

Work Sample & Commentary: *My Life as a Sea Horse* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Following a month long unit focused on various aspects of the ocean, students were asked to write a paper about an ocean creature. In the following report, a student chose to write from an ocean creature's point of view.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback | with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E1c Reading: Read and comprehend informational materials.

E2a Writing: Produce a report.

E4a Conventions: Demonstrate a basic understanding of the rules of the English language.

What the work shows

E1c Reading: The student reads and comprehends informational materials to develop understanding and expertise and produces written or oral work that:

- restates or summarizes information;
- relates new information to prior knowledge and experience;
- extends ideas;
- makes connections to related topics or information.

The student organized and restated information from a variety of sources in a manner appropriate for an informational piece of writing.

(A) The report establishes a connection between prior knowledge about reproduction and the reproductive behavior of sea horses.

(B) The ideas gathered through reading and research are recast within a story that incorporates the ideas in a new context. The idea that sea horses need special attention if they are kept as pets leads to the conclusion that they must be happier living in the ocean.

(C) The report provides a connection between the information presented and the feasibility of having a sea horse as a pet.

E2a Writing: The student produces a report that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- develops a controlling idea that conveys a perspective on the subject;
- creates an organizing structure appropriate to a specific purpose, audience, and context;
- includes appropriate facts and details;

Work Sample & Commentary: *My Life as a Sea Horse* Elementary School English Language Arts

- excludes extraneous and inappropriate information;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as providing facts and details, describing or analyzing the subject, and narrating a relevant anecdote;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The report establishes a context in the explanation that the sea horse is trying to make her way “around a school of fish,” and that, as she tries to “make her way home,” she will talk with the reader.

(D) (E) The friendly, conversational tone and the use of a female persona develop reader interest. The persona is maintained throughout the piece and the attitudes expressed by the persona are consistent with the factual data and with a distinctive personality.

(F) The use of the first person to relay information creates an informal yet informative tone.

Facts and details are grouped and organized in an appropriate manner.

(G) The majority of the scientific details are accurate and details that are inconsistent with the persona or inappropriate for the report’s purpose are avoided.

(H) The framing device of the sea horse narrator is maintained throughout the piece and referred to again in the conclusion, providing a sense of closure to the work.

E4a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates a basic understanding of the rules of the English language in written and oral work, and selects the structures and features of language appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of the work. The student demonstrates control of:

- grammar;
- paragraph structure;
- punctuation;
- sentence construction;
- spelling;
- usage.

The student made use of:

(I) introductory words;

(J) rhetorical questions;

and a humorous tone to imitate the structures and features of speech. The organization, spelling, usage and sense of syntax demonstrate fluency with the conventions of the written language.



My Life as a Sea Horse



I
F

Hello! I'm a female seahorse! I'm trying to make my way home around a school of fish but I'm not having very much progress! These new born fish are feisty. Every second, one jumps out at me!

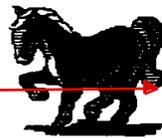
I
D

Well, I might as well stop trying and go with the flow. I'm not a strong swimmer. While I'm floating, I'll tell you a little about myself.

E



J



First of all, I am a slender fish with a head shaped like a ... what do you call them? OH! It's shaped like a horse's head! Also, I have a monkey's tail.

We seahorses range from one and a half to eight inches long. We are grayish and blend in with our environment.



My body is encircled with many bony rings which represent fused scales. My head is set at a right angle to my body. I have a tube-like snout which I use to suck my food into my toothless mouth. I have bulging eyes on either side of my head.

I swim in an upright position using my back fins. I use my tail to anchor myself to coral, sea anemone or other kinds of water plants. This way I can hide from my enemies.

G

I live in shallow waters that are warm year round. I have a hearty appetite. I eat small shrimp and other small organisms. I will really eat anything small enough to fit in my mouth.

A

Here is the best thing about being a female seahorse. I can do something that not many other females can do. I know many human females will envy this. I can lay my eggs in a pouch on my mate's belly. This pouch is called a brood pouch which is like the pouch of a kangaroo. My husband will hatch the eggs for me in eight or more days. I think this is very fair of him. After all, they are his babies, too.

When my babies leave the pouch, they measure about one fourth of an inch but are very active in the water.



Although I can be kept as a pet, I am delicate and need special care. At least two gallons of seawater is what I need. Also I need coral to hook my tail onto. My diet is live foods such as baby brine shrimp. Many people like to keep me as a pet but I have much more fun in the ocean than you could ever dream of.

C

B

H

Well, here's my chance to escape this school of fish. I hope you liked hearing about sea horses! Maybe sometime I could hear more about you humans!

References:

- Merit Student's Encyclopedia U. 16, p.481
- Compton's Learning Company 1991 (C-D ROM)
- World Book Encyclopedia U. 17, p. 254
- Childcraft - Story of the Sea U. 7, p.124-125

Work Sample & Commentary: *A Rainbow of Your Own* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to work through a series of drafts to produce a report. This student chose initially to present information on the topic in an oral presentation, then used audience feedback to revise the work and produce the final draft.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback | √ with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2 a Writing: Produce a report.

E4 b Conventions: Analyze and subsequently revise written work.

What the work shows

E2 a Writing: The student produces a report that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- develops a controlling idea that conveys a perspective on the subject;
- creates an organizing structure appropriate to a specific purpose, audience, and context;
- includes appropriate facts and details;
- excludes extraneous and inappropriate information;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as providing facts and details, describing or analyzing the subject, and narrating a relevant anecdote;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The work develops reader interest with an appealing title, “A Rainbow of Your Own,” and with an intriguing first sentence that poses a question in the form of a riddle.

(B) The opening paragraph establishes that the controlling idea of the piece is to persuade the reader that a love bird would be a perfect pet.

(C) The student arranged reasons, examples, and anecdotes persuasively, e.g., in paragraph four, the argument begins with the hardiness of love birds, moves on to a comparison of the feeding needs of love birds and other pets, to paper training, to size, and finally to the ease of having love birds cared for while the owner is away.

(D) The work includes the appropriate amount of information for a prospective love bird owner and supports the main points by citing personal experience and opinions, such as the belief that love birds are “very funny.”

