The dog cept on talking intel he was finished talking."), the remaining sentences are compound sentences composed of short, simple clauses connected by "and" or "but" ("I said that dogs couldn't talk but my dog did. I didn't now what to say and I penched myself but it wasn't a drem.").

In addition to the sentence fragment, the response contains serious spelling errors. Among these are "now" for "know," "penched" for "pinched," "drem" for "dream," and "cept" for "kept." Sentences often lack commas between independent clauses. The spelling

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

errors in particular interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Lacking a narrative sequence, descriptive language, and sentence variety and beset with numerous spelling errors that interfere with the reader's understanding, this response is a score point 1.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on March 6 and 7, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Three

One day I went on a walk with the dog. Then the dog stated talking. He was talking about where he used to live. Then he was wishing he could go back there. Then he said I hope we could go there soon. Thats what the dog was telling this whole entire time. Now I know what the dog was telling me. He was telling me he wanted to go home. Thats what the dog was talking about. Yes we might go there soon.

Commentary

This writer addresses the part of the writing task that asks students to write about an experience with a talking dog. The response demonstrates no understanding of purpose, however, because it fails to present a narrative about what happens when the dog asks to return to his former home.

Although this response demonstrates a discernible beginning, middle, and end, it lacks a clear narrative structure. It contains a one-sentence introduction (“One day I went on a walk with the dog.”) and a one-sentence conclusion that speculates about the future (“Yes we might go there soon.”), but the body is developed almost exclusively with repetition (“He was talking about where he used to live. Then he was wishing he could go back there. Then he said I hope we could go there soon. Thats what the dog was telling this whole entire time. Now I know what the dog was telling me. He was telling me he wanted to go home. Thats what the dog was talking about.”). This repetition does not constitute a narrative of events.

The language of the response is uniformly general rather than specific and contains no central idea about the narrator’s experience with the dog.

The consistently short, simple sentences demonstrate no variety (“Then the dog stated talking. He was talking about where he used to live. Then he was wishing he could go back there.”).

The conventions are sound except for the omission of quotation marks (“Then he said I hope we could go there soon.”), a contraction that lacks an apostrophe (“Thats what the dog . . .”), and the omission of a comma (“Yes we might go there soon.”).

Although the conventions are generally sound, the lack of a narrative sequence, a central idea, descriptive language, and sentence variety make this response a score point 1.

Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

The writing task below was administered to students who took the CST in writing in grade four on May 1 or 2, 2007. The writing task used for the March 6 and 7 administration is shown on page 5. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are included for both tasks.

Narrative Writing Task

Directions:

- In this writing test, you will respond to the writing task on the following pages.
- You will have time to plan your response and write a first draft with edits.
- Only what you write on the lined pages in this booklet will be scored.
- Use only a No. 2 pencil to write your response.

Scoring:

Your writing will be scored on how well you

- include a beginning, a middle, and an end
- use details
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

Read the following writing task. You must write a narrative about this topic.

Writing a Narrative

Think about your favorite animal. For one day, you are going to be that animal.
Write about your day as this animal.

When you write about this experience, remember

- to include a beginning, a middle, and an end
- to use details to describe the experience
- to use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample One

It was in the 1800's, the time when the Bengal tiger was being hunted. I was laying on my bed reading a book about the poachers, hunters that hunted Bengals. These tigers were almost excited. I wanted to scream and hurt those hunters anyway I could. Suddenly, I heard my dad come down the hallway. I hastily turned off my light and dropped my book. My eyes closed as I pretended to be asleep. The door to my dad's room shut. "Thank God!" I thought.

As I drifted off to sleep, I pictured poachers and Bengal tigers. I wished with all of my heart to help the magnificent tigers. As I woke I suddenly became aware I wasn't in my house, neighborhood, or even state! I was in the Tropical Rain Forest of South America! Except my vision was sharper and I could smell everything! A fern was poking into my back, but it wasn't the right feeling.... I had fur! White with black stripes. I had claws and a long tale. I had become a Bengal tiger! "Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!" I said, or thought I said because all that came out was an angry snarl. Then I thought this is awesome! I sprang up and flexed my claws. I ran up a tree and jumped back down, with so much speed that only cats have. It is time to fulfill my dream. Help the Bengals! "That is why I was sent here," I thought.

After wandering in the jungle for some time, my sharp ears heard someone shout, "Help, Help, Helppppp!" I jumped and ran towards the voice, which I recognized as one

Commentary

This response clearly addresses the writing task by describing the narrator's experience as a Bengal tiger. It demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by relating a sequence of significant events that is thoroughly developed with vivid descriptive language and sensory details.

The response focuses consistently on the narrator's experiences and is told consistently from the narrator's point of view, even when the narrator turns into a Bengal tiger ("Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God! I said, or thought I said because all that came out was an angry snarl."). The response demonstrates a clear and consistent organizational structure in which the narrator's experience as a Bengal tiger is framed by an introduction and conclusion in which the narrator is human.

