

The task

Students were asked to write a story, focusing on the element of setting, about an exchange student coming to meet a host family in New York City and getting lost. The students had to resolve the exchange student’s dilemma in a believable way.

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 and of conclusions that can be drawn from those 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, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action, e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) On arrival at the airport, Ari finds that his exchange family is not there to meet him. This establishes the context and the persona of Ari Goldstein as “a 15 year old exchange student.”

The reader’s interest is engaged by the vivid beginning that describes Ari’s arrival in New York. The reader’s interest is further developed by the humorous misinterpretation of the word “subway.”

(B) The plot unfolds as Ari encounters numerous characters who each play a role in his adventures around various famous New York settings. The work incorporates believable transitions which create a sequence of events. The conflict is resolved when Ari is united with his host family.

The student organized the work around a problem which is introduced at the beginning. The action builds until Ari meets Juan who is instrumental in solving Ari’s problem. The plot is resolved when Ari finally meets the host family.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lost in New York*

Middle School English Language Arts

(C) Throughout the work, the student used descriptions to enhance the narrative. For example, the first person whom Ari meets is “a man wearing a turban who was standing next to a yellow taxi.”

(D) The student used concrete language and a well organized sequence of events to develop the plot. For example, in each anecdote, Ari is unable to communicate verbally and must resort to using body language which adds humor to the story. Ironically, this results in Ari receiving exactly what he needs from a person who is ideally suited to helping him.

Ari’s character is developed through the many encounters he has with different people as he travels around New York City. He is portrayed as a trusting, innocent, brave, personable, and resourceful young man. The character, Juan, is interesting. He is a Puerto Rican who speaks little English but is fluent in Hebrew because he works in a kosher restaurant. It is this twist of fate that leads to Ari finding his family.

The student used suspense as an effective strategy to create reader anticipation throughout the story.

(E) The student used the famous landmarks in New York City as a strategy to enhance the story while maintaining reader interest.

(F) The final paragraph provides a sense of closure to the writing. In keeping with the humorous events that lead Ari safely to the home of the host family, Ari’s final comment sums it up, “He explained that it was funny to him that he had spent an entire day in Manhattan and had not met one person who spoke English.”

There are some errors in the work, for example, in the second paragraph the word “told” appears as “old.” This seems to be a typographical error. Also in this paragraph, “remembered” is used instead of “remember.” This could be a slip since the student demonstrated a control of tenses elsewhere in the narrative.

Lost in New York

By _____

A →

Ari was excited when he looked out of his window and saw the Statue of Liberty for the first time. Ari Goldstein was a 15 year old exchange student from Israel. His plane was about to arrive at La Guardia Airport where he was to meet the exchange family. As luck would have it the family was stuck in traffic near Shea Stadium and were late. Ari waited at the gate for the family but they did not show up. He stepped outside of the terminal. When he looked about he could see the Unisphere, the steel model of the world that was the symbol of the 1964 World's Fair that was left standing in Corona Park. Ari walked up to a man wearing a turban who was standing next to a yellow taxi. Ari realized he was very hungry because he had been too excited on the plane to eat. The hungry boy remembered the advertisement for Subway sandwiches from the magazine on the airplane. When the man in the turban heard the word subway he took Ari to the N train.

C →

Ari saw the sign for the subway and went downstairs. The only other person on the platform was a Chinese man who was waiting for the train. Communicating with his hands Ari told the man that he was hungry. When the man realized that Ari was hungry he smiled and made gestures indicating that the young man should come with him on the train. Luckily for Ari the man happened to be Gui Chen Fong, a famous Chinese chef who was on his way to work. Mr. Fong could remember the days when he was a new immigrant in New York and wanted to make this lost young man from a foreign country feel more comfortable. The two new friends got on the train and rode to Chinatown. In Chinatown Mr. Fong took Ari to the Big Wong Chinese Restaurant where he worked on Mott Street for a meal. Ari had never seen so many different kinds of noodles before and ate until he was about to burst. After shaking hands with the man Ari

D →

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stepped outside and started walking uptown.

Ari walked over to Mulberry Street. He had only traveled a few blocks north of Canal Street when he met an old Italian man who was sitting outside of a store in an wooden rocking chair. The young man was very thirsty after such a large meal. When Ari made a motion with his hands to show that he wanted something to drink, the man walked him to Umberto's Cafe for a cappuccino.

Feeling refreshed Ari went walking further uptown, he wandered to SOHO where he met a group of Frenchmen who were looking in the window of an art gallery. Ari tried to get directions from them. When he said a word that sounded like "village", the men sent him further uptown to Greenwich Village. In the Village, Ari entered Washington Square Park. Near the arch he saw a group of men who were playing chess. He watched the game for a while and started a conversation with one of the people next to him. This man's name was Juan and he was a Puerto Rican. While Juan only spoke a little English, he spoke Hebrew fluently. It turned out that Juan was a waiter at a kosher restaurant named Triplets and had learned Hebrew from the other workers and his customers. Ari told Juan his story and Juan offered to drive Ari uptown to the apartment of the exchange family. On their way up the Avenue of the Americas they passed Macy's, the world's largest department store. Looking out of the sunroof of the car Ari could see the top of the Empire State Building. Further uptown the car passed Rockefeller Center. At 53rd Street, by the entrance to the Hilton Hotel the car had to wait for almost one hour while President Clinton's limosine drove up to the hotel where he was to speak at an important business convention. Ari was more excited to stare into the window of Rodier of Paris while waiting for the car to move again. Finally the car made its way to 57th Street where Juan was able to drive north through Central Park. At 81st Street Juan turned west and brought Ari to the apartment of

the exchange family which was located directly across from the Museum of Natural History.

Everyone was relieved that Ari was safe. They all hugged and kissed him. Ari began to laugh very hard and the family stopped to stare at him. He explained that it was funny to him that he had spent an entire day in Manhattan and had not met one person who spoke English. They all laughed with him.

The task

Students were asked to write a story about someone who meant something to them. The students read a number of narratives to help them become familiar with the various elements that create a narrative and to learn how different writers work to achieve different effects according to the purpose of the story. The student who wrote this story preceded it with a note labeled “Author’s Note.” The note reads: “Everything in the story you are about to read is true! There are no falsities whatsoever! All the characters were real people! Thank You.”

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.

E4a Conventions: Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language.

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 and of conclusions that can be drawn from those 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, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action, e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The work creates an omniscient point of view for the voice of the narrator and then maintains that voice consistently throughout the story.

The student established a plot sequence that followed the timeline of Lena’s entry into America and her first ten years or so of trying to deal with life in a new country.

The organizing structure centers on the difficulties experienced by the main character. These difficulties build to the tragedy of Charlie’s death in ways that make Lena’s reaction understandable and Charlie’s dramatic recovery that much more welcome.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lena and Chayim*

Middle School English Language Arts

(A) The student used language in a mature fashion, bringing to life the various characters and developing the plot at the same time. The short paragraph describing Charlie’s death is a good example of these uses of language.

(B) By giving brief glimpses of certain events and more extended versions of others, the student created differing effects to communicate different messages. The selection of information serves to create the desired effects.

(C) The story creates the various characters and identifies the complex nature of each character. In the case of Chayim, for example, the story identifies Chayim’s frustration at not being able to make a living in his new country, and then identifies the series of events that caused him to start drinking heavily and to eventually alienate himself from his family.

(D) The student used dialogue sparingly, but where it is used it serves as a strategy to tell the reader something about the character.

(A) (E) The student used suspense as an effective strategy, allowing it to create reader anticipation both in the introduction when Lena and Chayim are first trying to enter the country and then towards the end when Charlie dies.

(F) The use of tension as a strategy between the moments of anticipation where things suddenly look brighter for Lena and Chayim, and the events that serve to squelch the anticipation, such as the births and deaths of three children, serve to make the story interesting.

(G) The story ends in the fashion of many stories with a “happily ever after” conclusion. Although the ending is a bit dissatisfying for a story of this caliber, the parenthetical note in the last sentence showing that the student recognized this fact, combined with the preface to the piece that declares the truthfulness of the events being recounted, indicates that the choice for an ending was a conscious one. The clear indication that the student understood the implications for such a simplistic ending and yet chose it nevertheless, suggests that the ending functions just as the student intended.

E4 a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates an 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 demonstrated, through virtually error free writing, the ability to manage the conventions of grammar and usage. The student managed a variety of sentence constructions, appropriate punctuation, and complex syntax. This is evident throughout the work.

Lena and Chayim

With a loud bump and thud against the dock, a huge ship filled with immigrants seeking hope and prosperity in America, landed in New York harbor. As the boat doors were opened, a heavy flow of people streamed out. They looked tired and rumpled from their long journey from Europe and their eyes, accustomed to the darkness of the ship, squinted into the blinding sunlight. Dragging bags, boxes and baskets, these bedraggled humans made their way into the main building on Ellis Island. Among these newcomers was Lena, a young Polish Jew, and her husband, Chayim.

Lena was beautiful with deepset blue eyes, and long flowing black hair. She had high cheekbones and stood almost six feet tall. Chayim was rather plain. These two young people had not married by choice but had been forced to wed. While still in Poland, Lena had been deeply in love with a young man called Jacob. He was sought out by all the young women in the village, for he was handsome and sang very well. He, however, only liked Lena and would have married her at once but the choice belonged to their parents so Jacob and Lena were forced to go their separate ways. For a while, Lena was very unhappy but soon she forgot about Jacob and went on with her life.

Now, as Lena walked closer and closer to the main inspection building on Ellis Island, her heart was filled with dread. Should she or Chayim show any signs of illness, mental or physical, they might be detained and then (the immigrant's nightmare), DEPORTED! Once inside the building, Lena and the others were ushered up the stairs and into the dreaded Registration Room. If a person had any trouble walking up the stairs, they would be taken aside and examined for tuberculosis, pneumonia, consumption or other breathing disorders. Neither Lena nor Chayim encountered any trouble.

Now the immigrants walked into the Registration Room, filling all the hard wooden benches that filled the entire room. It was here that many of them would wait for days, even weeks, before being examined and questioned by officials. Luck smiled upon Lena and Chayim and they only waited a few hours. When their names were called though, they had much trouble with the questions they were asked. Lena did not speak a word of English; Yiddish was her native tongue. They did not know what to do until a young official approached them. His name was Fiorello LaGuardia and he spoke Yiddish with great ease. Translating questions and answers, he helped Lena and Chayim with their passage to America.

Before leaving the island, Lena sat down to a meal in the large Ellis Island dining room. The foods on her plate were all American and she, like many others, were greatly puzzled over them. One of the most fascinating things set before Lena was a long, yellow crescent. She watched as people all around her pick it up and eat it as it was. However, the person sitting next to her removed the outer part first and then bit in. Lena did the same. DELICIOUS!