(E) The details of pet care, the anticipation of problems and solutions for these problems, and the anecdotes about the bird, Salsa, develop the argument for liking love birds as pets.

Work Sample & Commentary: *A Rainbow of Your Own* Elementary School English Language Arts

(F) The final paragraph provides a sense of closure by reiterating the main point of the argument.

E4b Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student analyzes and subsequently revises work to clarify it or make it more effective in communicating the intended message or thought. The student’s revisions should be made in light of the purposes, audiences, and contexts that apply to the work. Strategies for revising include:

- adding or deleting details;
- adding or deleting explanations;
- clarifying difficult passages;
- rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs to improve or clarify meaning;
- sharpening the focus;
- reconsidering the organizational structure.

(G) The student added details and reconsidered prior ideas over the course of producing the various drafts, e.g., after the first draft the student listed fifteen points according to the sequence in which they might subsequently be used in later drafts.

The student revised the work in terms of audience and purpose through multiple versions. The first draft includes information and anecdotes about various birds and lists four reasons why birds make good pets. This information appears in different forms in subsequent drafts.

The drafts treat the information from a variety of perspectives. In the second draft, the title was changed from “Birds” to “Love Birds,” and the piece took the form of a speech. The final draft is a report designed to persuade the reader that love birds make good pets.

The writing incorporates critiques from teachers and adults, e.g., the list of fifteen reasons to have a pet lovebird was created as the result of a suggestion by an adult.

The student responded and then reorganized the final draft in response to suggestions from peers that the speech was disorganized.

The drafts progress from a set of facts through a disorganized speech to a polished report. This progression suggests an understanding of the stages of writing and a willingness to make substantive changes as needed.

FINAL DRAFT

A → A Rainbow of Your Own

Have you ever seen a rainbow with two beady,

B → black eyes? I have, it's my pet Salsa! He's a lovebird. A lovebird would be the perfect pet for you.

I'm sure that some of you like to bird watch, right? If you have a lovebird you can see all the brilliant colors of birds at home. They come in every shade of every color, so you can pick the one you like best.

Lovebirds are extremely smart. They can be taught amazing tricks. They can even learn to talk! I know what you think, oh, they're

E → too loud. Well, that is a disadvantage, but their noises are either talking or nice singing. This can be very enjoyable. Another great thing about lovebirds is that after they ^{are} used to their

names, they come when you call, just like dogs. Love birds are also very curious. They are always discovering new things, that can make you laugh.

① → Love birds are very hardy and can live up to fifteen years. This is a lot longer than mice or hamsters. Love birds don't eat as much as dogs or cats, because they have much smaller stomachs! I know you're thinking, they have to poop sometimes. Well, they do, but you can paper train them and if you don't it doesn't really bother you.

When thinking of birds, lots of people think of big, extremely loud macaws or tiny singing canaries. Love birds are just the right size to hold and enjoy. Another good thing about love birds is that they can stay home when you go on a trip for a few days. If you go away for longer,

Work Sample & Commentary: A Rainbow of Your Own
Elementary School English Language Arts

it is easy just to take your bird's cage to a friend's house.

Lovebirds become very attached to you. ^{They are} loyal and always want to be with you. They are also pretty cute. Most lovebirds have good personalities and are full of energy. You've probably heard that lovebirds bite. Well, that is true, but if you spend a lot of time with your bird, that nippiness disappears. They are also very funny. **D** ← For instance, my bird, Salsay, makes funny faces and he is always ready for another hilarious battle with one of his toys. Salsay is very soft and cuddly. His feathers are like fluffy clouds.

I think "lovebird" is a great name for these **F** → pets. If you had one, you'd think so too. They are really lovable!

Draft of introduction
and conclusion

Have you ever seen a rainbow
with two black beady eyes? I have, it's my
pet Saloa! He's a lovebird. A lovebird would
be a perfect pet for you.

I think lovebird is a great name for
these birds. If you had one you'd think it
can that too. They're really loveable.

Draft 2

Love Birds

~~Hello ladies and Gentlemen tonight I am~~
~~going to tell you why love birds are good pets. We~~
I'm sure that some of you like to bird watch right?
~~Any way, If you have a love bird you can see all~~
~~the brilliant colors of birds at home.~~
① ~~Lovebirds become very attached to you. They~~
~~are very loyal and always want to be with you. They~~
~~of love birds can be taught amazing things. They~~
lovebirds are ~~to~~ very hardy and can live up to 15 years ^{things} a lot
~~longer than mice or hamsters. Love birds don't eat~~
~~as much as dogs or cats because they have~~
~~much smaller stomachs!~~
② ~~Love birds are extremely smart. They~~
~~can even learn to talk! I know what you think~~

Work Sample & Commentary: A Rainbow of Your Own
Elementary School English Language Arts

oh, they're too loud. Well, that is a disadvantage.
2 but their noises are either talking or nice singing.
This can be very enjoyable. They come in
every shade of every color so you can pick the
one you like the best. ~~Lovebirds are like little~~
~~downies~~ they are very pretty. ~~Lovebirds are~~ ① They
also pretty cute. ② You've probably heard ~~the~~
4 ~~is/are~~ that they bite. Well, that is true, but
if you spend a lot of time with ^{your bird} that nipper
~~ness~~ disappears. ③ Most lovebirds, it's not
fairly have good personalities and are full
of energy. (That's not people) ③ When I think of
birds think of big, extremely loud macaws
or tiny singing canaries. Lovebirds are just the

Work Sample & Commentary: A Rainbow of Your Own
Elementary School English Language Arts

to hold and enjoy,
are just the right size, small enough that
their cages aren't as big as a room, but
big enough that they aren't really cheap and flimsy.

⑤ They are also very funny. For instance, my bird,
Salsa, makes funny faces and he's always
ready for another hilarious battle with one
of his toys. Salsa is very soft and cuddly.

⑥ His feathers are like ^{stuff} clouds. I know what
you're thinking, they have to go to the bath-
room some time. Well, they do, but you can
paper
potholes train them and if you don't, it doesn't
really bother you.