Strong, specific nouns and active verbs help convey the central idea that the narrator's experience as a tiger is intense but perilous. The narrator's first sensory experience, for example, is of a "fern [that] was poking into my back..." He realizes he has "claws and a long tale" and a voice that is a "snarl." After discovering he is a Bengal tiger, he "sprang up and flexed [his] claws." He runs with "speed that only cats have." He dodges a "dart [that] was whizzing strait towards my head..." and "buried itself into the tree right above me." Later, he "slashe[s]" a poacher's shoulder and "growl[s] deep and horrible."

A mix of energetic simple sentences of various lengths, compound sentences, and complex sentences creates a vivid narrative that moves along quickly ("I jumped and landed right on one of the poachers head and slashed at him with one powerful claw. A deep gash appeared on his soulder. I sprang off and growled deep and horrible. They fled. The younger tiger was about to thank me but suddenly I dissapered.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

of my own kind. As I stepped into the clearing, I saw a horrible sight – another younger tiger was trapped under a poacher net! I ran up and easily cut the thick rope with my claws. When I was on the last strand I heard a human shout. I looked up and a dart was whizzing strait towards my head. I ducked with catlike reflexes and just in time too. The dart buried itself into the tree right above me. I stole a quick glance at dart and jumped into the tree. It was the poachers from North America coming to take Bengal skins back to the stock market. I jumped and landed right on one of the poachers head and slashed at him with one powerful claw. A deep gash appeared on his soulder. I sprang off and growled deep and horrible. They fled. The younger tiger was about to thank me but suddenly I dissapered. I was lying in my bed when Mom shouted, “Time for breakfast!”

“Maybe it was a dream,” I thought. But as I was combing my hair I found some white hairs. And right then and there I knew I did help the tigers. Well, at least one of them.

Commentary

I was lying in my bed when Mom shouted, “Time for breakfast!”).

Conventions are generally sound, although the response contains occasional errors. Most of these are spelling errors (“excinted,” “Ecsept,” “tale” for “tail,” “awsome,” and “strait.”). The response contains one error in verb form (“laying” for “lying”) and one pair of fused independent clauses (“As I stepped into the clearing, I saw a horrible sight another younger tiger was trapped under a poacher net!”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

A well-organized narrative with good sentence variety, excellent descriptive detail, and vivid narrative action makes this response a strong score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Two

"Oh, boy," I shouted, "Kibble!" I raced downstairs, my little paws going as fast as they could. I dived head-first into the bowl. "Watch it, Fluffy," my master, Tom, said. I lapped up some water. At that moment, my master's sister, Lucy, came in. I instantly dived at her and started licking her. "Ewww, gross," she wined, "Dog slobber!", I thought it must be a compliment, so I continued licking her. "Come on, boy," my master said, "Let's go have a walk" and put me on a leash. I went outside, and I felt the breeze blow in my fur. We started to walk toward the stove.

Suddenly, three boys came out of nowhere. "Bullies," my master said. I decided "bully" must be a word for friend, so I jumped on them. "Get off me," one of the boys said. I was about to jump away when.... whoops, I went on him. When a dog has to go, he goes. "Sick," one of them mumbled. "If this kid has to resort to his dog to protect him, he's not very strong," and they ran off without another word. "Come on, boy," my master said, "Let's go home". By the time we got home, Tom's mother was waiting to eat lunch. "Fluffy saved me from bullies today," Tom told his mother. "Well, in that case, he gets a reward," and handed me some beef. For the rest of the day, I chewed on the savory bone. At night, I slept on his bed. I hope tomorrow will be even better than today.

Commentary

This response clearly addresses the writing task by describing the writer's day as his favorite animal. It demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by describing a sequence of events that is thoroughly developed with vivid descriptive language and sensory details.

The writer consistently narrates the story from a dog's point of view, beginning with the opening sentence ("Oh boy," I shouted, "Kibble!") and continuing throughout the response where the narrator-dog repeatedly misinterprets the responses of humans ("Ewww, gross," [the narrator's sister] wined, 'Dog slobber', I thought it must be a compliment, ..."; "Bullies," my master said. I decided 'bully' must be a word for friend ..."). The beginning of the response, where the dog is excited at the prospect of kibbles, the middle, where the dog protects his master from bullies, and the end, where the dog is rewarded for his efforts, are all well developed. The final sentence ("I hope tomorrow will be even better than today."), however, seems like an effort to simply get the narrative over with.