Lena and Chayim were among the many immigrants to have friends or relatives already in New York. Their friends had found them a coldwater flat on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Living conditions were terrible! The apartment had no running



Work Sample & Commentary: *Lena and Chayim*

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water or private bathroom. It was freezing in the winter and swelteringly hot in the summer. But what could they do? There was no where else to go.

B →

After a while, Chayim bought a small sewing machine. He had been a tailor in the old country and a very reputable one at that. He had been rich and people had sought him out far and wide to do custom tailoring for them. Now he could work again. Chayim's hope dwindled when he saw that the type of work he was getting was not what he had expected. Few people had enough money to buy new clothes and called upon him only for patching and mending. Soon Chayim realized that he would have to find better work. Lena was pregnant and they simply did not have enough money to support a child.

F →

Eventually Lena gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. Chayim was almost in despair. He took a job in a factory, working sixteen hours a day, six days a week. A year later, both twins died of the measles.

Lena would not be beaten. She had heard of a man, Samuel Gompers, who believed strongly in unionism and convinced Chayim they should both attend the meetings he led. Soon, Lena and Chayim believed in unionism too.

Lena gave birth to another child, a boy and happiness again found the lonely couple. Their happiness could not last. This child too died from the measles within a year. Chayim mourned over the third lost child and forgot about unionism. He began to drink heavily. Lena, though saddened was determined not to let life strike her down. She began to take in sewing because Chayim was no use any more.

C →

Soon Lena had another child. She called him Yeshayahu, meaning "God will save him." Later on she changed the boys name to English and he became "Charlie." Her whole life now centered around this new son. He was her pride and joy. She ignored Chayim more and more. As a result, Chayim grew jealous of his son and often beat the young boy. Lena spoke out against Chayim and put a stop to these beatings but now a terrible hate grew between husband and wife. Chayim barely spoke to Charlie except to say such things as, "Charlie, take this dime and go out and buy me a bucket of beer. I'm expecting company." It was terrible.

D →

Lena still loved Charlie. She catered to his every whim and babied him incredibly. She also decided that Charlie would grow up to love music. She took him to free band concerts and sang him old Yiddish lullabies. Her plan worked. Charlie's hero was John Philip Sousa, the composer of the United States National Anthem.

The winter of 1901 came in cold and angry. Wind howled bitterly and their was ice and snow everywhere. It seemed as if there would be no end. Lena took in no more sewing because none of the neighbors wanted to walk outside to bring it to her. She had also borne another son and things looked grimmer than ever.

One day Lena saw eight-year-old Charlie sitting near the stove. He had on a thin shirt and was shivering terribly. She brushed her hand against his head and felt that it was burning with fever. Lena immediately put down her newborn son and went out to seek the neighbors help. She needed money for the doctor.

A →

The doctor arrived at the house very quickly. Charlie had a high fever and was shivering more than ever. He was stricken with pneumonia. The doctor sponged him down with cold water to lessen the fever. Instead it rose! Suddenly the shivering stopped. Charlie's face became sheet white. The doctor checked unsuccessfully for a pulse. Charlie was dead.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lena and Chayim* Middle School English Language Arts

Lena was horrified. She was angry. She began screaming and beating the doctor. The neighbors heard her cries and came to help the poor doctor. It took three men to get Lena away from him. They had to restrain her so the body could be taken away. One woman took the baby away to care for it. Then they took her shoes and money and locked her in the apartment. They were afraid she might do something violent. Lena screamed and cried out for hours and finally fell asleep from exhaustion.

Lena awakened at the crack of dawn. She had to see Charlie, she had to. Lena climbed out the window and out onto the fire escape. She reached the street below and ran ten blocks through the snow to the funeral parlor. Lena at last reached her destination. She was barefoot and unkempt and had the appearance of someone gone mad.

She opened Charlie's coffin. His thin body was enveloped in a prayer shawl. As Lena gazed into the coffin, Charlie sat up! He told Lena he was thirsty and wanted some milk. Now, this is a very strange occurrence. It happens maybe once in 50 years. If Lena had been in any other state of mind at the time, she might have passed out on the floor. But she didn't. She was in *such* a crazed state that she couldn't have cared less Charlie had started to fly. She acted as though his awakening were a normal occurrence. "Yes my child, I'll get you some milk," she said.

For the second time that morning Lena went out into the cold winter weather. She ran about looking desperately for an opened store. There were none. Finally Lena came across a store with steel cans of milk displayed in front. She pried one opened (only in such a crazed state could she have done this) and poured the contents of it into a ladle used for serving customers. Then she carefully made her way back to Charlie, careful not to spill a drop of milk.

When Lena returned, Charlie was crying for her to come back and an old watchman (having recovered from an earlier fainting spell when Charlie awakened) was doing his best to comfort the little boy. Lena gave Charlie the milk and carried him back home. She had regained control of life at last.

Chayim died soon after of a liver illness at the age of 41. Lena was consoled by friends who told her that her first love Jacob was living in the area. He too was mourning the loss of his spouse. Lena and Jacob met and found that they were still very much in love. They married and (here is the most annoying last line of a story ever but I have to say/write/type it) lived happily ever after.



Work Sample & Commentary: *Lost Time*

Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to write a creative reaction to a cliché about time. This student chose to respond to the cliché, “Lost time is never found again.”

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.

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

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 and of conclusions that can be drawn from those 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, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action, e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The student engaged the reader by beginning the story with an exciting scene from the movie *Star Wars*. The reader is drawn into the world of the movie which, through a smooth transition, becomes the world of the character, Chris, who is watching the scene on television. This parallel reflects Chris’s involvement in the movie.

The student divided the account into three sections using visual breaks. Each of these sections represents a distinct chunk of time and this division creates a clear organizing structure.

¹ This modern fable incorporates many of the elements of the traditional moral tale (the protagonist errs and learns a lesson) into a short story that is essentially modern. “Lost Time” is brief and is focused on one character and the consequences of his decision.

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The work is further organized around the results of the choices made by the main character, Chris. When he chooses to waste time, he sets off a chain of negative events, which in the end teach him an important lesson about time.

(A) Dialogue is used to establish the plot, the conflict, and the setting of the story.

The student used sensory details to enhance the story and to develop the characters. For example,

(B) metaphor; and

(C) appropriate adjectives.

The student used a range of appropriate strategies, such as,

(D) tension and suspense; and

(E) specific narrative action, e.g., movement, gestures, and expressions.

The student also used dialogue throughout the narrative to develop reader interest, vary the pace of the narration, and to develop plot and character.

(F) The work closes with the statement made by Chris' father which brings the story full circle. The conflict is resolved when Chris chooses to use time wisely.

E5b Literature: The student produces work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

The work demonstrates the student's ability to manage the elements of the short story. The student used the cliché, lost time is never found, as the basis for this modern fable. The story focuses on a single event, the student's choice to waste time rather than do his homework, and the resulting consequences. The narrative is concise while incorporating figurative language and appropriate dialogue which engages the reader and develops the character and the plot.

The story concludes, as the traditional fable ends, with the protagonist recognizing the error of his ways.

There are a few errors of usage (e.g., "your" in the first sentence of dialogue should be "you're" and "hanged" in the fourth paragraph of the third section should be "hung"), and punctuation (e.g., the run-on sentence in the first paragraph of the third section).

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lost Time*

Middle School English Language Arts

“LOST TIME”

Several asteroids flew overhead, the *Millennium Falcon* steered to the right then flew upward. A large asteroid barely missed the ship. Speeding up behind them were several *TIE Fighters* spinning and maneuvering past the asteroids. The *TIE Fighters* fired away. Red lasers streaked across space and hitting the *Millennium Falcon* in the rear. Han Solo rocked in his chair. He could hear C-3PO rambling behind him.

“We are not going to make it. Han Solo your out of your mind!”

Han Solo responded bluntly, “Will someone shut him off!”

The *Millennium Falcon* reared hard to the right, flying across the screen. The stereo blasted. Chris Davis could barely hear his mother yelling in the background. He turned the volume down.

“What is it Mom?” asked Chris.

“I want you to do your homework. It’s already ten o’clock and you didn’t even start,” she said. She looked at him harshly.

“The movie is almost finished in about an hour. Just let me finish watching the movie. I promise I’ll do my homework when the movie finished,”

“O.K. But you better finish it before twelve,” his mother said sighing.

Chris turned his head toward the screen and smiled as he watched the movie.

It was midnight and Chris was sweating. He still had not finished his homework. Nothing was going his way. His mother walked into the room and leaned against his desk.

“Times up. You had until twelve and you still haven’t finished. You’re going to bed,” she said.

“But.....But.....My teacher will give me a zero. Just give me a half-hour,” Chris said.

“No excuses. Off to bed now!”

Chris removed the papers off his bed and removed his bookbag. He looked at his mother. She quickly pointed to the bed. His mother turned off the lights and he reluctantly went to bed.

Chris watched the shades of light trickle into the classroom. Then suddenly the bell rang. He jumped from his seat and grabbed his coat as the students poured out into the hallway. He walked down the marble stairs and left the school. He looked at the sky, the clouds threatened to rain. He walked home thinking about this hell of a day. Why does this have to happen to him. As he walked it began to pour.

He ran home with the wind and rain beating on his face. He could see his house not far away. Then ran toward the front door and opened it. His mother turned away from the television. Chris stood in the doorway dripping, profusely, on to the floor. He closed his eyes half-way at his mother and sneered.

His mother smiled and said, “Had a nice day.”

“Not funny. Why couldn’t you just let me complete my homework?” Chris asked. He removed his coat and hanged it on the rack.

“I told you to finish before twelve, yet, you didn’t finish. I believed you learned your lesson,” his mother said triumphantly. Suddenly, his father came into the room. He looked at his son and spoke.

“Lost time is never found again.”

“What?!?” Chris said in bewilderment.

“I said ‘Lost time is never found again’,” his father said.

“No, that’s not what I mean. I mean what does that mean?”

“It means,” said his father, “that if you waste time or use it unwisely you cannot bring it back. You can’t make it up it’s gone forever.”

Chris thought for a second. He immediately ran toward his room. He heard his parents saying to him.

“Where are you going?” they asked in unison.

He smiled and said, “To my room, to do my homework.”

In the back, he could hear his parents laughing.

A →

B →

E →

F

F

C

C

E ←

D ←

The task

Students were asked to write a story for submission to the Ezra Jack Keats Children’s Book Contest. The students were instructed to create a character, develop it fully, and include the elements of a story.

Circumstances of performance

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

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E5b Literature: Produce work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

What the work shows²

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- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action, e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The student used a simple, traditional plot sequence to tell the story which is organized around the protagonist’s problem and its solution.

The student assumed an omniscient point of view and maintained this perspective effectively throughout the story.