⑦ Another thing that is great about
that
live birds is ¹ after they get used to their

Work Sample & Commentary: A Rainbow of Your Own
Elementary School English Language Arts

name they come when you call, just like dogs. ⁽⁴⁾ Another good thing about love birds is that they can stay home when you go on a trip for a few days. ~~If you go away for longer than that it is easy for a friend to take care of them.~~
6. Love birds are also very curious. They are always discovering new things ^{that can make you laugh} ~~as they like to explore the lake.~~
Again, ~~I would like to say love birds make great pets!~~

G →

List of reasons/arguments

Between drafts 1 and 2

2. You can bird watch at home.
- 1 could be 8. They are smart and can talk.
- 1 could be 12. They are soft and cuddly.
12. They are very funny.
3. They are very attached to you - loyal - love to be with you.
11. They are just the right size and have bright colors.
10. They have good personalities and are full of energy.
6. don't eat as much as dogs or cats because they have smaller stomachs.
5. can stay home when you go on trips for a few days -
- 11 could be 9. They are very pretty and cute.
14. They will come to you when call their name like dogs.
16. They are very curious.
5. They are hardy and live around 15 years longer than mice and hamsters.
9. They come in all the colors of the rainbow so you can choose the one you like the best.
4. Love birds can be taught amazing tricks.

1. Introduction

DRAFT 1

Birds

Highlight
only reasons
why lovebirds
make good
pets.

Hello, ladies and gentlemen tonight I
am here to tell you why to have birds
for pets. In the last episode ~~_____~~
wrote why to bird watch ~~_____~~
~~have your own bird. you can~~
~~bird watch right in your home!~~

In my house we have three birds,
two cockitails and one love bird, the
love bird is mine. Our three birds
names are Dandy, Billy and Salsa.

I know what your thinking, oh Salsa
is the best name, that's because he is
my bird and I thought up his
name all by my self.

Lots of people want dogs and
lots of people have dogs and they
think ^{oh} my dogs so smart he can roll
over. ~~haha birds are much smarter
they can talk~~ My bird Salsa is very
funny what he does is he stands on
his perch and swings down then
he hits his head on the floor of
his cage. Then he lets go of his perch
and climbs back on again. ^{He does this over and over again} He also
has battles with his toys, it's a very ^{intrastive} funny
sight to see."

When you get a bird you should
pick the one that pays the most attention

to you when you are picking one out. As soon as you get home you should spend a lot of time with. If you don't do that it will bond to someone else that means that it always wants to be with with another person.

~~It is a very soft and cuddly~~
~~specifically hand fed ones~~ You can get hand fed love birds and cockitails at critter land. ~~Critter land~~ is in Mill Valley it is a cross from Zelen and if you don't know where Zelen is I think you need to get your brain checked.

I know what your thinking they just sit in their cage and chirp and sing. Well, that's not the truth. Salsa is very excited. he reads with ~~me~~ and watches television with ~~me~~ basketball he goes every where I go. Well, I mean in my house and in my back yard.

Again I would like to say birds are great pets.

The End

Work Sample & Commentary: Brothers of the Heart

Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to read *Brothers of the Heart* by Joan Blos and then produce five pieces: a character list along with a brief annotation about each character; a summary of the story; a recounting of the book's various themes; a book review; and a Venn diagram showing the relationships among several of the main characters. Only the book review is included here.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| in class | √ as homework |
| with teacher feedback | with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2b Writing: Produce a response to literature.

What the work shows

E2b Writing: The student produces a response to literature that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- advances a judgment that is interpretive, analytic, evaluative, or reflective;
- supports judgment through references to the text, references to other works, authors, or non-print media, or references to personal knowledge;
- demonstrates an understanding of the literary work;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The book report gets the reader's attention in the first sentence by highlighting the general idea of the story. The report retains the reader's interest by keeping the writing focused and to the point.

(B) The report connects Shem's experiences with a theme common to many books, biographies and movies: people in search of their purpose and/or destiny.

(C) The writer supports her judgments by making connections between relationships described in the book and those common to real life experiences.

The book report demonstrates an understanding of the text as a whole through references to Shem's struggles and conflicts and by drawing parallels to real life.

(D) The report ends on a personal note, providing the reader with the understanding that the book has personal significance for the student. The implication is that the book may have significance for others as well.

Book Review

A → Joan W. Blos created a story which shows two worlds. One is the white man's world, and the second, the Native American world. Her story was touching, rich and beautiful. Although the book had a simple plot, it had many rich symbols.

The hero of the book, Shem, was a character who became real. You wanted to help him find his place in the world. Her other characters were also described very well. Through the many letters and impressions in the book, you could also understand some of the pioneer life.

B → This book was about finding destiny and purpose. By the end of the book, Shem had found his place in the world. Although he lived in the white man's world, he also honored his connection to the Native American world. I believe we all find our destiny and purpose, and although some of us don't empathize with other worlds, we can all feel brotherhood and kinship, and find our own brother of the heart. **C** ←

D →

Work Sample & Commentary: *Moneyville* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to produce a written response to the book, *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*, by Judi Barrett.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback | with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2 c Writing: Produce a narrative account.

What the work shows¹

E2 c Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The work establishes a context and develops reader interest in the first paragraph by supplying the background for the unusual setting of the story. The straightforward, journalistic style in an omniscient voice creates an illusion of credibility which instantly captures the reader's attention.

(A) The choice of language for the first sentence, "Once there was..." is a traditional fairy tale/fable opening. This also engages the reader while establishing the genre and mood.

The student used the chronological order of events as the framework for the fictional narrative. The two anecdotes the student chose to elaborate on are structured within two separate days (i.e., "One day..." and "Another day...") which keeps the organization of the narrative clear and uncluttered.

The student used concrete language to develop the plot and the conflict of the narrative.

¹ This narrative account has many of the elements of a traditional moral tale. It is a simple, imaginary story about a town whose population err and learn a lesson. It is concise, focuses on one event, moves chronologically, and, like a moral tale, ends with the return of order.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Moneyville* Elementary School English Language Arts

The work does not develop complex characters which is in keeping with the moral tale style of the narrative. However, the townspeople, as characters, go through a series of changes in the course of the story. At the beginning, it can be assumed that everyone is leading a regular life. But after the money begins to fall from the sky, their personalities change and they become greedy and lazy. The anecdote about the boy who bought all the books at the book fair suggests that they also became selfish.