The response conveys the central idea that the narrator is an excitable puppy whose life is filled with breathless activity. This idea is suggested through descriptive language, especially active verbs, both early in the response ("I raced downstairs, my little paws going as fast as they could. I dived head-first into the bowl ... I lapped up some water.") and later as well ("... I jumped on [the bullies] ... I was about to jump away when ... whoops, I went on him."). The vividness of the narrative fades toward the end when the writer begins to rely on summary writing ("For the rest of the day, I chewed on the savory bone. At night, I slept on his bed.").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

The writer produces a smooth flow of sentences by mixing sentence lengths and types and by alternating between main and subordinate clauses to begin sentences (“‘If this kid has to resort to his dog to protect him, he’s not very strong,’ and they ran off without another word. ‘Come on, boy,’ my master said, ‘Let’s go home’. By the time we got home, Tom’s mother was waiting to eat lunch. ‘Fluffy saved me from bullies today,’ Tom told his mother.”).

The response contains a single spelling error (“wined” for “whined”). Otherwise, the conventions are very sound.

Vivid descriptive language and dialogue, sound conventions, and the clever use of point of view make this response a score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Three

One night I woke up feeling weird. I looked in the mirror and saw that I turned into a tawny owl. Somehow, I just turned into one. Then, I flew through an open window and into the starry night.

I examined my reflection in a nearby pond. My body was covered with brown feathers and my eyes were black with red and blue rings around them. I was about 1 1/2 feet high. I spotted a tree and fluttered over to it. Since I was hungry, I turned my head and listened.

I heard a rustling noise below. Before I knew it, I had killed a mouse. I quickly gulped it down. Minutes later, I coughed up a pellet.

So, I flew around the neighborhood. Soon, I perched on a mailbox. Then I heard a great horned owl fly and attack me, so I flew to a tree and hid in the leaves.

The owl soon flew away. I hooted and looked around. The horizon was tinted with the color of the sun. Since it was getting light, I decided go in my house. When I got in, I perched on the bed.

Soon, I fell asleep. The light was getting brighter. Later, when the sun rose, I woke up. I was myself again. It was good being an owl, but it's good to be myself.

Commentary

This response clearly addresses the writing task by describing the narrator's day as a tawny owl. It demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose by presenting a sequence of events that is thoroughly developed with vivid descriptive language and sensory details.

The response is narrated throughout from the narrator-owl's point of view, and it demonstrates a consistent organizational structure. The first paragraph discusses the narrator's transformation from human to owl and the owl's escape through a window into the night. Each paragraph of the body describes a main event in the narrative: the narrator's discovery of what he looks like, his capture of a mouse and escape from a great horned owl, and his return home. The conclusion describes his transformation back into a human.

The response conveys the central idea that the tawny owl's life is focused on survival. This idea is suggested mostly in the third paragraph where the hungry tawny owl kills and eats a mouse and then escapes an attack by the horned owl. To convey the central idea and to help the reader envision scenes, the writer uses concrete nouns and verbs and well-chosen adjectives ("My body," says the narrator, "was covered with brown feathers and my eyes were black with red and blue rings around them." At one point, he "spotted a tree and fluttered over to it." After killing a mouse, he "coughed up a pellet" and "perched on a mailbox." Later, he "hooted and looked around.").

Although sentences are usually short, the liberal use of transitional expressions and occasional alternation between simple and complex or compound sentence structures enables the reader to move easily through the response ("I examined my reflection in a nearby pond. My body was covered with brown feathers and

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 4 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

my eyes were black with red and blue rings around them. I was about 1 ½ feet high. I spotted a tree and fluttered over to it. Since I was hungry, I turned my head and listened.”).

The response contains very few errors in conventions. The second sentence contains a mistake in verb tense (“I looked in the mirror and saw that I turned [rather than ‘had turned’] into a tawny owl.”). The third paragraph contains a weak transition (“Minutes later, I coughed up a pellet. So, I flew around the neighborhood.”). Otherwise, conventions are sound.

A concise, clearly organized narrative with vivid description and sound conventions makes this response a score point 4.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample One

One day I went to sleep. The next day, I woke up and I felt sick so I stood up and went to the bathroom and I looked at myself and screamed! I was a lion I had claws, and sharp teeth. I couldn't believe it I was a real lion. I went down staires hoping that my mom wouldn't notes me and they would think that I was at school. When I got down staires my mom was in the bathroom and my dad was still sleeping. I said, "Thank god." So then I just screamed "I'm going to school." My mom said "Are you going to eat breakfast?" I said "No Bye." I just ran out of the house and hoped that nobody would notes I was just running somewhere I wouldn't be seen. I went to the park and hid in the bushes. Suddenly, I saw someone coming and I put my paws in my head, but that guy saw me and said "What is that thing in the bushes?" He touched me and then, said "It's a lion!" In my head I thought wait I'm a lion people are scared of lions yes. I'll just scare him off and go to Africa, but what about my mom? Maybe she will be so worried. What should I do when I scare the guy off. Maybe I should just scare him off and think about my mom and all the other thing latter. I roard at the guy and the guy went running and called for help. I went to a train that goes to Africa. I jump on top of the train and layed down flat so nobody would see me. The day went by and I saw the sunset and like one hour later I fell asleep. The next day I woke up and I was in Africa. Something had happened. I was a little boy again I couldn't

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task by describing the narrator's day as a lion. It demonstrates a general understanding of purpose by presenting a sequence of events that is adequately developed with descriptive language and sensory details.