² This short story has many of the elements of a traditional fairy tale. It is a simple, imaginary story about marvelous events. As a short story, it is concise, focuses on one character, moves chronologically, and, like a fairy tale, ends happily.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Magic Rose*

Middle School English Language Arts

(A) The title “The Magic Rose” and the words “Once upon a time...” are used to engage the reader’s interest and establish the context of the story as a fairy tale. The student used foreshadowing to draw the reader into the story and to establish the plot.

(B) The student introduced the conflict relatively late in the story. Like many fairy tales, the protagonist is helped by a magical character, usually an animal or an inanimate object, which is given human qualities. In this story, Crystal develops self-confidence with the help of a rose.

(C) The student included sensory details to develop the main character and describe the changes in appearance and attitude she experiences.

The student effectively used dialogue to develop the character of Crystal and to move the action of the plot forward.

(D) The climax of the story occurs when the Magic Rose dies and Crystal must rely on herself. The conflict, which has been established as internal, is resolved when Crystal begins to live the lessons of the Magic Rose.

E4 a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates an 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 managed the conventions, grammar, and usage of English so that they aid rather than interfere with reading. Noteworthy are the student’s use of paragraphs and quotation punctuation.

The student used “place” instead of “placed” at one point in the narrative. This is most likely a typographical error rather than a grammatical error since the student managed past tense markers throughout the work.

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

The work demonstrates the student’s ability to manage the elements of a short story and produce a literary work in the fairy tale genre. The student employed all of the elements associated with fairy tale—the introductory words “Once upon a time...,” the heroine, the elements of magic, and the customary happy ending.

A

Once upon a time there lived a little girl whose name was Crystal. No one thought she was pretty and she was often teased by her classmates.

One day Crystal was walking home from school all alone, as she always did.

Suddenly, a rose fell from the sky. She picked it up and hurried home with it. She put the beautiful rose in a vase with water and brought it up to her room. She was admiring the perfect flower when, much to her surprise, it began to speak.

Crystal was astonished. "I've been watching you for a long time now," said the beautiful flower. "You don't think you're very pretty, do you?"

Crystal's mouth hung open in amazement. "Nno," she stammered. "I'm not pretty at all. I have no friends. I am sad and lonely all the time," she blurted out.

E

"I can help you," said the magic rose sweetly. "I can make you happy and beautiful. I can help you get lots of friends."

"How can you possibly do that?" asked Crystal with wonder.

"Just take one of my magic petals and place it under your pillow tonight. Tomorrow you will be transformed into a beautiful girl," spoke the magic rose.

Of course, Crystal was eager to have these wishes come true. That night, Crystal had a happy feeling inside her. She did all of her homework, helped her mother make dinner, and read to her little sister. Crystal's mother noticed her new attitude right away.

"Crystal, you're in such a pleasant mood tonight. It's so unlike you," said her mother.

"I'm feeling very special tonight," replied Crystal. "It's something secret and exciting." Crystal hurried up to her room and took a petal off the magic rose and carefully placed it under her pillow.

The next morning Crystal woke up to hear the birds chirping outside her window. She jumped out of her bed and ran to the mirror. Sure enough, she looked absolutely beautiful. Her hair was shining, her cheeks were rosy, her eyes a sparkling blue!

"I'm really beautiful," sang Crystal.

She went to her closet and chose her prettiest dress. She brushed her golden hair, placed a headband carefully on her head, and added a smile.

"Good morning," said the magic rose. "You do look beautiful today, Crystal," she said. "Remember that you are special if you believe in yourself. And don't forget to put another petal under your pillow tonight."

Crystal dashed off happily to school. She felt so confident that all the children noticed the change immediately. The girls gathered around her.

"I love your dress," Jessica said.

"Let's play at recess today," said Chrissy.

"Would you like to come to my house after school today?" asked Darcy.

Crystal was feeling so proud and happy. She began to really enjoy life. Every night she remembered to put a rose petal under her pillow and every morning she



woke up feeling happy and beautiful. She continued to make new friends, do great in school, and get along well with her family.

After several days, Crystal realized that there was only one rose petal left. She began to panic. "Magic rose," she frantically called. "What am I to do?"

← **B**

"Believe in yourself, Crystal," replied the rose. "You don't need me anymore," she said calmly. "My life is now over; my beauty and love of life will live on in you," she said. "Continue to believe in yourself, and you will be beautiful and happy for the rest of your life."

← **D**

Crystal took the advice of the wise and beautiful magic rose. Even though the petals were long gone, Crystal continued to believe in herself. She realized that if she felt good about herself, other people would like her. She also realized that when she smiled and brushed her hair, she looked so much prettier. She now had many friends and always took time to be extra nice to everyone around her.

← **B**

The magic rose taught her an important lesson. Although the petals had long disappeared, the message they brought changed Crystal's life forever. She grew up to be happy and beautiful, inside and out.

THE END!

Work Sample & Commentary: *Using the Library Reference Computers* Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to write a set of instructions for a familiar procedure. They were encouraged to find situations beyond the classroom where a set of instructions was needed. The students were asked to pay particular attention to the audience and purpose of their work. The final version of the following work sample that came from this assignment is being used currently in a library to guide students in their research.

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 d Writing: Produce a narrative procedure.

E4 a Conventions: Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language.

E4 b Conventions: Analyze and subsequently revise written work.

What the work shows

E2 d Writing: The student produces a narrative procedure that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- provides a guide to action for a relatively complicated procedure in order to anticipate a reader's needs; creates expectations through predictable structures, e.g., headings; and provides smooth transitions between steps;
- makes use of appropriate writing strategies such as creating a visual hierarchy and using white space and graphics as appropriate;
- includes relevant information;
- excludes extraneous information;
- anticipates problems, mistakes, and misunderstandings that might arise for the reader;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The guide engages the reader by establishing a simple context in the title, i.e., how to use reference computers to conduct research for school tasks.

The creation of the persona of a helpful, non-critical guide who has personal knowledge of the procedure being described lends credibility to the instructions.

(B) The guide anticipates the reader's needs by describing what is on the computer screen and by explaining where to find the arrows that move the cursor, what the cursor looks like, and how to select a folder.

(C) White space and headings are incorporated as guides to the procedure. In addition, single words are used to provide transitions.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Using the Library Reference Computers* Middle School English Language Arts

The guide includes information relevant to a particular type of computer in a specific library.

(D) Problems that the reader might encounter are anticipated in the section on “Helpful Tips.”

E4a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates an 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.

In almost error free writing, the students demonstrated an understanding of the rules of the English language.

The students incorporated several writing strategies to help keep the guide user-friendly. For example, the information is organized into paragraphs and separated by headings and white space. The students used bullet points to delineate the separate items under the “Helpful Tips” section and they also included concrete examples with each set of directions.

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.

(E) The students added information in the writing process, e.g., the early draft has one helpful tip while the final draft includes three tips.

(F) The students deleted selected passages, e.g., the section titled “How to use the Reference Computers” in the early draft was compressed into the section titled “Working in Your Chosen Folder.”

(G) The students clarified a number of passages, e.g., “The following directions will help you find your book” became “The following directions will help you find books after you have chosen a folder.”

Work Sample & Commentary: *Using the Library Reference Computers* Middle School English Language Arts

(A) (H) The students sharpened the focus, e.g., the change of title from “Getting Started” to “Using the Library Reference Computers To Find Books For Your Research” makes the piece specific rather than general.

Final Draft

A →

Using the Library Reference Computers To Find Books For Your Research

Usually the computer is already turned on for you. On the screen there is a big, light green rectangle that reads *inquired by* and *subject, author, and title* in that order. In the bottom right-hand corner there are four arrows that move the cursor or marker up, down, right, and left (exactly like the arrow points). The cursor is a bright blue line that highlights the title of the folder as you move the arrows.

B →

Use the up and down arrows to move the cursor to the folder you choose. Then press enter.

F →

Working in Your Chosen Folder

G →

The following directions will help you find books after you have chosen a folder:

C →

Title

After you choose the Title folder, type the title of the book. If the book you are looking for is in the library, the screen will bring up the author's name, short summary, call number, number of pages, and tell you if it is available or not.

Example: Say you are looking for **The Game**, a book by **R. L. Stine**. Type the title and the screen will show you if the book is in our library and if it is available.

Author

After you choose the Author folder, type the author's name and the screen will show you all the books we have by that author. If you see the book you want in the list, move the

cursor to that title and press enter. The screen will then show you a call number, a short summary, number of pages, title, and subject.

Example: Say you are looking for a book by **Christopher Pike**, but you do not know the title. Type his name into the computer and the screen will show you all the books by him that are available in the library.

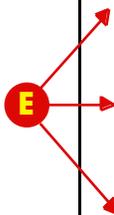
Subject

After you have chosen the Subject folder, type the subject that interests you. Look through the list of books under that subject (use the arrows to move through the list). If you find a book you want, press enter again and the screen will show you the call number, short summary, number of pages, title, and author's name.

Example: Say you are looking for Texas History. Type that in and the screen will show you a long list of different topics on that subject. Of course, you can narrow down your topic. The Alamo or Sam Houston or Ranching will have fewer entries than Texas History, but the entries will be more specific.

Helpful Tips

- To get out of a folder, press escape.
- If you get in a mess, just ask anyone in the library for help. You will not get in trouble since you are just learning and how else would you learn? Usually pressing escape several times will get you out of your mess and back to the first screen.
- If you cannot find books on your subject, try the magazine index. (There is a set of directions for that index also.)



Early Draft

H

Getting Started

Usually the computer is already turned on for you. On the screen there is a big, light green rectangle that says inquired by and subject, author, and title in that order. In the bottom right hand corner there are four arrows that go up, down, right, left use the up and down arrows to move the cursor to go to the folder you want. The cursor is bright blue line that high lights the title of the folder as you move the arrows.

F

How to use the Reference Computers

At the reference computer there are three different folders you can choose from (author, title and subject) to help you find the book you are looking for. The following directions will help you find your book:

G

Title

On the reference computer screen go to the folder that says "Inquired by Title" and press enter. Next type the title of the book into th computer. If we have the book you're looking for in our library it will give you the authors name, short summary, call number, number of pages, and tell you if it is available or not.

Example: Say your looking for The Game a book by R.L. Stine. Type the title and it will show you if the book is in our library

and if it's available.

Author:

On the reference computer screen go to the folder that says "Inquire by Author" and press enter. After you do that, type the authors name and the screen will show you all the books we have by that author. If they have the book you want go to the title and press enter again. When you finish that, you will see on the screen call number, a short summary, number of pages, title, and subject.

Example: For instance say your looking for a book by **Christopher Pike**, but you don't know the title. Type his name into the computer and it will show you all the books we have by him in our library.

Subject

On the reference computer screen go to the folder that says "Inquired by Subject" and press enter. Next type the subject you are looking for. If it lists the book you want, press enter and it will show you all the books we have on that subject. If it has the book you want, press enter again and it will show you the call number, short summary, number of pages, title, and authors name.