The people decide to move away when the town becomes dangerous due to the falling money. They recognize that they would rather return to their original values and lifestyle.

The story retains the reader's interest by keeping the writing focused and to the point.

(B) The work closes appropriately with the townspeople's decision to abandon Moneyville. The final line mimics the traditional tale by referring to the fate of the antagonist, in this case Moneyville.

April 11, 1997

A Once there was a town called Springfield. One day it started raining coins and dollar bills. From that day on, every time it rained, coins and dollar bills fell from the sky. The people changed the name of their town to Moneyville.

Everyone in the town decided to quit their jobs and just wait for money to fall from the sky. They all hoped for rain everyday. When it did rain money, the people rushed to the mall. They bought the most expensive things the stores had to offer. They were always taking vacations with their money. Everyone loved living in Moneyville!

One day there was a book fair at one of the local schools. The weatherman was calling for severe thunderstorms that day. It rained so many dollar bills that one student named Rashaan collected \$1,000. He loved to read and was always seen with a book in his hand. That day he bought every book at the book fair! All the other children didn't get a chance to buy anything. So, they had to have another book fair.

Another day it rained fifty cent pieces. A crossing guard got hit six times by these large coins. She finally fainted right in the middle of the street. The traffic was a mess. Children didn't know when it was safe to cross the street. Many children and adults were injured and had to be rushed to the hospital.

Moneyville was becoming a dangerous place to live. The people of the town decided that they must abandon the town. Everyone packed up their houses and moved away. It was difficult for them to adjust to their new lives. Most of them and **B** gotten used to not working. Now they had to find jobs and earn money. They were happy though. As for Moneyville, nobody ever went back.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Voyage* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

After a unit on immigration that included the reading of *Grandfather's Journey* by Allen Say, students were asked to produce a narrative account incorporating some of the common themes of immigration. This student chose to write a fictional account of an old man's memories of his voyage to America.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback | √ with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2c Writing: Produce a narrative account.

What the work shows

E2c Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The title, “The Voyage,” and the first paragraph establish the context of the work as an immigrant’s journey to America. The story is told from the point of view of one of the “hundreds of people” traveling on the ship and this first person voice engages reader interest.

The student used the trip from the family’s native land to their new neighborhood in America as the organizing structure for the narrative. But the frame for the piece is the old man telling the story in the present day.

(B) Using concrete language, the student created a dismal picture of life in the steerage section of the ship. The student incorporated the information learned in a manner that gives the work both voice and authenticity.

(C) This voice is reinforced by the constant refrain that things would be better in “the land of plenty.”

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Voyage* Elementary School English Language Arts

The narrative remains focused on the experiences of the family and avoids extraneous details. The work includes the appropriate details to describe the voyage and subsequent arrival while conveying a wide range of feelings and concerns.

Although the narrative represents an overall shared experience, there is some implicit characterization of the old man who, as a boy, suffered such terrible conditions. Throughout the work, the man refers to his love of America and his feelings of gratitude for the chance for a “new beginning.” More generally, though, the father and son represent the immigration experience of every family who left home to make their way in the new world.

The student built tension by describing the many hurdles to be overcome during the journey to America. This tension is mitigated by the underlying optimism of the piece.

(D) The final paragraph provides closure as the old man shifts from narrating the story to speaking directly to the reader. The student maintained the voice here as the old man philosophizes about the past using time-worn clichés.

A **THE VOYAGE**

Hundreds of people were on line waiting to board the ship to a new country. My family of four was one of the hundreds waiting. We were on our way to America, the land of plenty. When everyone was aboard, the captian yelled ‘anchors away.’ **C**

B Because we were so poor, we traveled in the steerage section of the ship. The four of us were put into a large room with other poor families. There was no privacy and soon fights began to break-out. My parents had to take turns sleeping because people would steal from you. My father told us not to complain because things would be better in the new world. **C**

After two weeks on the ship many people became ill and died. There was no place for us to go so we lived among the sick and diseased. We felt blessed that we did not get ill. This was a positive sign to us that we would reach America. **C**

A few weeks later we heard someone yelling. We all ran to see what was going on. When we reached the top of the ship, we stopped in our tracks. There before our eyes was the most beautiful sight. We were looking at the Statute of Liberty. Miss Liberty represented freedom, opportunity and a new beginning for my family. **C**

My father told us that when we got off on Ellis Island, we would start our new life. How wrong he was. Because of all the sickness and disease on the ship, they kept us in isolation for another two months. They checked every passenger to make sure that we did not carry any diseases. The time we spent in isolation was almost as bad as being on the ship.

Finally, the day came when we boarded the ferry for our trip across to New York. How excited we were. When we reached the shores of Manhattan, we fell to our knees and kissed the ground.

When we left Europe, we were told that an Irish community had been set up in mid town Manhattan and that we should make our home there. Somehow we found the area and were welcomed by previous immigrants. They helped us get started in the land of plenty. **C**

D I am an old man now but I can remember that voyage to America as if it were yesterday. The hardships we suffered helped us get off to a good start. We knew that nothing came easy and that if we worked hard and obeyed the rules, we would have a good life in America.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Game* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to tell a story of something they did during the winter recess. After sharing the story with a small group of students, they were asked to draft the story. This student drafted, revised, redrafted, edited, and eventually produced a final copy of “The Game.” The first draft was written in a notebook. The second, third, and final versions are reproduced here.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback | √ with peer feedback |
| timed | √ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2 c Writing: Produce a narrative account.

E4 b Conventions: Analyze and subsequently revise written work.

What the work shows

E2 c Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The work engages the reader by immediately establishing the context of the narrative with the title and the first two sentences. The repetition of “front row seats” in the first two sentences helps to create a mood of excitement. This repetition also introduces the persona of an excited fan. The enthusiasm and excitement of the work continues to engage the reader while giving the narrative an authentic voice.