The response maintains a mostly consistent organizational structure, moving sequentially through a series of events, but lacks paragraph breaks to indicate changes of scene (when the narrative shifts, for instance, from an introductory section in which the narrator realizes he is a lion to the subsequent section in which the narrator-lion goes downstairs). The sequence also suffers from needless repetition when, at the end of the response, the narrator backtracks in time to explain why the "guys" who called his parents knew his parents' phone number.

The response conveys the central idea that becoming a lion causes the narrator anxiety. This idea is suggested with moderately descriptive language at various points. Early in the response, for example, the narrator is terrified when he realizes he is a lion ("... I looked at myself and screamed!"). Later, he "went to the park and hid in the bushes" to avoid being seen. When he goes downstairs and finds his mother in the bathroom and his father still in bed, he expresses his relief with dialogue ("I said, 'Thank god.'").

Although sentences tend to begin with main clauses structured in a repetitive subject-predicate form, the writer sometimes varies sentence lengths and begins sentences with a subordinate clause or transition to produce a more fluid style ("I went down staires hoping that my mom wouldn't notes me and they would think that I was at school. When I got down staires my mom was in the bathroom and my dad was still sleeping. I said, 'Thank god.' So then I just screamed 'I'm going to school.'").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

believe it. Some guys saw me and they called my parents. They already knew the phone-number because they knew my parents. I was with my parents again. The next day I woke up and I was all

To be continued

Commentary

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include fused sentences (“I couldn’t believe it I was a real lion”; “In my head I thought wait I’m a lion people are scared of lions yes.”), errors in spelling (“down staires,” “notes” for “notice,” “roard”), and unnecessary changes in verb tense and a mistake in verb form (“I went to a train that goes to Africa. I jump on top of the train and *layed* down . . .”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this response would be improved with a stronger organizational structure, the writer’s use of descriptive language to convey the central idea and some sentence variety makes it a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Two

Well it started like this. I was only a puppy and I was in a cage at Ralfs pet store. A little girl walks in with her mom and was looking at animals. Then she saw me and she wanted me. So when she got me Ralf asked what she was going to name me. She thaght about it and said Roxy! I jumped like I was on a trampoline. When we got home I saw her room was filled with A's so I thought about her name then her mom called her for dinner like this "Amber come down for dinner and bring Roxy." "Ok" she said. So she picked me up and walked down the stairs. There was a bowl on the tabel and a plate on the ground. Her mom said oops mix up. That night I did my circle thing and layed down. She said "silly old dog you sleep up here." Then giggled. I jumped up on the bed and watched T.V. Before I knew it, it was the next day. Her mom suggested we go to the park. When we went to the park and you know us dogs we like to chase BIRDS! My leash wasn't on all the way so I ran! I came off my leash and a strange man picked me up. Amber was yelling and screaming my name. I was so scared I didn't know where I was going. Then the guy left a rancent note that read, "If you want your puppy back leave three hundred thousand dollars in this bag." Then the guy took off his mask it was Ralf! He said to me, "I miss you old pal." Then he said, "this is wrong. I will bring you home." So I smiled at him. He brought me home and explained what he had done. Over the years I got bigger. And that is the story of my life.

THE END

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task by describing two days in the narrator's life as a puppy. The writer demonstrates an understanding of purpose by adequately developing a sequence of events with some descriptive language and sensory details.

The writer maintains a mostly consistent organizational structure by describing events from the time the narrator-puppy is purchased at a pet store until she is returned to her owners after being kidnapped. The organization is inconsistent, however, in the writer's failure to include paragraph breaks to indicate changes in setting and time (the change of scene from the pet store to the puppy's new home, for example, and the change in time from the first to the second day).

The response suggests the central idea that the narrator enjoys life as a puppy. This idea is conveyed through descriptive language, sensory details, and dialogue. Early in the narrative, for example, the narrator-puppy says she "jumped like I was on a trampoline" when she hears her name will be Roxy. Later, the writer sketches a scene of domestic contentment ("Amber [her owner's mother yells] come down for dinner and bring Roxy.' she said. So she picked me up and walked down the stairs. . . . That night I did my circle thing and layed down. She said 'silly old dog you sleep up here.' Then giggled. I jumped up on the bed and watched T.V.").