Example: Say you're looking for the subject *Texas History*, it will show a long list of different topics on that subject.

A Helpful Tip

- To get out of a folder press the escape key (esc). In the upper left hand corner.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Conformity in Numbers*

Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to write an essay to persuade an audience one way or another on an issue of current significance in the news.

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:

E1 d Reading: Demonstrate a familiarity with public documents.

E2 e Writing: Produce a persuasive essay.

What the work shows

E1 d Reading: The student demonstrates familiarity with a variety of public documents (i.e., documents that focus on civic issues or matters of public policy at the community level and beyond) and produces written or oral work that does one or more of the following:

- identifies the social context of the document;
- identifies the author’s purpose and stance;
- analyzes the arguments and positions advanced and the evidence offered in support of them, or formulates an argument and offers evidence to support it;
- examines or makes use of the appeal of a document to audiences both friendly and hostile to the position presented;
- identifies or uses commonly used persuasive techniques.

The student responded to a matter of public policy that may affect her directly, and yet did so in a manner that engages the issue rather than attacks it irresponsibly. This strategy also maintains the document’s appeal to both friendly and hostile audiences.

The essay analyzes the major argument for advocating school uniforms and identifies some of the possible problems with the argument.

E2 e Writing: The student produces a persuasive essay that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- develops a controlling idea that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment;
- creates an organizing structure that is appropriate to the needs, values, and interests of a specified audience, and arranges details, reasons, examples, and anecdotes effectively and persuasively;
- includes appropriate information and arguments and excludes information and arguments that are irrelevant;

Work Sample & Commentary: *Conformity in Numbers* Middle School English Language Arts

- anticipates and addresses reader concerns and counter-arguments;
- supports arguments with detailed evidence, citing sources of information as appropriate;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) A bleak context is established in the opening sentence that serves to emphasize the negative judgment.

(B) The controlling idea for the argument is established in a thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph.

The essay holds to the structure of the argument identified in the thesis statement, dealing first with the idea of stifled creativity and then with the idea that uniforms do not properly address the issue of violence.

(C) The essay deals directly with the traditional arguments given in support of school uniform policies, particularly in dealing with the issue of violence.

(D) The strong conclusion reiterates the point made in the opening regarding school uniforms, but in a more forceful manner that takes into consideration the argument presented.

Conformity in Numbers

A → Robots. Bleak, perfunctory masses. I feel this is what children will become if forced to wear school uniforms. The idea of school uniforms becoming mandatory in public schools is hardly engaging to me. In fact, I am against the idea, full force. They will stifle creativity, but hardly eliminate any the threat of violence that has aroused in the education populous.

B → School uniforms are barricades, invisible prisons. Children should be nurtured to be different, not mechanically the same. They do not operate on the same level, nor should they have to. Uniforms will make them appear similar, to a dangerous point. Children will not see themselves as "special," but no better than anyone else. They will be without motivation or reason to go beyond what is expected. We will live in a world where we are no better than our comrades. We will become statistics, not judged as individuals, but as numbers. Nameless, faceless, black and white ideas. Not existing together but as one. Children will stop being children. Instead, they will become monotonous automans, working for nothing. There will be nothing to strive for.

C → Again, uniforms will hardly eliminate violence. If people are attacked for jackets, and the school they attend forces mandatory uniforms, other possessions will become target. How are we to know if clothes are motivation for killing? Does drab garb eliminate the hate and animosity people feel towards one another? Is it jealousy of clothes or what they portray? Clothes are material, inanimate. They do not have feelings. On the other hand, the people inside them do. We can not suppress emotion, whether it be good or bad. Uniforms can not, either.

D → I hate to think that we have so lost touch with our children as not to see that it isn't uniforms they need, but love and support. Uniforms will not eliminate the threat of violence. They will only stifle creativity, leaving us barren and vacant. They will confine us into becoming the same. They should not be mandatory in public schools.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Million Man March* Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to write a poem about a significant event in African-American history.

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:

E4b Conventions: Analyze and subsequently revise written work.

E5b Literature: Produce work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

What the work shows³

E5b Literature: The student produces work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

The work explains the significance of the Million Man March through the poetic techniques of repetition, rhyme, rhythm, and organization.

The student organized the poem to follow the sequence of events as they occurred during the march.

(A) The repetition of the phrase “The Million Man March” is used to illustrate the movement and determination of the thousands of African-American men who traveled to Washington for the event.

(B) The student used the idiom “They came together” to not only denote the meeting in Washington, DC, but to also connote unity. This is echoed throughout the poem.

(C) The student provided a sense of closure to the work by ending it with the refrain “The Million Man March.”

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.

³ This poem incorporates many of the elements that distinguish poetry from prose, such as precise word choice, condensed form, use of sensory imagery, figurative language, rhyme, and rhythm.

Work Sample & Commentary: *The Million Man March* Middle School English Language Arts

The student rearranged the organizational structure of the work by combining phrases and deleting some of the repetitions of “The Million Man March.” These changes help to slow down the rhythm and keep the reader focused on the main ideas of the poem.

(D) The student added a new stanza to the poem. This stanza describes the events of the day much more specifically—hearing speakers and participating in the activities of the event. This addition changed the structure of the poem making it more closely mirror the events of the march and explain the motivating factors behind the event. This specificity demonstrates the student’s understanding of the event.

Final Draft

5/27/97

The Million Man March

By: _____

It was no mystery.

A The Million Man March
Black men made history
The Million Man March

B They came together
They braved the weather
They came in unity
from different communities
The Million Man March

D They came to acknowledge,
and hear the voices
of their leaders and elders
and make their own choices.

The Million Man March

They came to atone,
and take back home.

The knowledge, the power
that will grow like a tower,
hour by hour

C The Million Man March.

Early Draft

THE MILLION MAN MARCH

By _____

**It was no mystery.
The Million Man March
Black Men made History.
The Million Man March
They came together.
The Million Man March
They braved the weather.
The Million Man March
They came in unity.
The Million Man March
From different communities.
The Million Man March
They came to hear.
The Million Man March
They had no fear.
The Million Man March
They came to earn.
The Million Man March
What some never learned.
The Million Man March
They came to atone.
The Million Man March
And take back home.
The Million Man March
The knowledge, the power,
The Million Man March
that will grow like a tower,
The Million Man March
hour by hour.**

Work Sample & Commentary: *Mama*

Middle School English Language Arts

The task

This student wrote a poem for Mothers' Day to be read aloud in church. The student brought the poem to school to be included in her English Language Arts writing portfolio.

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:

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

What the work shows⁴

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

The student used free verse and figurative language to create a poem that pays tribute to the sacrifices made by a mother for her children.

(A) The work effectively employs metaphors to create powerful images and evoke strong emotions in the reader. The metaphor in the first verse compares a mother's breast to a soft pillow. This image of comfort and softness evokes feelings of love, rest, and security.

(B) The student used words whose connotations give life and beauty to the images described in the work. The poem conveys the depth of feeling that is held by a child for a mother.

(C) The breaks in rhyme scheme in the poem sharpen the focus of the verses and separate the images. Rhyme is used to give the poem rhythm and to speed up the flow of the work.

The work is presented in its original handwritten form. There are some errors of spelling (e.g., "sheild" instead of "shield") and spacing (e.g., at the bottom of the first page). However, these errors do not detract from the overall quality of the work.

⁴ This poem incorporates many of the elements that distinguish poetry from prose, such as the use of the line as the formal unit, precise word choice, emotional content, condensed form, figurative language, and personalized symbolism.

Mama

A → The pillow of her breast
upon which I would rest
As a little girl
My Nubian Queen
Guardian angel

B → and the ~~ceem~~
Constructor of my world
Her unbearable, unfold story
That she always did
Hide.

C →

As her head is bowed low
Ashamed
left only with the element of
Pride
The Pride
that has haunted our ancestors
for generations and years
That has brought halted
laughter
to replace forbidden tears
Yet
She stood as a strong woman
Tending only to her children's
cares
Forgetting her childhood
her old chocolate coated
Peers

Work Sample & Commentary: *Mama*
Middle School English Language Arts

Waiting for her children to
escape
the world in sleep
Sitting alone in grandma's rocker
only to silently weep
The gentleness of her smile
when I'm all
alone
The reassurance of her eyes
when papa wasn't
home
The shield of her words
when the tide of trouble
rolls in
As her arms envelope
my body
And my soul is at peace
within
The bloodiness of the battle
I never imaged
I could win
When my teenage years
swept by
And there was
no time to listen
In ^{the} bittersweet of
a life time
Corrupted with sin,

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London* Middle School English Language Arts

The task⁵

Students were asked to write a fictitious account of a trip to a foreign country in order to learn relevant facts about that country. Students were asked to present their research in the form of a travel log. The travel log included both factual and fictitious information. The sources used for this task included several brochures on England, an encyclopedia, an interview with a teacher, and maps from Encarta, a software encyclopedia. In this work, the student takes the role of a criminal attorney who is a New York State lottery winner enroute to London.

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 material.

E4a Conventions: Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language.

E5b Literature: Produce work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of the genre.

What the work shows⁶

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.

(A) The student gathered information from a variety of sources to create a fictional travel log of a trip to London. This demonstrates that the student was able to take information in an assortment of forms and incorporate it smoothly into the narrative.

(B) The work incorporates relevant historical facts such as information about the Tower of London and St. Paul's Cathedral.

⁵ At first glance, "Trip to London" and "Ciao, Italia!" (page 216) appear to be similar. However, the task differentiates the purpose of each piece. "Ciao, Italia!" uses information as an organizing structure whereas "Trip to London" uses facts in the service of a story.

These work samples reflect the variety of tasks that may produce standard-setting work.

⁶ This sample of student work has many of the elements of novels that use journal entries as the basis for the narrative. The work is a first person narrative with an informal tone and focuses on a single character's travels or experiences.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London* Middle School English Language Arts

(C) Information about the criminal system, which is in keeping with the persona of the narrator, is interwoven with the episode of the attempted robbery and the visit to the Central Criminal Court.

(D) The descriptions of elements of the English culture, which are derived from factual sources, are incorporated into the travel log in an authentic and believable manner. This strengthens the content of the travel log and sustains reader interest. It also demonstrates the student’s capacity to expand and develop information using the plausible likes and dislikes of the narrator.

(E) The student made the connection between fast food in London and fast food in the United States to share an understanding of the newly acquired information.

(F) The student demonstrated an understanding of the value of the British currency through the purchases mentioned throughout the log.

E4 a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates an 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.

Throughout this work, the student demonstrates, in virtually error free writing, the ability to use a variety of sentence constructions, appropriate punctuation, and the ability to manage the conventions of grammar and usage.

The student used a number of linguistic strategies to convey the mood of the story. For example:

(G) the use of the present tense in the first journal entries gives the story a sense of excitement and immediacy;

(B) switching into the past tense in places gives the journal entries some variety and adds authenticity; and

(I) the use of British vocabulary and names gives voice and credibility to the work.