The student established a plot, setting, and conflict through the commentary which adopts the style and tone of professional sports commentaries. This style is constructed using the following techniques:

(B) short, pithy sentence structures;

(C) use of the present tense to comment on the action of the game;

(D) while the rest of the narrative is written in the past tense;

(E) use of basketball jargon; and

(F) suspense.

These techniques also make the description of the game immediate and exciting.

The student used the sequential play-by-play recounting of the game to create a narrative structure. The student also included a time-out that allows for a conversation between the protagonist and his grandfather.

The dialogue includes concrete language which helps to develop the relationship between the characters and gives the reader some background information about the grandfather.

(G) The student used the metaphor of a dark cloud to convey the notion that the Knicks were having bad luck.

The work avoids extraneous details and information as the sports commentary style of the language, along with the structure, helps to keep the narrative focused.

(H) The student used clear transitions between the narrative of the day at the game and the commentary on the game. This is also made clear by the repeated switches in the tenses.

(I) The student provided a sense of closure to the writing and conveyed the enthusiasm and joy felt when the Wolves won the game. Although formulaic, the final sentence (followed by three exclamation points) is a conclusion commonly used by sports commentators to end their presentations.

The student used a variety of techniques for emphasis and dramatic effect, for example:

(J) sentence fragments and one word sentences;

(K) upper case letters for whole words in the middle of a sentence;

(K) several exclamation points to emphasize particularly exciting passages in the game; and

(K) basketball terminology throughout the description of the game.

E4b Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student analyzes and subsequently revises work to clarify it or make it more effective in communicating the intended message or thought. The student's revisions should be made in light of the purposes, audiences, and contexts that apply to the work. Strategies for revising include:

- adding or deleting details;
- adding or deleting explanations;
- clarifying difficult passages;
- rearranging words, sentences, and paragraphs to improve or clarify meaning;
- sharpening the focus;
- reconsidering the organizational structure.

(L) The student added details in the course of the revisions. For example, the information about the grandfather appears in the third version while the date did not appear until the fourth draft.

(M) The student responded to a peer revision suggestion by changing all of the numerals to words except for the scores.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Game* Elementary School English Language Arts

(N) The student changed words such as “face off” to “tip off” to keep the language consistent and appropriate to the sport. The vocabulary throughout the work shows precise word choices, e.g., “stunned,” “mediocre,” some of which were added in at later stages of the revision.

(O) This draft went through a peer review process. The students indicated spelling and typographical errors and made suggestions for the writer. At the bottom of the first page, the peer reviewers created a legend to explain the symbols they used for commenting on the narrative. These errors were then corrected in the final draft.

Since the organizing structure and the order of events closely follows the order of the game, no substantial revisions of structure were made in the revision process.

(P) The student, however, replaced a paragraph of the narrative with a much more effective dialogue.

The student demonstrated an understanding of the rules of the English language in paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, and sentence construction. The student attempted a sophisticated combination of tenses—the present for the commentary on the game and the past as the narrative frame. Unfortunately, there are some places where the student did not manage to maintain these parallel structures consistently. As a consequence, there are places where the juxtaposition of the two tenses could cause reader confusion.

1/21/97

The Game

A Front row seats. My first front row seats ever to a basketball game: Minnesota vs. New York on December 26, 1996. I was in Minnesota, visiting my grandparents. I went to the game with my grandpa. He played for the Minnesota Gophers and loves basketball like me. Time for the game. **H**

J The Wolves win the tip-off. I was stunned that Ewing lost the tip-off. It was the first time I've ever seen him lose. Marbury gets the ball, dribbles and passes it to Gugliotta. He fakes the shot and passes back to Marbury. Marbury pulls up for three. Good! The crowd goes wild! **L**

F Even though I'm from New York, I was still rooting for the Wolves. I really like three of the Wolves' players and that's why I was rooting for them over the Knicks. I've been to a lot of Knicks games and I've never seen them losing this badly to a mediocre team. **E**

B After about two minutes pass, it's a five point lead for the Wolves. Now the Knicks have the ball. They get it to Ewing and he does a turnaround jump shot. In! Now it's only a three point lead for Minnesota. At the end of the first quarter it was 28-18, Wolves. At that point I thought there was a dark cloud over the Knicks. **G**

C Then immediately, the Knicks come back and they're only down by two. The Wolves get the ball with two minutes left in the half. Mitchell puts up the shot. It is blocked by Ewing. The Knicks are on a break and score two baskets. They are now ahead by four. The Wolves inbound the ball and the Knicks steal the ball. The Wolves call time out. **M**

J "Grandpa," I said. **H**

M "Yes," he replied.

G "Who's that?"

"That's a great basketball player named Kevin McHale. He played for the Gophers, the Celtics, and now he's the general manager of the Wolves. See over there? That's Kirby Puckett, who's a retired baseball player."

D It was a great moment. I've never seen so many great players all at once.



Work Sample & Commentary: *The Game*

Elementary School English Language Arts

- H** Back to the game. Fifty seconds until halftime, and the Knicks lead by eight. The Knicks dribble the ball and Childs pulls up for three.
- F** Good! The Wolves get the ball and they pass it. The Knicks STEAL it! The Knicks score! By the end of the half, the Knicks have turned the game around and are now leading by 14! **K**
- G** By then, I was amazed that the Knicks had turned the game around. The dark cloud had switched over to the Wolves and the sun was shining on the Knicks. Now let's skip to the fourth quarter.
- The Knicks are up by 10. It seems like the Wolves have finally pulled it together. They were finally playing like a smart ball club. They were moving the ball around and getting it to the open man. Marbury brings the ball up and gets it to Gugliotta. He gets it to Garnett and Garnett jams it home! Now the Knicks only have a six point lead.
- With only nine minutes left, the Knicks inbound the ball and push the ball up and miss. The Wolves bring the ball up and sink a three! Now the Knicks only have a three point lead.
- With only one minute left, the Knicks are up by one point. The Wolves inbound the ball and pass it to Marbury. He shoots, gets fouled, and makes the basket. The Wolves are finally ahead!!! **L**
- L** The Wolves lead by five with 10 seconds left. The Knicks get the ball with one second left, but the buzzer sounds before they can do anything. The Wolves win!!!!
- I** I can't believe it! After the Knicks were ahead at the half by 14, the Wolves turned it around and won! I was so excited that I was on my feet during the whole fourth quarter, rooting and yelling. It was the best game I ever saw!!!