The response demonstrates sentence variety. Early in the response, for example, the writer mixes longer with shorter sentences and simple with complex and compound sentences to create a smooth progression through a paragraph ("So when she [the puppy's new owner] got me Ralf [the pet store owner] asked what she was going to name me. She thaght about it and said Roxy! I jumped like I was on a trampoline. When we got home I saw her room was filled with A's so I thought about her name . . .").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include errors in sentence structure such as sentence fragments (“Then giggled.”; “When we went to the park and you know us dogs we like to chase BIRDS!”), fused sentences (“Then the guy took off his mask it was Ralf.”; “. . . I saw her room was filled with A’s so I thought about her name then her mom called her for dinner . . .”), failure to use quotation marks to indicate quoted material (“Her mom said oops mix up.”), errors in verb tense (“A little girl walks in with her mom and was looking at animals . . .”) and in verb form (“layed” instead of “lay”), and spelling errors (“tabel,” “rancent” for “ransom”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this response contains errors in conventions and would be strengthened by improved paragraphing, the writer’s effective use of description and dialogue to convey a central idea and some use of sentence variety make this response a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Three

One day I was walking down the street, and this wierd old lady in a purple and yellow gown walked up to me. She started talking in this other language I've never heard before. I didn't have any idea what she was talking about so I just walked away. The next morning I got up to change but then I realized I wasn't in my house. I got worried as I was pasing back and forth through the house. As I passed the mirror I noticed I wasn't in my own body, and at this point I was really freaked out. I was a monkey!

Now I understand whats going on just a little bit. I'm a monkey, in a house on a tree, in a jungle ... Ahhh!, wait, I'm a monkey awesome. About 5 minutes later I got used to the whole monkey thing and I couldn't wait to explore the jungle. I found some food in the house I was in. I put it in my bag and set off to explore the jungle. I approached this little house on stilts it looked like a good house to stay at for a while, so I got closer and went up the steps and on the padio. There was a sighn on the door that said "official Monkey hang out" so I went in. It looked a lot bigger inside than out. There was a big party inside with a disco ball, a pool, a water slide, a dance floor and so much more. I blended in perfectly and joined the party but after about an hour at the party I went outside on the porch to rest. I was out there for about 10 minutes looking at the beautiful scenary. I got so tired I fell asleep and woke up in my bed, and in my body, and thats what happend during the day I was a monkey.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task by describing the narrator's day as a monkey. It demonstrates an understanding of purpose by adequately developing a sequence of events with some descriptive language and sensory details.

The writing maintains a mostly consistent focus and organizational structure by describing the narrator's activities from the time he turns into a monkey until he turns back into a boy. The narrator's early encounter with the "wierd old lady in a purple and yellow gown" seems extraneous, however, because the writer does not make clear that it is the old lady's magic that causes the change in the narrator. The organization demonstrates further inconsistency when the writer fails to insert paragraph breaks to indicate changes in setting or situation (for example, in the opening paragraph when the narrator gets up "the next morning" or in the second paragraph after he realizes he is a monkey and begins to explore the jungle).

The response conveys the central idea that being a monkey is a lively experience. This idea is conveyed through the narrator's expressions of excitement ("I'm a monkey awesome. . . . I couldn't wait to explore the jungle") and through the writer's use of some descriptive language to describe the party in the "official Monkey hang out" ("There was a big party inside with a disco ball, a pool, a water slide, a dance floor and so much more.").

The response demonstrates sentence variety. The opening portion of the response, for example, contains compound, simple, and complex sentences. These sentences sometimes begin with a modifying phrase, sometimes with a main clause, and sometimes with a subordinate clause ("One day I was walking down the street, and this wierd old lady in a purple and yellow gown walked up to me. She started talking in this other language I've never heard before.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 3 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

I didn't have any idea what she was talking about so I just walked away. The next morning I got up to change but then I realized I wasn't in my house. I got worried as I was passing back and forth through the house. As I passed the mirror I noticed I wasn't in my own body, . . ."). This variation in sentence structure allows the response to move along quickly.

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include a failure to use commas between independent clauses ("About 5 minutes later I got used to the whole monkey thing and I couldn't wait to explore the jungle."), run-on sentences ("I approached this little house on stilts it looked like a good house to stay at for a while, . . ."), a lack of apostrophes in contractions ("thats"), and spelling errors ("wierd," "sighn," "scenary.") These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Although this response would be improved with a clearer organizational structure, some effective description and lively sentences help make it a score point 3.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample One

If I was a animal I would be a monkey because that is my favorit animal. The first thing I would do is go find bananas for food. When I was doen eating them I went over to my friends house. When I got their we went out side and played games. It was getting late so I took my friend home and I went home and went to sleep.

Commentary

This response addresses some of the writing task by presenting a short and minimally developed description of the narrator's day as a monkey. Composed of a brief sequence of events with limited descriptive language and sensory details, the response demonstrates little understanding of purpose.

Although the response relates a sequence of events, it demonstrates an inconsistent point of view. The first and second sentences are written in a speculative mode that describes what the narrator-monkey "would be" and "would do." From the third through the final sentence, the writer abruptly shifts into a more narrative mode, relating events in past tense ("When I was doen eating them I went... It was getting late so I took my friend home..."). The logic of events is inconsistent as well: In the third sentence, the narrator "went over to my friends house," after which, the narrator says, "... I took my friend home...").