There are some errors of punctuation. For example, in the first sentence of the March 11 entry, the student put the period after the quotation marks instead of before. These errors do not detract from the overall quality of the work.

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

The personal account takes the form of a travel log of a visit to London. The information is presented as journal entries organized in chronological order. The student incorporated geographical, historical, cultural, and popular information along with fictitious anecdotes into a narrative with a beginning and an end. The student used a variety of techniques to keep the reader’s interest including:

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London*

Middle School English Language Arts

- (F) developing a persona for the narrator;
- (G) engaging the reader with the narrator's excitement in the first entry;
- (H) tension and drama; and
- (I) choice of vocabulary words and names that are traditionally associated with the British upper class.

8-334
SPRING

March 8, 1997

G → I'm so excited! My flight leaves at 7:30 tonight for London, England. I already have the car service reserved and they are going to pick me up at 4:30. I must be at the airport two hours ahead of takeoff for security check and baggage inspection. I'm flying American Airlines from JFK and will land tomorrow morning at Heathrow Airport. I hope they show a great movie on the flight. I will be staying at the Cumberland Hotel. I hear it's a great hotel and will cost me \$200. per night. Of course since I won the Lottery money is no object.

A → I'm now on the plane and my watch says 10:30 PM, but I really am not sure of the time. We're over the Atlantic Ocean now headed directed for England. Our flight path took us from New York to Boston, Massachusetts, to Bangor Maine and then into Canada and finally the Canadian province of Newfoundland. That was the end of the land portion of the flight. Since we are flying east, the sky will soon begin to slowly get light. I really will miss a full night traveling this direction. They are about to show the movie which will be Selena. How lucky can I be! These first class seats are terrific. I'll never again fly coach. The service, food and beverage selection is superb and the seats are divinely comfortable. After the film, I'll take a short nap, have a little breakfast and prepare for London.

March 9, 1997

What a terrific flight. We've landed and I'm waiting to exit the plane. The movie was excellent. I cried at the end. I'll write again tonight after my first full day in London.

March 9, 1997

I love my hotel. The Cumberland is so lovely and my suite of rooms is magnificent. I have a lovely view, a livingroom area and a spacious bedroom. I was tired from the flight so I had room service deliver a small lunch and a cup of famous English tea. Then I took a nap and later went out for my first look around.

B →

I went to the Tower of London. It is a massive building founded by William the Conqueror around the year 1066. It has a bloody past and contains a superb collection of the priceless Crown Jewels. It is guarded by the “Beefeaters” a company of men founded by Henry VII in 1485. I saw the largest diamond ever cut -530 carats_ and many other incredible pieces of jewelry. I took many pictures of the grounds surrounding the Tower.

By this time I was starving and went back to the hotel to prepare for dinner. My former teacher Ms. Lipman used to live in London and she arranged for her friends to show me around. I met them for the first time tonight and had dinner at their house. In order to get there, I took the Underground which is our subway. I took the Piccadilly Line five stops to their house. They are a very nice couple with two really sweet children. They cooked a wonderful English meal of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. I plan to see them again before I leave.

March 10, 1997

Today I went to the Victoria and Albert Museum. I loved walking around the rooms and looking at the different displays and decorations in the collection. My favorite was the elaborate furniture and woodwork collection. I had a lunch of fish and chips. English people eat this like we Americans eat McDonalds. Tonight I ate at Simpsons-in-the-Strand and had oysters in bacon on toast, wild mushroom soup, saddle of lamb and English apple pie. I staggered back to my hotel and watched some English TV. It was some sort of drama, but I could hardly understand what they were saying. I can't believe it's the same language. What a great day

E →

← **D**

March 11, 1997

Today I “shopped ‘till I dropped”. I first went to Harrads which is the greatest department I have ever been in. Then I bought a \$700 coat at Burberrys, 6 cashmere sweaters at Westaway and Westaway and numerous crafts from the British Crafts Centre. Am I lucky that I won the lottery! I looked at some English china for my mother, but decided to leave it for another day since I was getting tired. My new British friends are going to introduce me to their wealthy bachelor cousin named Maurice Brenton-Jones.

F

I

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London*

Middle School English Language Arts

March 12, 1997

I had the most fabulous time last night. Maurice was certainly an English gentleman through and through. He took me to the most beautiful places - places that sparkled with lights, beauty and interesting British people. The restaurant we went to was on a boat and the dinner cruise had entertainment as it traveled down the Thames River to Greenwich. I ate oyster stew, rare roast beef, delicious vegetables and salad. We toasted our new friendship with a bottle of rare French champagne. The champagne cost 300 pounds! I couldn't believe that I met not only a handsome and intelligent young man, but a fabulously wealthy young man. After the dinner cruise, we went to the opera at the Royal Opera House. Only the finest operas and ballets take place at the Royal. Then we went to a private British dancing club with the largest casino I have ever seen. He took me back to my hotel at 4AM and left me with a wonderful handshake. He is a true gentleman.

A

D

E

March 13, 1997

Wow! I slept the day away after my wonderful night on the town. When I finally awoke, I watched some British TV and found it very interesting. I took a short walk and had some fish and chips for dinner.

D

March 14, 1997

Ms. Lipman called me to say that Maurice Brenton-Jones thanked her for introducing him to such a wonderful young woman. She told me that he had no idea that I was a New York State lottery winner and therefore a millionaire on my own. Now I know he really likes me for ME and not for my MONEY. He called me soon after and we have a date for the 18th. Today I did more shopping and decided to buy a lovely cashmere scarf for my former guidance counselor and law teacher, Jane Lazarus. After all now that I'm a successful young attorney practicing both in New York and Los Angeles, I do want to remember her. I bought my mother the English China (Wedgewood) and hope she likes it. By the time I ordered all the extra pieces, the bill came to several thousand pounds. I went to the exhibit at the Tate Gallery, a museum famous for its modern art. I went back to the hotel and then out to dinner at a local Indian restaurant called Mitali. I must admit that I thought of Maurice quite a bit today and I'm glad he is an international investment banker who spends a great deal of time in the States.

F

D

E

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London* Middle School English Language Arts

March 15, 1997

This morning was a gorgeous day. The sun was shining and I decided to take a walk in Regent's Park. The park is attractively landscaped and I enjoyed my stroll. I spent a little time at the zoo, but decided to move on since there is so much more to see in London. I visited St. Paul's Cathedral which was built after the Great Fire of 1666. It was built by Sir Christopher Wren and is known for its beauty throughout the world. I then visited Westminster Abbey and the famed Poet's Corner. Many great writers of English literature are buried here. Westminster Cathedral is very impressive. I treated myself to high tea at Brown's Hotel. I had a pot of delicious tea, wonderful tea sandwiches, scones with cream, and fabulous little cakes. Tea is served between 3:30 and 5PM. I strolled through the Kensington area after my tea and did a little more shopping at Harvey Nicols and Marks and Spenser. I bought several pieces of China and since I enjoyed my tea so much, I stocked up on some tea to take home. Marks and Spenser has a great selection of English tea. I could hardly believe that I had dinner plans for 8PM with Ms. Lipman's friends. However, I found myself looking forward to spending time with them and going to another fabulous English restaurant. We had dinner at the Ritz which was very elegant and very delicious.

B →

← **D**

I

March 16, 1997

Today I went to the Barbican Centre which is a housing and social development with walkways between many levels. There are many beautiful gardens and theatres. It was lovely and since 1955 has been renovated. Then I passed by the National Theatre which has a superb interior complex. Many famous plays and famous actors are at the National Theatre. I walked around Piccadilly and visited Fortnum and Mason which I guess could be compared to a classy Macy's. However, the food department at Fortnum and Mason is unbelievable. I ate Italian food at Bianchi's and enjoyed some different dishes. On my way home to the hotel, I had a dramatic experience. I felt someone behind me, but each time I turned around I saw no one. Yet, I was certain that I was being followed. It was my years of law training in school and the fact that I am a criminal attorney now that gives me the ability to "feel" danger. Was I ever correct! Suddenly I felt a tug on my purse and I was jostled by young lady who believe it or not, looked almost exactly like me. Of course, I had no intention of giving up my purse and my years of martial arts training came in handy. In one minute I had her on the ground and was calling for the authorities. A policeman arrived quickly and was I surprised to learn that English police are not armed. There are very few illegal weapons in England. The woman was booked at the station. I was questioned as to whether I press charges. I decided to speak with her and find out what led her to do this awful deed. She showed no emotion or compassion so I went ahead and pressed charges. I'll probably have to fly back to London for the trial, but won't mind at all. I love this city even though I had this little incident.

F

C

D →

H

Work Sample & Commentary: *Trip to London*

Middle School English Language Arts

C

March 17, 1997

This morning I visited Old Bailey which is now the Central Criminal Court. For many years it was the site of many horrid executions. Reform has changed that now and the new building (1900-1907) is all that is left. The old building was constructed in the Middle Ages. People still line up or, as they say in England “queue up” to watch a trial. After a lovely lunch at a charming restaurant called Food For Thought at 31 Neal Street near Covent Garden, I strolled through the Covent Garden area. There are many trendy little shops and flower stalls. It was a fine afternoon. Tonight I went to the theatre to see a new play called “Art”. It is a great hit in London and will probably be in New York soon. It’s about the art world and how some people pretend to like paintings just because the fancy art critics say the paintings are important.

March 18, 1997

A → I spent the day with Maurice and it was truly unforgettable. He picked me up at the hotel early this morning and we drove outside of London into the countryside. He drives a beautiful Jaguar, but I must admit I was horrified at how fast everyone on the motorway drove. He was driving “slowly” at 75mph and every car on the road was passing us. We drove to the town of Bath which is 116 miles or 186km from London. He showed me the magnificent Georgian homes with their gorgeous views of the surrounding hills. We had a fine lunch at one of the most famous restaurants in England called the Hole in The Wall. Along the main street were many wonderful shops and I picked up some last minute gifts for friends in New York. Maurice and I drove back to London and he surprised me with an invitation to meet his parents at their home. After all this was my last night in London and he told me that he had already mentioned my name to them. I insisted that he drop me at the hotel so that I could relax, shower, and change. Two hours later he picked me up again and we drove to Mayfair to meet the family. I admit I was a nervous wreck, but they were so kind and interesting that I soon felt at home. We talked about America and of course New York. They also were very interested in my opinions about London. I invited them to visit me in New York. Well, it was time for me to return to the hotel and pack for my flight home. Our goodbye this time was a little bit more than a handshake, but I must say that Maurice is a perfect gentleman and I look forward to seeing him in New York.