The Game

1/2/97

N Front row seats. My first front row seats ever to a basketball game, Minnesota vs. New York. I was up in Minnesota because I was visiting my grandparents. Time for the game.

L The Wolves win the ~~fast~~ tip off. I was stunned that Ewing lost the tip off. It was the first time I'd ever seen him lose. Marbury gets the ball, dribbles and passes it to Gugliotta. He fakes the shot and passes it back to Marbury. Marbury pulls up for the 3. Good! The crowd goes wild!!!

L Even though I'm from New York, I was still rooting for the Wolves. Since I've been to ~~a few~~ Knick games, I've never seen them loosing this bad to a ~~not very~~ good team. I really like 3 of the Wolves' players and that's why I was rooting for them over the Knicks.

L After about 2 minutes pass, it's a 5 point lead for the Wolves. Now the Knicks have the ball. They get it into Ewing and he does a turn around jump shot. In!! Now it's only a 3 point lead for Minnesota. At the end of the first quarter, it was 28-18; Wolves. At that point I thought there was a dark cloud over the Knicks.

L Then immediately, the Knicks come back and they're only down by 2. The Wolves get the ball with 2 minutes left in the half. Mitchell pulls up the shot, It is blocked by Ewing. The Knicks are on a break away and score 2 baskets. They are now ahead by 4. The Wolves' in bound pass was stolen and Knicks score again. The Wolves call time out to talk it over.

P ~~My grandpa get up to get drinks and see Kevin McCall to our right, a great player who is now retired. Then we see Kirby Puckett to our left, who is also retired and was a great baseball player for the Minnesota Twins. It was a great moment. I've never seen so many great players all at once in person.~~

L Back to the game. 50 seconds until half time, and the Knicks lead by 8. The Knicks dribble the ball and Childs pulls up for 3. Good! The Wolves get the ball and they pass it. The Knicks STEAL it! The Knicks score! By the end of the half, the Knicks have turned the game around and are now leading by 14!!!

L By then I was amazed that the Knicks turned the game around. Now the dark cloud has switched over to the Wolves and the sun is shining for the Knicks. Now lets skip to the 4th quarter.

Handwritten notes:
 I went to the game he played for
 my grandpa the Minnesota Timberwolves and he was basket ball player
 me.
 on 12/28/96
 Ever
 X Grandpa I said "yes" he replied "Who's that?"
 "This is a great basketball player named Kevin McCall."
 "And who's that?"
 "Oh, that's Kirby Puckett. Who's a retired baseball player."
 Legend
 J-1910
 J-1910

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Game*
Elementary School English Language Arts

The Knicks are up by 10. It seems like the Wolves are finally ready to pull it together. They were finally playing like a smart ball club. They were moving the ball around and getting it to the open man. Marbury brings the ball up and gets it to Gugalioto. He gets it to Garnett and Garnett jams it home! Now the Knicks only have a 6 point lead.

With only 9 minutes left, the Knicks in bound and push the ball up and miss. The Wolves bring the ball up and sink a 3! Now the Knicks only have a 3 point lead.

Now, with only 1 minute left and the Knicks are only up by 1 point. The Wolves in bound the ball and pass to Marbury. He shoots, get fouled and makes the basket. The Wolves are finally ahead!!!

The Wolves lead by 5 with 10 seconds left. The Knicks get the ball with 1 second left but the buzzer goes off before they can do anything. The Wolves WIN!!!!!!

I can't believe it! After the Knicks were ahead at the half by 14, the Wolves turned it around and won!! I was so excited that I was on my feet during the whole 4th quarter hooting and yelling. It was the best game I ever saw!!!!

————— /OH R
E



write a little bit more
about what you were
doing

④

The Game 1/7/97

Front row seats. My first front row seats ever to a basketball game ⁱⁿ Minnesota in New York. I was up in Minnesota because I was visiting my grandparents. I went to the game with my grandpa. He played for the Minnesota Gophers and loves basketball like me. Time for the game.

The Wolves win the tip off. I was determined that Ewing lost the tip off. It was the first time I've ever seen him lose. Marbury gets the ball, dribbles and passes it to Duggins. He fakes the shot and passes back to Marbury. Marbury pulls up for three. Good! The crowd goes wild!!!

Even though I'm from New York I was still rooting for the Wolves. Ever since I've been to a lot of Knick games, I've never seen them looking this badly to a mediocre team. I really like ^{some} of the Wolves players and that's why I was rooting for them over the Knicks.

After about ^{two} minutes pass, it's a ^{five} point lead for the Wolves. Now the Knicks

(2)

have the ball. They get it to Irving and he does a turn around jump shot. Oh!!! Now it's only a ³ point lead for ~~the~~ ~~Knicks~~. At the end of the first quarter, it was 28-18; Wolves. At that point I thought there was a dark cloud over the Knicks. Then ~~immediately~~ the Knicks come back and they're only down by 2. The Wolves get the ball with 2 minutes left in the half. Mitchell pulls up the shot, it is blocked by Ewing. The Knicks are on a break and ~~get~~ ~~two~~ ~~points~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~first~~ ~~half~~. They are now ahead by 4. The Wolves inbound the ball and the Knicks steal the ball. The Wolves call time out.

"Grandpa," I said

"Yes," he replied

"Who's that?"

"That's a great basketball player named Kevin McHale. See over there that's Kirby Puckett, who's a retired baseball player."

It was a great moment. I've never seen so many great players all at once.

P

(3)

Back to the game, 50 seconds until half time, and the Knicks lead by 8. The Knicks dribble the ball and Childs pulls up for 3rd ^{shot} Good!! The wolves get the ball and they pass it. The Knicks STEAL it! The Knicks score! By the end of the half, The Knicks have turned the game around and are now leading by 14!!!

By then I ^{had} was amazed that the Knicks ~~had~~ turned the game around. ~~By~~ the dark cloud ~~had~~ switched over to the Wolves and the sun ^{was} shining for the Knicks. Now let's skip to the fourth quarter.