The response conveys no central idea about the narrator's experience as a monkey, other than the faint intimation that the experience was fun ("... I went over to my friends house. When I got their we went out side and played games."). Other than one reference to "bananas," the response lacks concrete descriptive language.

Despite the brevity of the response, the writer achieves a degree of narrative flow by mixing sentence types and alternating main clauses with subordinate clauses to start sentences. The five sentences of the response, for example, include simple, complex, and compound structures and begin with two main clauses and three subordinate clauses.

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. In addition to the sudden shifts from conditional to past tense, errors include the use of

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

the wrong article (“If I was a animal . . .”), lack of an apostrophe to indicate the possessive (“friends”), and misspellings (“favorit,” “doen” for “done,” “their” for “there”). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this response demonstrates a sequence of events and sentence variety, an inconsistent point of view and organization and minimal descriptive language make it a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Two

If I were an animal I would be a monkey. I would leap from tree to tree, and then jump on people heads. I would be playing with other kids and I would be learning to skateboard! I would be eating bananas of trees and I would like them. Then when I got tired I would go to sleep. That's what I would do if I was an animal.

Commentary

This response addresses some of the writing task by presenting a short account of the narrator's day as a monkey. Composed of a brief sequence of events that is minimally developed with limited descriptive language and sensory details, it demonstrates little understanding of purpose.

The narrative moves consistently from the beginning of a sequence of events to the end, but the writer's focus appears to wander in the third sentence when the narrator seems to change briefly from monkey to human ("I would leap from tree to tree, and then jump on people heads. I would be playing with other kids and I would be learning to skateboard!") before becoming a monkey again in the next sentence ("I would be eating bananas of trees...").

Although this response contains limited descriptive details, the writer's more active verbs ("I would leap from tree to tree, and then jump on people heads") help the reader imagine the narrator's experiences. This description only faintly suggests the central idea that being a monkey is eventful and fun, however, because events are minimally developed (Only four brief sentences describe what it is like to be a monkey).

The response contains little sentence variety. After the opening sentence, the next four sentences follow a repetitive "I this, I that" pattern ("I would leap from tree to tree, and then jump on people heads. I would be playing with other kids and I would be learning to skateboard. I would be eating bananas of trees and I would like them. Then when I got tired I would go to sleep.").

The response contains errors in the conventions of English. These include unnecessary shifts in verb form from "I would leap from tree to tree..." to "I would be playing..." and "I would be learning..."

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

failure to use the subjunctive form of the verb (“That’s what I would do if I was an animal.”), and inclusion of an unnecessary comma (“I would leap from tree to tree, and then jump on people heads.”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Although this response demonstrates some effective use of active verbs, an overall lack of description to support the central idea and a lack of sentence variety make this response a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Three

Koala

My favorite animal is a koala. I like them because they are cool. I am a koala now, so the first thing I'm going to do is eat some leaves. Next I'm going to play with my friend cesar. I wonder if he is home?

Cesar is home and he wants to play. We played get the leaves. It was so much fun. Then we had a sleep over it was fun. We watched movies and had a leave snack.

The next morning we woke up and we stretched. We were so tierd. We went to go get some food. I had a lot of fun being a koala with Cesar. Then I went back home.

Commentary

This response addresses some of the writing task by describing the narrator's day as a koala. It demonstrates a limited understanding of purpose by relating a brief sequence of events that is minimally developed with limited descriptive language and sensory details.

The response is consistent in describing events from the time the narrator becomes a koala until he returns home after playing with a koala friend. It is inconsistent in the opening paragraph, however, when the narrator presents background information ("My favorite animal is a koala," and "... they are cool") and also begins the narrative sequence ("I am a koala now, so the first thing I'm going to do is eat some leaves."), rather than providing separate paragraphs for these two purposes. In addition, the narrator inappropriately squeezes a summary statement between the last two narrative events in the final paragraph ("The next morning ... We went to go get some food. I had a lot of fun being a koala with [the narrator-koala's friend] Cesar. Then I went back home.").

The response presents the central idea that the narrator "had a lot of fun being a koala with Cesar." Although the writer states this idea repeatedly ("It was so much fun. Then we had a sleep over it was fun. ... I had a lot of fun ..."), it is not convincingly communicated because it is not adequately illustrated with descriptive language ("We played get the leaves. ... Then we had a sleep over ... We watched movies and had a leave snack.").

The response demonstrates little sentence variety. As the passages cited above indicate, most sentences are short and simple.

The response contains many errors in the conventions of English. These include run-on sentences

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 2 Response

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

("Then we had a sleep over it was fun."), unnecessary shifts in verb tense ("Cesar is home and he wants to play. We played get the leaves."), a missing capital ("Next I'm going to play with my friend cesar."), use of the plural form where the singular form is needed ("We . . . had a leave [rather than "leaf"] snack."), and a spelling error ("tierd" for "tired"). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Inconsistencies in organizational structure, lack of description and detail to support the central idea, and minimal sentence variety make this response a score point 2.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample One

being a snake whuld be cool I whuld eat any thing find that I like then I will stop and rest then I will go out sid and cool of then I will shed but I like being myself.