March 19, 1997

Check in at Heathrow and a good flight home followed by a traffic jam on the LIE from Kennedy. Some things never change. It was a trip of a lifetime, but only the first trip of a lifetime. I know that I will travel all over the world and maybe someday I’ll write a travel book. Right now I need to unpack, sleep, and get ready to face the real world -- that of a high powered attorney. I must remember to write a note to all my teachers at my old school _____ thanking them for teaching me to do the right things, study hard, have goals and read, read, read.

*****ADDITIONAL NOTES - TRIP TO LONDON*****

I can't believe that I forgot to mention my visit to Buckingham Place which I saw the Changing of the Guards. It's an amazing thing to watch those brightly dressed soldiers march up and down without changing their facial expressions. I had hoped to get a glimpse of the Queen but of course she was nowhere to be seen. They told me that she was visiting the country of Australia this month.

I also visited the British Museum, but it is so huge that I could only see a few important exhibits. There are these famous Elgin Marbles which were brought from Greece years ago. They are incredible to look at. I wish I had more time there, but they'll always be a next visit.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind* Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students read the following books:

- *The Sign of the Beaver* by E. G. Speare;
- *My Brother Sam is Dead* by James L. Collier and Christopher Collier;
- *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester;
- *Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Jeanette Winter;
- *Who is Carrie?* by James L. Collier and Christopher Collier;
- *My People Could Fly* by Virginia Hamilton;
- *In Their Own Words, 1619 - 1865* by Milton Meltzer.

Then they were asked to produce a historical novel based on the assigned readings and the Prentice Hall textbook, *The American Nation*. A collaborative approach was utilized with individual groups brainstorming and writing specific chapters. The students used consensus to reconcile differences encountered in the production of the novel.

This work sample is made up of excerpts from “Friendship is Colorblind” which consists of eight chapters and an epilogue.

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:

E1 b Reading: Read and comprehend at least four books about one issue or subject, or four books by a single writer, or four books in one genre.

E4 a Conventions: Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the English language.

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

What the work shows⁷

E1 b Reading: The student reads and comprehends at least four books (or book equivalents) about one issue or subject, or four books by a single writer, or four books in one genre, and produces evidence of reading that:

- makes and supports warranted and responsible assertions about the texts;
- supports assertions with elaborated and convincing evidence;
- draws the texts together to compare and contrast themes, characters, and ideas;

⁷This student work contains many of the elements of a novel. It is an extended narrative incorporating many characters connected by significant events and localities. “Friendship is Colorblind” is also a work of historical fiction in that it is set in another period and deals with the lifestyles and problems of that time.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind* Middle School English Language Arts

- makes perceptive and well developed connections;
- evaluates writing strategies and elements of the author’s craft.

The students read seven books about slavery in the United States from 1619 to the early 1900’s. The depth of their understanding of this historical period is made evident by the situations, incidents, experiences, and characters they created in the story. By portraying the slave owners as people with different attitudes toward, and relationships with, the slaves they owned, the students were able to stay true to historical fact and show the complexities of human nature. The capture of the African children by the slave catchers, the trip across the Middle Passage to America in slave ships, the slave auctions, and the continuous selling of slaves from one owner to another, were all common occurrences as documented in the slave narratives of this period. The students’ attention to detail, such as the references to the shackles, nets, and the conditions on the slave ship help to draw the reader into the story and make the experiences of the characters believable.

E4 a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language: The student demonstrates an 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 students managed the conventions of grammar, paragraph structure, usage, and punctuation consistently and correctly throughout their extended narrative. The students used a variety of sentence structures, from simple to complex, and sentence lengths to fit the mood and action of the story.

The work contains some errors. For example, there is a spelling error in the second chapter (“go” instead of “got”). Since the students avoided similar errors throughout the extended narrative, it can be assumed that this is a slip rather than an error. There are also a couple of places where the comma or period is outside the quotation marks. In the majority of cases, quotation punctuation is used correctly.

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

The work demonstrates the students’ ability to manage the elements of the novel and produce a literary work in the genre of historical fiction.

(A) The title of the first chapter, “Kidnapped To America,” engages the reader’s curiosity initially by appealing to human interest. The work continues to involve the reader by depicting an ironically peaceful scene which the reader, because of the title, strongly suspects is about to be disrupted. These are conventions commonly used by professional novelists.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind*

Middle School English Language Arts

(B) The students incorporated historical details into their narrative. For example, the realistic descriptions of Mr. Walker’s mistreatment and killing of slaves, and the beatings of Hakeem and Betsy, reflect the horrors of the actual time period of the story.

(C) The students used fictitious characters as a method of dramatizing historical information. (In this paragraph, Mr. Walker is mistakenly referred to as “Mr. Smith.”)

(D) The work balances historical fact and details, with suspenseful, fast-paced narrative.

The story, narrated from an omniscient point of view, is organized into three sections—life in Africa before slavery, life in America during slavery, and the return to Africa and freedom. The conflicts in the story are both external, such as the shackles and whips used to physically restrain and break the Africans, and internal, evidenced by Hakeem’s struggle over his friendship with the slave owner’s blind son, Joseph. The conflicts are resolved in the tragic and climactic ending of the story. The recurring theme of the enduring bond of friendship is incorporated throughout the work.

The work illustrates a variety of character constructs, from Hakeem, who shows a range of emotions and attitudes in response to the events and circumstances he finds himself in, to Mr. Walker, who embodies the cruelty and horror of slavery. The character of Mrs. Smith develops in the course of the narrative from a woman concerned only for the well-being of her family to someone who could stand up for Hakeem and his friends in front of the town’s people.

(E) As in professional novels, the students incorporated a large number of characters into their story. These characters are all connected by significant events, localities, and, in some cases, experiences.

(F) The epilogue provides closure to the novel and returns the action to the starting point—in Nigeria.

(G) Also noteworthy is the students’ incorporation of the cliff-hanger into their narrative. Each chapter ends at a climactic point in the action of the story. This technique, used often by serial television shows, keeps the audience engaged in the long story line.

The students also used a variety of story writing techniques to enhance and develop their narrative:

(H) metaphor;

(I) foreshadowing;

(J) irony;

(K) dialogue; and

(L) descriptive language.



1.

Kidnapped To America



It was a hot, humid day in the summer of 1650 when Hakeem, a young African youth, was sent outside by his mother to pick some mangoes, bananas, and kiwis from the long line of tropical trees which grew on the shoreline of Nigeria. Hakeem didn't want to go but went anyway because it gave him a chance to see Shanika, a pretty young girl who lived in the village..

Other children were also picking fruits on the shore. Hakeem saw a large tree that had bananas so ripe that it made him think that his mother would be happy if he picked them. Hakeem started to climb the tree. His long, strong legs, the color of mahogany, made it easy for him to climb to the top. Everyone crowded around the tree to watch Hakeem climb. When he got to the top, he saw something in the wide ocean.

"Look at that! I wonder what that is?" He pointed towards the sea. The children gave their attention to where Hakeem pointed. They saw something that they had never seen before. Hakeem jumped to the ground and ran to the shore. The strange object was drawing closer. Soon it became clear to Hakeem that it was a ship. It was a huge sailing ship made of rough wooden planks.

All the children were standing at the coastline when the ship was anchoring. Hakeem saw Shanika and walked over to her. He looked into her coal-black eyes. She asked, "What do you think the ship is doing here, Hakeem?"

"Do you want to find out?" Hakeem asked with a dare in his voice. Shanika and Hakeem walked closer to examine the ship. The children followed them because they trusted Hakeem who was a smart boy and the son of the chief. They couldn't imagine that he would lead them into danger.



They were all staring at the huge vessel when suddenly, a voice said, "Welcome, children. Would you like to see the inside of the ship?" The person who owned the voice was a stout, friendly-looking man but Hakeem had a nagging suspicion that something was wrong.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind* Middle School English Language Arts

K

“Let’s go, Shanika “, he said in a low voice.

“Are you afraid, Hakeem?” Shanika teased him.

“No, I’m not. Don’t you ever say I am!”

“Then climb up here and prove it!”

“Only for a minute. Then we’ll go, Hakeem answered. He boarded the ship and joined the rest of the children.

The friendly man introduced himself as Mr. Smith. Then, suddenly, he yelled to the crew, “Get the shackles. We got them!”

“Shackles? What are those?” Shanika wondered. In an instant, white men came running towards the children with ropes and nets. The children screamed and struggled to get away from them. But it was too late. They finally realized that their lives would never be the same. The children were forced to wear chains. They were shoved under the deck where their voyage to America would begin.

D

Weeks passed. Those weeks were filled with pain and suffering. The food the children ate was either spoiled or filled with insects. During the day, some sang. Others moaned. At night, all cried for their mothers. Two children died. Was it malnutrition or disease? No one knew. It didn’t matter. Each one thought that they all would die soon anyway.

H

Hakeem was separated from Shanika and forced to work for the ship’s captain. This was actually an easier job and he felt guilty, constantly worrying about how Shanika was doing in the hell beneath the deck.

L

One evening while Hakeem was on deck , getting fresh water for the captain, he saw dark clouds building across the ocean. A great storm is coming, he thought to himself as raindrops began to pour from the clouds. Within minutes, lightning flashed and thunder rumbled.

I

The captain yelled to his son, Joseph, a small, brown-haired 16 year-old boy, who was on his father’s ship to learn the sailing trade. “Lower the sails, boy. A storm is going to hit!”

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind*

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The ship rocked back and forth. Joseph struggled to lower the sails. As the ship rocked violently, Joseph stumbled and knocked his head on the mast. Rain was pouring across the deck. The wind was howling through the sails. Joseph was about to fall off the ship when Hakeem rushed to his aid. He pulled Joseph away from the railing. He helped him to his cabin. Joseph was dizzy and his head hurt greatly. After he opened his eyes, his shouts could be heard all over the ship, “I can’t see! I can’t see!”

K

Hakeem was alarmed. He tried to calm Joseph down. “Who are you? Who saved me?”

“Me, Hakeem, your father’s personal helper,” Hakeem answered.

“YOU saved me. I owe you my life. I am very grateful. What is going to happen to me now? I’m blind. I feel so alone. Please, don’t leave me.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll not leave you”, Hakeem reassured him.

When the storm finally passed, Joseph sent Hakeem to get his father. The early dawning light was a peaceful end to the storm and the beginning of a friendship between Joseph and Hakeem that would change both of their lives forever.

When Hakeem brought Captain Smith to the cabin where Joseph lay, his son told him the story of how Hakeem had saved him. Then, Joseph told his father the awful truth that he had lost his eyesight. He was answered with a sudden burst of swearing and cries of “Nonsense!” But when he saw his son’s blank stare he realized that it was indeed true. He finally accepted the news of his blinded son and put his hand on Joseph’s shoulder. “I’m sorry, Son. It was just such a shock! Is it true that Hakeem saved your life?”

“Yes, Father. It is”, said Joseph with a grateful tone in his voice.