The Knicks are up by 10. It ^{seems} like the Wolves have finally pulled it together. They were finally playing like a smart ball club. They were moving the ball around and getting it to the open man. Marlbury brings the ball up and gets it to Gugalioto. He gets it to Garnet and Garnet jams it home! Now the Knicks ~~only~~ have a 5^{pt} point lead.

With only ~~5~~ minutes left, the Knicks in bound ~~the ball~~ and push the ball

(4)

up and miss. The Wolves bring the ball up and sink a 3!! Now the Knicks only have a 3 point lead. Now, with only 1 minute left, ~~and~~ the Knicks are only up by 1 point. The Wolves in bound the ball and pass it to Marbury. He shoots ~~and~~ fouled and makes the basket. The Wolves are finally ahead!!! Five

The Wolves lead by 8 with 10 seconds left. The Knicks get the ball with ~~with~~ ¹⁰ seconds left but the buzzer ~~before~~ they can do anything. The Wolves win!!!!

I can't believe it! After the Knicks were ahead at the half by 14, the Wolves turned it around and won!!! I was so excited that I was on my feet during the whole 4th quarter, hooting and yelling. It was ~~an~~ the best game I ever saw!!!

Wolves

What team did
you want to win.
I think that
you should include
What you did
after the game...

M

~~you should~~
you should write
3 as three, 5 as five
ect. when you say
28-18 wolves you
should say the wolves
are winning

Work Sample & Commentary: *Mom and the World Trade Center Bombing* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

As part of Women’s History month, students were asked to write a personal narrative account about a woman they knew.

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback
timed | √ with peer feedback
opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2 c Writing: Produce a narrative account.

What the work shows

E2 c Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The work engages the reader by establishing the World Trade Center bombing as the context of the narrative since this event has become part of the local history. The first sentence opens the work by establishing a sense of foreboding, “...is a day I will never forget.” This is reinforced by the foreshadowing in the second sentence when the mother tells the boy to have “a good day.”

The student created an organizing structure by using the chronological order of the day’s events. Tension and suspense are built into the narrative as the reader sees the day’s events from the point of view of the boy waiting for news of his mother. The student successfully conveyed his own fears while waiting for the safe return of his mother.

(B) With this phrase, “...until I returned...,” the mood and the pacing of the piece changes. The television (with its implicit noise and live coverage) shifts the tempo up and the sentence structures change from sentences where the student is the passive subject to sentences where he is the active subject, “I was scared...,” “I wanted...,” “I needed....”

Work Sample & Commentary: *Mom and the World Trade Center Bombing* Elementary School English Language Arts

(C) The student related the story in concrete language which focuses the narrative first on the student's anguish and then on his mother's bravery. The student used some sensory details when describing the stairwells in the building.

(D) The work closes with a rephrasing of the first sentence which includes the student's gratitude for the safe return of his mother.

Mom and the World Trade Center Bombing

A The day of the World Trade Center bombing is a day I will never forget. I remember my mother taking me to school and telling me to have a good day. Then she went to work as usual at the World Trade Center where

B she was a tour guide. It seemed like any other day, until I returned home after school. All programs on television were gone except for the constant telling of the terrible bombing. I was scared. I wanted my mommy home with me as soon as possible. I needed to know that she was all right.

C Hours passed and still no phone call came. Finally the phone rang and my mother told me she was fine. When my mother reached home, I remember her crying a lot with her head on grandma's lap. All she could say was

C "Why?" Later my mother told me how she walked through the smoky, dark stairwells to bring people down from the 107 floors to safety. She helped people who were stuck in elevators get out. Many were crying and some could not speak English because they were from foreign countries. Some were dying. Some were hurt. All were frightened. My mother's on the job emergency training came in handy. She always helps others and puts herself second. This disaster brought people together; strangers helped strangers. On February 26, 1993, terrorism hit home in America. It is the day I remember when my mother was a hero and the day God brought my mother back home to me. **D**

Work Sample & Commentary: *Enchiladas* Elementary School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to select a topic to which they had a commitment in their lives and then to choose a genre in which to express that commitment. Students were required to revise and edit their writing before “publishing” the complete texts. The work shown here is one recipe and an anecdote from a much longer project in which a series of recipes and anecdotes were compiled into a book titled, “La Mesa Esta Puesta (The Table Is Set).” This student also produced the work in Spanish.²

Circumstances of performance

This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| √ alone | in a group |
| √ in class | √ as homework |
| √ with teacher feedback
timed | √ with peer feedback
√ opportunity for revision |

This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following parts of the standards:

E2 c Writing: Produce a narrative account.

E2 d Writing: Produce a narrative procedure.

E5 b Literature: Produce work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

What the work shows³

E2 d Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The work engages the reader with the title of the larger project, “La Mesa Esta Puesta (The Table Is Set),” and a colorful cover to identify the project as a Spanish/English recipe book. The work includes both the recipes and the accompanying anecdotes, with each providing an interesting context for the other.

²The Spanish version of this piece of student work was selected to illustrate a standard-setting performance for parts of the Spanish Language Arts standards at the elementary level (see page 181).

³This sample of student work incorporates many of the elements of picture books and recipe books. The student used colorful drawings to illustrate the recipes and included an engaging story about the food described.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Enchiladas* Elementary School English Language Arts

- (A) The work provides a guide to action through the recognizable form of a recipe.
- (B) The instructions are clear and are organized chronologically with specific guidelines about when to move on to the next step.
- (C) The student used appropriate strategies for relating a recipe, which include identifying the logical steps involved in cooking, and then presenting them as a series of statements in clear, concise language.
- (D) The recipe section concludes by creating a visual image of what the enchiladas will look like.

E2 c Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The anecdote engages the reader by establishing the reader as an observer of the events in the kitchen.

The plot sequence includes all the appropriate elements—rising action: arrival of the various guests who serve as distracters; conflict: conversation instead of cooking; climax: burning the enchiladas; conclusion: the guests excusing themselves.

(E) The conflict in the story (the burning of the enchiladas) develops as a result of the socializing, but the story still ends with a positive and, therefore, somewhat ironic result.