Commentary

This response addresses the part of the writing task that asks students to write about being their favorite animal. Composed of a skeletal list of events and lacking descriptive language and sensory details, however, the response demonstrates little understanding of purpose.

The response lacks an organizational structure. Although the introductory clause (“being a snake whuld be cool . . .”) suggests the subject and main idea of the response, it does not clearly introduce all of the events that follow it. To some extent, the first two events proceed from the introductory clause and are presented in a logical sequence (“ . . . I whuld eat any thing find that I like then I will stop and rest . . .”), but the next two events (“ . . . then I will go out sid and cool of then I will shed . . .”) appear more random than sequential. The final clause (“ . . . but I like being myself.”) does not function as a conclusion because it is not clear how it connects to the events that precede it.

The writer suggests the central idea that “being a snake whuld be cool,” but the events in this short paragraph (eating, stopping eating and resting, going outside to cool off, and shedding) are, on the whole, more marginal to than supportive of this central idea.

Since all clauses in the response are squeezed into a single rambling statement, the response demonstrates no sentence variety. The independent clauses that follow the opening statement are simply five rudimentary clauses connected by “then” and “but.”

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of English. These include the absence of periods after all except the final clause, creating a one-sentence response, and several spelling errors

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

("whuld," "out sid," "of" for "off. "). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

A lack of organizational structure, sentence variety, and descriptive detail to support the central idea make this response a score point 1.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Two

I am a bog my name is cat. I like my name becse I don't like cat. I got tael and play with my tael.

I need to play & run outsied and then I can go to sleep and then I look for my boll to eat.

I want to go to the prke to wak and la bon

Commentary

This response addresses only that part of the writing task that asks students to write about a day as their favorite animal. Composed of a brief sequence of events that lacks descriptive language and sensory detail, the response demonstrates very little understanding of the purpose of the task.

The response does not have a clear organizational structure. The opening paragraph presents random bits of background information about the narrator-dog (“I like my name becse I don’t like cat” and “I... play with my tael [tail].”). The middle paragraph presents a brief series of events but in an expository rather than a narrative form (“I need to play & run outsied and then I can go to sleep and then I look for my boll [bowl] to eat.”). The final paragraph presents another event (“I want to go to the prke [park] to wak and la bon [lay down]”), after which the response abruptly stops rather than concludes.

Since the writer relates events that do not cohere around any central idea, all of the events and explanations are marginal.

Sentences tend to be chaotic rather than varied or repetitive. The response contains one illogical complex sentence (“I like my name becse I don’t like cat.”). The remaining four sentences include simple sentences (“I got tael and play with my tael.”; “I want to go to the prke to wak and la bon.”), run-on simple sentences (“I am a bog [dog] my name is cat.”), and a rudimentary run-on compound sentence (“I need to play & run outsied and then I can go to sleep and then I look for my boll to eat.”).

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of English. These include the errors in sentence construction noted above and errors in spelling

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

("tael," "becse," "boll," "bon"). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

A large number of serious conventions errors and the lack of a clear organizational structure, a central idea, descriptive language, and sentence variety make this response a score point 1.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Narrative Writing Task Administered on May 1 and 2, 2007

Score Point 1 Response

Student Work Sample Three

*I want to bee a dog. I tak a ran the the
haus. In the haus I ran on the gras.
I eat lot of sotet.
I gor to the pla gras.*

Commentary

This response addresses only that part of the writing task that asks students to write about a day as their favorite animal. Composed of a brief list of events that lacks descriptive language and sensory detail, the response demonstrates very little understanding of purpose.

The response demonstrates no clear organizational structure. The first paragraph introduces the topic (“I want to bee a dog.”), but it also includes attempts to sequence events that belong in a separate paragraph (“I tak a ran the the haus. In the haus I ran on the gras.”). The fourth and fifth sentences are apparently separate paragraphs that list more events. The response simply stops, rather than concludes, after the fifth sentence.

All description is marginal because the response contains no central idea that might link events.

The response demonstrates no sentence variety. It consists solely of short, simple sentences.

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language, mostly in spelling. Among the misspellings are “bee” instead of “be,” “tak” for “took,” “sotet” for an indecipherable word, and “gor” for “go.” These errors interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Serious errors in spelling and the lack of a clear organizational structure, a central idea, purposeful description, and sentence variety make this response a score point 1.

2007 Grade Four Scoring Rubric*

The scoring rubric shown below is used to assign scores to students' written responses on the grade four writing tests. This rubric includes two sets of criteria. The criteria under "The writing" are adapted from the state English-language arts content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions of English. These criteria are used to evaluate on-demand, first draft written responses in all genres. Student responses are evaluated on their clarity of purpose, central idea, and organization and for their use of supporting evidence, sentence variety, and written conventions. The criteria under "Narrative writing," "Summary writing," and "Response to Literature writing," adapted from the grade four Writing Applications content standards for these genres, are used to evaluate student writing in the specific genres to which they apply.