“I want you to be my son’s slave from now on. I want you to take good care of him. If you do, I promise you that you will be well taken care of.”

Hakeem took pity on this poor boy and agreed to take good care of him. He hoped that in this way he could maybe get some better treatment for Shanika and himself. Just as he had these thoughts, a voice called out, “Land!”

G

2.

Blinded

“Land ho! Land ho!” shouted the sailor from the top of the mast.

“Prepare to anchor the ship,” commanded Captain Smith as he guided his son, Joseph, off of the ship. Although he was being led by the arm, Joseph stumbled as he walked down the gangplank.

“Father, I need Hakeem to take me to Mother as soon as possible.”

“How can I do that? How can I trust one of the slaves to take you to Mother?”

“But, Father, he risked his life to save mine. He wouldn’t harm me. I’m sure of it.”

So Hakeem was chosen to guide Joseph home. When they go to the Smith house, they knocked on the door. “Mother, are you there?” asked Joseph in a sad voice.

“What’s wrong? What happened?” asked Mrs. Smith as she ran to the door of this well-taken care of home.

“I don’t how to tell you this. But there was a bad storm at sea. The ship was rocking back and forth and I hit my head against the mast of the ship. When I opened my eyes, I realized I couldn’t see anymore.”



“I can’t believe this! My poor boy! Well, are you alright otherwise?”

“Yes, Mother.”

“Who’s this boy with you?”

“This is the slave Father chose to take care of me. His name is Hakeem.”

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind*

Middle School English Language Arts

“Now, you don’t need him anymore. I’m here to take care of you.”
“But, Mother, you don’t understand. Hakeem is my friend. He saved my life. I owe my life to him. I don’t want to get rid of him. He can help me live with my blindness.

“Do you want anything to eat or drink, Son?”

“Yes, please bring me some tea and biscuits.”

As Mrs. Smith came back in the room, bringing food and drinks, Captain Smith arrived home. “Sarah, I’m home”, he called out. They hugged and cried as they wondered what the future would bring for their only child.

As the weeks passed, the Smith family adjusted to a new way of life. Joseph and Hakeem were inseparable. They talked about their lives before they knew each other.

Joseph wanted to learn all about Hakeem’s native land. Although it was painful, Hakeem told him about the freedom and beauty of Nigeria. Joseph told Hakeem that his childhood was boring. “I had to go to school.”

“What is school?” Hakeem asked.

“Well, school is a place where you learn how to run a plantation and own slaves.”

“What are slaves?”

“You are a slave.”

“Why?”

“Because you have no freedom. You belong to me. I’m your master.”

“Why do you do this?”

“My people need help with the work around the land.”

“What about my people? What about my land?” asked Hakeem in a sad voice.

A few weeks later, Captain Smith had to go on a voyage to the West Indies. One day in the fall, a messenger came to the Smith house with the sad news that Mr. Smith had died in a shipwreck.

Mrs. Smith had suffered another shock. For weeks, she walked around saying, “I can’t believe he’s dead. What will we do?” Finally, she made a decision. She spoke to Joseph and Hakeem one night after dinner. “I’m sorry but I have no choice. We have to sell Hakeem. We have no money since you father died.”



3.

On The Run

Joseph protested, “You can’t sell Hakeem. Father said I could keep him. He wouldn’t have wanted you to sell him. He’s taken good care of me.”

Mother insisted, “But, Honey, we have no money to survive. If we sell Hakeem, we’ll be able to buy what we need.”

Joseph threatened, “If he goes, I’ll go too.”

Mrs. Smith pleaded, “Don’t leave me, Joe. You’re all I have.”

As Joseph felt his way out of the room, he turned to his mother and said, “Remember, you put this on yourself.”

Mr. Walker, a tall, skinny man with a mean, vicious face, visited the house a few days later to find out if Mrs. Smith had any slaves to sell, since three of his slaves had recently died. What he didn’t tell her was that they had died as a result of the cruel way he treated them. Mrs. Smith told him about Hakeem. “I don’t want to sell Hakeem. My son doesn’t want me to sell him. He has been a good friend to Joseph and me but I need the money.”



Mr. Smith couldn’t believe what he was hearing. “How could you be a friend to a slave? He is not human. He is property. I can’t understand your way of thinking. It would be, to me, like having a table or a chair for a friend. Mrs. Smith saw that Mr. Walker could not understand so they began to talk about the price. “If you ask me, he’s only worth about \$200”, said Mr. Walker. “I’m going to have my hands full getting him back in shape to do field work after the way he’s practically had the run of your house.”

“But I need to sell him for \$300”, answered Mrs. Smith. I was counting on that money to survive.”

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind*

Middle School English Language Arts

“I don’t really care what you need the money for. \$200 is my final offer”, said Mr. Walker, suddenly becoming angry. Hakeem overheard this conversation because he was working in the next room waiting for Joseph to wake up from a nap. He decided right then that he had to run away.

When Joseph awoke from his nap, Hakeem told him of his plan. Joseph cried, “Please take me with you. I can’t live here without you.”

Hakeem tried to talk him out of wanting to come with him. “You have a mother who takes care of you. Unlike me. I know what it means to leave your home and your family and never see them again. Believe me, you don’t want to do it. Besides, it will be hard to travel with me because you are blind.”

Joseph didn’t want to listen. He said, “I want to come with you. I don’t want to be here without you. My mother has never really accepted my blindness and now that my father is dead, she is more concerned with paying bills than with my happiness. We can escape to Canada. I can help you. I know people. I know the land. I have money to buy food. If we’re stopped, we can pretend that you are my slave and we are traveling together. Take me with you. You can leave me if I get in your way.”

Hakeem felt sorry for Joseph. He said, “Get ready. We’ll leave at sunset.

At sunset, when Joseph and Hakeem ran, it wasn’t long before a slavecatcher named Billy Joe caught them and brought them back to Mr. Walker.



4.

Cruel Mr. Walker

Billy Joe was a short, fat, red-faced man who enjoyed his job. He put chains on Hakeem's hands and feet. They were so tight that his veins were popping out. He tried to tell him that they were too tight but every time he began to speak, he was whipped again. He was attached to other slaves who had been caught. They stumbled over each other as they walked. Occasionally one would fall, but a quick flash of the whip would bring him up to his feet and the line would move on.

E

Joseph had tried to tell the story that he was merely traveling with his slave. But Mr. Walker had warned the slave catcher that the Smiths had treated Hakeem as a friend and not a slave. Furthermore, he had said, since they had taken the money for Hakeem and then probably helped him escape, they were thieves who could not be trusted.

Finally, they arrived at the Walker farm. The slave catcher turned Hakeem over to Mr. Walker who paid him for his trouble. There, Hakeem saw Mr. Walker's stepdaughter, Betsy, a tall, slim girl with curly, brown hair, blue eyes and soft pale skin. Her mother had died the winter before and she tried her best to run the household and deal with her cruel stepfather. As Hakeem looked up, his gaze settled on Betsy's beautiful face.

Mr. Walker noticed this and grabbed Hakeem by the arm. "How dare you look at my daughter?", screamed Mr. Walker. "I'll teach you your place if it kills me!" With this, he tied Hakeem to a post and began to whip him.

Hakeem was shocked by this outburst and asked, "Why are you doing this to me? I did nothing wrong"

B

Mr. Walker said in a vicious voice, "I'm gonna show you who's the BOSS!" He ripped off Hakeem's shirt and began to whip him even harder. As he was hitting him, he sneered, "This is not the Smith's house. You're not a guest in my home. I own you just like if you were a dog or a horse. I whip horses and kick dogs and I will do the same to you."

E

Betsy was in her room brushing her hair. She heard the sound of yelling and looked out the window. She saw her stepfather beating Hakeem. She ran down the stairs as fast as she could, swung the door open and ran into the yard. Betsy tried to stop Mr. Walker from beating Hakeem but he was too strong. He just said, "This doesn't concern you. Get into that house now." But Betsy would not listen. Finally, her stepfather took her by the arm and dragged her into the house.

By this time, Hakeem was unconscious because of the severe beating, but slowly he was coming back to the sound of Betsy screaming, "Don't let him hurt me! He's going to kill me!"

He also heard Mr. Walker yell, "Your mother is not here to protect you anymore! How dare you try to be friends with that animal?"

8.

The Price of Freedom

F

As time went on, they got more and more tired and hungrier and hungrier. Shanika was being supported by Hakeem and Betsy was leading Joseph. She limped along in pain and winced with every step. Every so often, they stopped and rested. During one of these rest stops, Betsy asked Hakeem. “How is Shanika?”

“She’s not doing well,” Hakeem said in a worried whisper. “But we must be going now. We can’t be caught.”

“No, Hakeem. please, just a little longer,” said Shanika. Hakeem nodded and sat down again.

Suddenly, they heard voices. Betsy said in a worried voice, “Who can that be?”

Hakeem picked up Shanika and Betsy grabbed Joseph’s hand and they ran into the bushes.

But it was too late. The voices got closer. Then, out of nowhere, three slave catchers burst into the clearing. They yelled for the young people to stop but the three knew that they could not. A man behind them opened fire. A bullet came blazing out of a large barrel. It hit Hakeem in the back of his shoulder. He fell to the ground in pain. Since Shanika had no support, she too fell. Joseph called out for Hakeem. Hakeem tried to warn Joseph to get down, but the words wouldn’t come out.

As for Betsy, she ran directly into another group of slave catchers who had just come into the clearing. She fell hard to the ground and her face hit the dirt. Joseph was still spinning in circles, trying to hear a familiar voice. All he could hear was screaming and shouting and people warning him to stand still. But Joseph ran forward, trying to get to Hakeem. Billy Joe thought that he was being attacked, so he opened fire. Joseph fell backward. His last words were, “Hakeem? Hakeem?”

Everything went into slow motion for Betsy, Hakeem and Shanika. They choked on their tears. Joseph’s death hurt more than their wounds. The

Work Sample & Commentary: *Friendship is Colorblind* Middle School English Language Arts

slave catchers made Hakeem carry the body of his friend. Betsy and Shanika were tied together and forced to march the long journey back. By the time they made it back, Mr. Walker's body had been discovered and the whole town was calling for justice. Joseph's mother hugged Hakeem when he returned. Everyone who saw this was shocked. She spoke to the crowd, "What is this boy's crime? Trying to save a young girl from a vicious beating? How could anyone who knew Lucas Walker doubt that Hakeem actually saved Betsy's life? I know what he did for my son. This boy is no slave. He is a human being. A young man I'm proud to call my friend. Since Mr. Walker is dead, I will return the money he paid me and set Hakeem free."

Hakeem couldn't believe what he was hearing. He ran to Mrs. Smith and told him about Shanika and Betsy who were still tied together. She went to the slave catchers and demanded that they were freed. The slave catchers took off the ropes. Shanika tried to walk but fell. Betsy and Mrs. Smith took her into the carriage that Hakeem was waiting to drive back to the Smith home. "Your son was a great friend and I'm truly sorry," said Hakeem.