The anecdote is organized chronologically within a brief period of time.

(F) The student included detailed descriptions of the tastes and smells in the kitchen appropriate to a story about cooking.

(G) The student used brief characterizations to introduce each of the women who came into her mother’s kitchen.

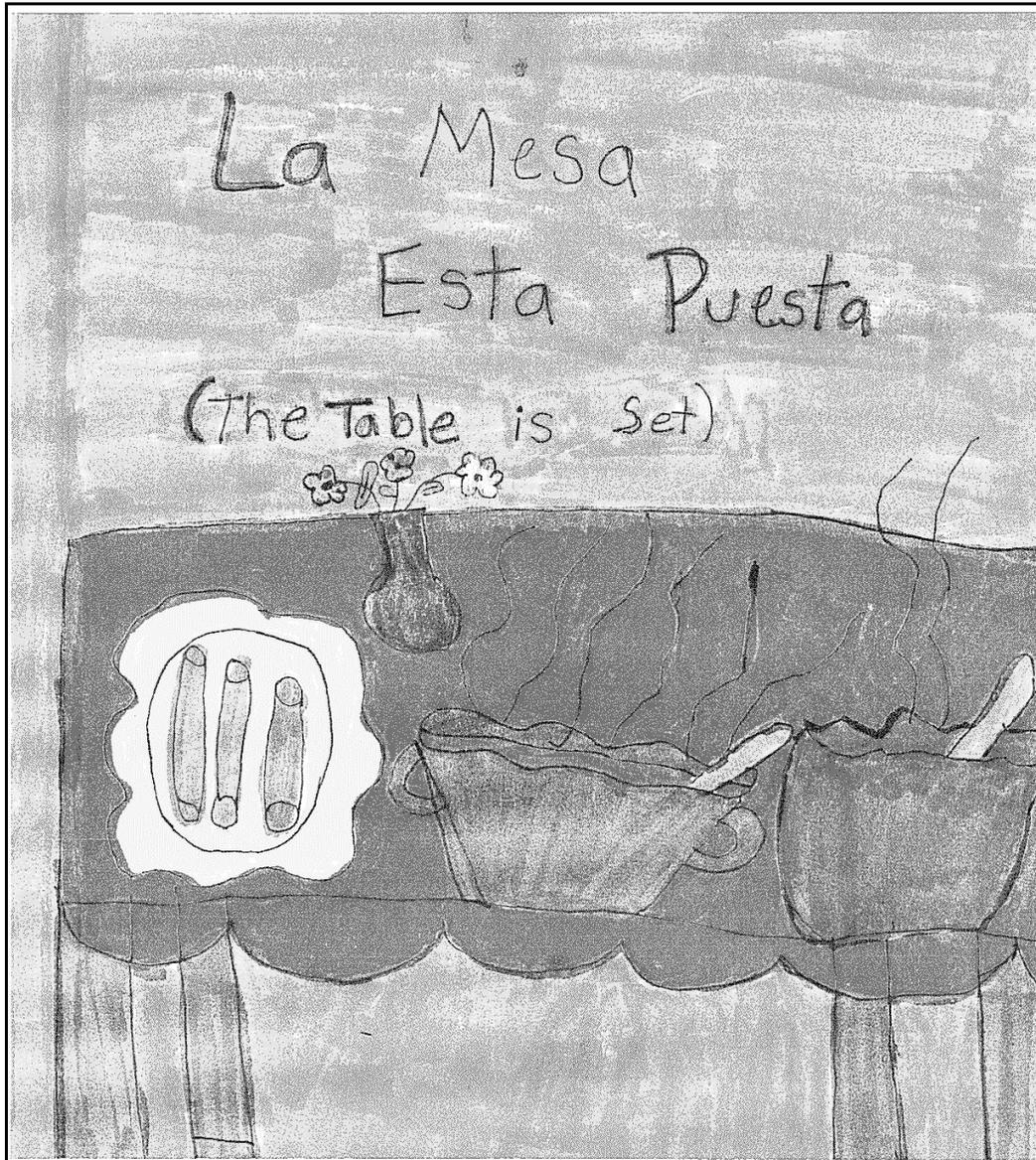
(H) The anecdote ends by indicating that the women’s leaving in disgust was actually the best thing that could have happened, because it meant the family could eat all of the enchiladas by themselves.

E5 b Literature: The student produces work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

The student replicated the format of the picture book genre using drawings to illustrate the recipes and the stories that accompany them. Although shown here in black and white, the drawings are vibrant and colorful and depict the characters portrayed in the stories. The book also includes a blurb “about the author” at the back (not shown here) which has a self-portrait of the student.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Enchiladas*
Elementary School English Language Arts

The few mistakes in this work are more likely “slips” than actual errors, e.g., whereas no apostrophe is used in the line “one of my moms...” the same construction is later used properly.



Enchiladas

Ingredients:

5 red chiles
2 packages of tortillas
2 chopped onions (finely)
3 finely chopped fresh cheeses
½ garlic head
1 cup of oil
salt to taste

To begin you put the red chiles in boiling water. When they are soft you put them in the blender and add a little bit of water, garlic and salt. The chile paste needs to be strained, in order to separate the juice from the seeds you then fry the tortillas a bit so that they are soft. When you take them out of the oil, you pass them through the chile. You then fill

D → them up with cheese and onions and roll them like a taco.

The day my mother made enchiladas all the neighbors came to visit us. They say that it is because the smell of the chile cooking creeps out the windows. Toña, one of my moms comadres came in with her baby crying. Maria, well "Mariquita" to the ones that knew her came in chatting away, as always. The other two comadres "the religious ones" forgot about church and walked in with their Bibles. On this occasion my mom started talking as she cooked. All the ladies were sitting in the kitchen around the table. My mom got into the talking so much that

← F
← G

she forgot the enchiladas, so
they burned. ~~when~~ But, my
mom still served them like that.
When the ladies tasted them
they looked at each other and started
getting up excusing themselves.
From that day on, no one ever
came back for my mom's ← **E**
enchiladas. Now, we can eat them
all ourselves. ← **H**

Work Sample & Commentary: *Enchiladas*
Elementary School English Language Arts