On pages 56 through 61, the grade four rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all the scoring criteria are applied to student responses in each genre tested.

4 **The writing—**

- Clearly addresses the writing task.
- Demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- Includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes sentence variety.
- Contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides a *thoroughly developed* sequence of *significant* events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *vivid* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with clear identification of the main idea(s) and the most *significant* details, in student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates a *clear* understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *effective* support for judgments through *specific* references to text and/or prior knowledge.

3 **The writing—**

- Addresses most of the writing task.
- Demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- Presents a central idea with *mostly* relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes some sentence variety.
- Contains *errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides an *adequately developed* sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *some* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with the main idea(s) and *important* details, generally in the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates an understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *some* support for judgments through references to text and/or prior knowledge.

* The English-Language Arts Assessment Review Panel reviewed the scoring rubric for grade four and made slight adjustments to ensure that it was being applied holistically. This rubric was used to score the 2007 CST in writing.

2 **The writing—**

- Addresses *some* of the writing task.
- Demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing.
- *Suggests* a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes *little* sentence variety.
- Contains *many errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides a *minimally developed* sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *limited* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with some of the main idea(s) and details, minimal use of the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates a *limited* understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *weak* support for judgments.

1 **The writing—**

- Addresses *only one part, if any*, of the writing task.
- Demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose.
- *Lacks* a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing.
- *Lacks* a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes *no* sentence variety.
- Contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- *Lacks* a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- *Lacks* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with few, if any, main idea(s) and/or details, little or no use of the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates little or no understanding of the literary work.
- *Fails* to provide support for judgments.

Grade Four Scoring Rubric in Rearranged Format

In the following charts, the grade four scoring rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all the scoring criteria in the rubric—those derived from the state content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions as well as those derived from the state content standards for Writing Applications—are applied to student responses in each genre tested.

The column under “Genre” contains the scoring criteria derived from the grade four content standards for Writing Applications. The column under “Organization and Focus” contains scoring criteria derived from the subset of Organization and Focus standards within the grade four content standards for Writing Strategies. The column under “Sentence Structure” contains the scoring criterion derived from the subset of Sentence Structure standards within the grade four content standards for Written and Oral English Language Conventions. The column under “Conventions” contains the scoring criteria derived from the subsets of Grammar, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Spelling standards within the grade four content standards for Written and Oral English Language Conventions. Although some columns contain more bullets than others, this is not meant to imply that columns with more bullets are more important in the scoring than the other columns. References to the writing content standards from which each scoring criterion is derived are presented in coded form following each criterion for score point four.

2007 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Narrative Writing

Genre (Narrative Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides a <i>thoroughly developed</i> sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. (WA 2.1 a, d) ■ Includes <i>vivid</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. (WA 2.1 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Clearly</i> addresses the writing task.* ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) ■ Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1; 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) ■ Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides an <i>adequately developed</i> sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ Includes <i>some</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses most of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. ■ Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes some sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

Genre (Narrative Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides a <i>minimally developed</i> sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ Includes <i>limited</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>little</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>many errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Lacks</i> a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ <i>Lacks</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>only one part, if any</i>, of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing . ■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

2007 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Summary Writing

Genre (Summary Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
<p>4 ■ Summarizes text with clear identification of the main idea(s) and the most <i>significant</i> details in student's own words. (WA 2.4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Clearly</i> addresses the writing task.* ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) ■ Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1, 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) ■ Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
<p>3 ■ Summarizes text with the main idea(s) and <i>important</i> details, generally in the student's own words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses most of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. ■ Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes some sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
<p>2 ■ Summarizes text with some of the main idea(s) and details, minimal use of the student's own words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>little</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>many errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

Genre (Summary Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
1 ■ Summarizes text with few, if any, main idea(s) and/or details, little or no use of the student's own words.	■ Addresses <i>only one part, if any</i> , of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations.	■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety.	■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

2007 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Response to Literature Writing

	<i>Genre (Response to Literature Writing)</i>	<i>Organization and Focus</i>	<i>Sentence Structure</i>	<i>Conventions</i>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of the literary work. (WA 2.2 a) ■ Provides <i>effective</i> support for judgments through <i>specific</i> references to text and/or prior knowledge. (WA 2.2 b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Clearly</i> addresses the writing task.* ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) ■ Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1; 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) ■ Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates an understanding of the literary work. ■ Provides <i>some</i> support for judgments through references to text and/or prior knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>most</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. ■ Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>some</i> sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates a <i>limited</i> understanding of the literary work. ■ Provides <i>weak</i> support for judgments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>little</i> sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>many errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

Genre (Response to Literature Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates little or no understanding of the literary work. ■ <i>Fails</i> to provide support for judgments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>only one part, if any</i>, of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.