The next day, they buried Joseph. Through flowing tears, they read the epitaph,

"Friendship is Colorblind"

Epilogue

Hakeem and Shanika decided never to be separated again. They knew that they could never be free of worry and danger in this country. So they decided to return to Nigeria where they could be married and raise a family. As the years went by, they had a baby boy. Hakeem thought that the most appropriate name for their son was Joseph. Also, so that all would know of the beauty of the life of their friend, Joseph Smith, they had a statue erected in his memory.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Annotated Book List* Middle School English Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to keep a reading log of the materials they read throughout the course of one year. The students' logs were to consist of three parts: a log listing the books read with brief annotations; a log listing the articles and informational materials read with brief annotations; and a two week log that gave a detailed description of the reading students did during those two weeks. The log of books read is included, as is one page from the five page log of articles and informational materials.

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:

E1 a Reading: Read at least twenty-five books or book equivalents each year.

What the work shows

E1 a Reading: The student reads at least twenty-five books or book equivalents each year. The quality and complexity of the materials to be read are illustrated in the sample reading list. The materials should include traditional and contemporary literature (both fiction and non-fiction) as well as magazines, newspapers, textbooks, and on-line materials. Such reading should represent a diverse collection of material from at least three different literary forms and from at least five different writers.

The reading log provides evidence that the student met the goal of reading twenty-five books of the quality of literature appropriate for the middle school standard. The reading log also shows the variety of texts he engaged in from fiction, classic literature, and informational materials.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Annotated Book List*

Middle School English Language Arts

Mrs. _____
April 22, 1996

Annotated Book List

1. 4/29: Great Expectations, by Charles Dickens - A story about a young boy named Pip who lives with his older sister and her husband. Throughout the entire book, you watch Pip grow in his way towards his expectations of becoming a true gentleman.
2. 3/15: To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee - Tells the story of a white girl's accusation of a black man raping her and is told through the eyes of a girl named Scout. Describes the racial tensions in a quiet, southern Alabama town named Maycomb.
3. 2/12: Gulliver's Travels, by Jonathan Swift - A classic work of literature, this story tells of the imaginary adventures of a man called Gulliver during his voyages away from his mother country, England. He encounters the most astonishing things in his travels.
4. 12/29: The Mysterious Island, by Jules Verne - Although not a very well known piece of literature, this book is very well written, describing the adventures of a party of men on a deserted island. In this story, you know what really happened to Captain Nemo.
5. 9/23: Treasure Island, by Robert Louis Stevenson - This story describes the happenings and adventure of a young boy named Jim Hawkins. With pirate fights, and buried treasure, it proves to be an excellent source of entertainment for any type of reader.
6. 10/15: Kidnapped, by Robert Louis Stevenson - The tale of the Jacobite rebellion in the highlands of Scotland, it contains a patriotic spirit that only Stevenson himself could only capture, writing of his homeland. This is sometimes considered his best work.
7. 1/14: Weir of Hermiston, by Robert Louis Stevenson - Left unfinished by Stevenson when he died, this novel is about an austere Scottish judge, and his son, and contains some of Stevenson's most brilliant dialogue passages in all of the books he wrote.
8. 1/31: Black Arrow, by Robert Louis Stevenson - The story is an exciting adventure story in which the hero, Richard Shelton, is fighting for the Yorkist cause in England's War of the Roses. Set in medieval times, it clearly defines Stevenson's variety of style.
9. 8/12: The Master of Ballantrae, by Robert Louis Stevenson - This novel tells of the lifelong feud between the Master Ballantrae and his younger brother Henry. This novel in particular underlines Stevenson's preoccupation with destiny and fate.
10. 9/5: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, by Robert Louis Stevenson - A chilling tale about how a doctor creates a separate personality, evil in instinct and repulsive in appearance, through the use of a special drug he discovers.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Annotated Book List*

Middle School English Language Arts

Mrs. _____
April 25, 1996

Annotated Reading Log 4/18 - 4/26

1. 4/18: Doctor No, Ch. 1,2,3,4, and 5, by Ian Fleming - This novel is about the British Secret Service agent, James Bond; code number 007. He's sent to Jamaica to investigate two recent murders, but ends up discovering a formidable enemy named Dr. No.
2. 4/18: "Newsfronts: Automobiles", by Dan McCosh - This article out of the March issue of Popular Science was all about concept cars. The one car that was investigated in this report was the Synergy 2010 concept car, by the design team at Ford Motor Co.
3. 4/18: "Newsfronts: Motorcycles" Popular Science, by Dan McCosh - This article was all about the new motorcycle cruiser wars between Harley-Davidson, Yamaha, and numerous other motorcycle companies over engine emission sounds. Unusual story!
4. 4/18: "Newsfronts: BMW 5-Series: Going Soft" Popular Science, by Dan McCosh - This articles was about the brand new, re-styled 5-series sedans from BMW. Tells about a better engine, stiffer chassis and suspension, plus side-impact air bags.
5. 4/18: "Home Technology: Environment" Popular Science, by Judith Anne Gunther - This article was about energy efficient houses constructed to provide energy efficient housing for people who were displaced or made homeless by Hurricane Andrew.
6. 4/18: "Home Technology: Lighting" Popular Science, by Judith Anne Gunther - The article was all about how researchers found a way to dim compact fluorescent lamps, some of which are already on the market. The "switch is an element called solium.
7. 4/18: "Home Technology: Pests" Popular Science, by Judith Anne Gunther - The article was about explaining why cockroaches are so attracted to the sticky bug traps that will kill them. It's because of a chemical called supellapyrone
8. 4/18: "Home Technology: Heating and Cooling" Popular Science, by Judith Anne Gunther - This article was over how you could use a special aerosol apparatus that seals the leaks in your home's attics, basements, and crawl spaces. Saves gob's of money.
9. 4/18: "Home Technology: Pipe Protection" Popular Science, by Judith Anne Gunther - The article was about how you could be able to tell that your pipes were frozen before they burst and fill your basement full of water. The answer is to install a cheap sensor.
10. 4/18: "What's New: Beam Us Up" Popular Science, by Mariette Dichristina & Suzanne Kantra Kirschner - The caption says that a new device called the Tri-corder Mark I detects the strength of electromagnetic radiation, and monitors weathers predictions.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea* Middle School English as a Second Language

The task

Following a textbook study of American explorers, this ESL student was asked to write a report. The student's report "Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea" included imaginative letters, journal entries, and dialogues as well as factual information about the expedition. This work sample is an imaginary letter from one of Lewis and Clark's companions to his wife about their adventures on the journey of exploration.

This sample of student work is one piece of a longer project. The student used the format of a letter as a device for presenting facts and details about one part of the expedition across the country. The student obtained information for the report from the textbooks used in class.

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 an advanced level⁸ ESL performance for the following part of the standards:

E1c Reading: Read and comprehend informational materials.

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 ideas gathered through reading and research are recounted in a format that incorporates the ideas in a new context. The letter format is a suitable organizing structure for the work, the purpose of which is to describe how Sacajawea helps the explorers. The opening comment, "I like to be home but it is great to be here," develops reader interest by suggesting that the writer is about to relate some details of the trip up to that point.

⁸ For background on ESL levels, turn to English as a Second Language on page 25.

The ESL Curriculum Frameworks for the advanced level, grade 6 - 8, include the following expectations related to the standards:

- Students will organize and develop a range of fiction and nonfiction texts as they apply their knowledge of English writing conventions.
- Students will obtain, process, and provide information, choosing language based on audience and purpose.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea* Middle School English as a Second Language

(B) The letter provides a connection between the historical facts of the journey and the experience of being a member of the expedition. The statement, “Mr. Lewis and Mr. Clark were excellent leaders,” implies that the writer is one of the companions of the two main explorers. The student engaged the reader by creating the persona of an explorer writing a letter to his wife.

(C) The framing device of the narrator as a member of the expedition is maintained throughout the piece. The anecdotes about Charbonneau and Sacajawea are told from the point of view of an observer. The first person narration picks up again at the conclusion, providing a sense of closure to the piece.

(D) The student included relevant facts and details about the expedition in the letter by describing how the two guides helped the explorers: “Because of them every Indians we meet on the way make peace with us.”

This ESL student demonstrated a basic command of the rules of the English language within the context of second language acquisition at the advanced proficiency level. The errors are typical of those made by second language learners and show that the student is well on the way to mastering the conventions of written English. The errors in this piece largely reflect the student’s developing understanding of verb tense.

(E) The student used some non-native English structures, such as “I like to be home.” The teacher can plan to review the verb form “I would like...” in a variety of contexts. Nevertheless, the student conveyed the tone of a husband addressing his wife.

(F) In “every Indians,” “every” is a singular indefinite determiner that requires the use of a singular noun. This construction is often confusing for ESL students, since the noun would be plural in the construction “The Indians we met.” In this sentence, the student referred to more than one Indian, but mistakenly used the plural form with “every.” The teacher should continue to provide opportunities to use adjectives that function as either singular or plural determiners, such as each, most, many, and some.

(G) In the sentence “the boat we were riding on had been hit by a strong gust of wind,” the student used the wrong tense and overgeneralized the use of the -ed ending to form the past participle used in the passive voice, e.g., it should be “was hit” not “had been hit.” The teacher can use a variety of techniques to review sequence of tenses and the passive voice in context.

(H) The inconsistent use of the simple past tense indicates that the student has not as yet internalized its use on par with a native speaker of English. The student remembered to use the -ed ending in “panicked” and “risked,” but not in “remain.”

(I) “I got to wake up” instead of “I have got to wake up” reflects the colloquial spoken language of English speakers.

A letter from one of the explorers

Dear Marcia,

E → I like to be home but it is great to be
A → here. I'm having so much fun. Mr. Lewis and Mr.
Clark were excellent leaders. They both know what
to do in case of trouble. We also had 2 good guides that
came from the Mandan Tribe. They were Charbonneau
and his pregnant wife, Sacajawea. Because of them,
F → every Indians we meet on the way make peace
C → with us. At one time, the boat we were riding on had
H → been hit by a strong gust of wind. Charbonneau
panicked but Sacajawea just remain calm and even
risked her life to save some important papers and
supplies that had been thrown overboard. Oh, I have to
stop writing now. I have to get some sleep. I got to
wake up early because we're going to continue our
journey.

Your loving husband,
York

Work Sample & Commentary: *Broken Promises* Middle School English as a Second Language

The task

This narrative account was produced as a response to literature after the completion of a unit focusing on the folktale, “The Pied Piper of Hamlin.” The assignment in this middle school ESL class was to write on the theme of a broken promise, modeled after the promise broken by the Mayor of the town of Hamlin.

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 an transitional level⁹ ESL performance for the following part 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 and of conclusions that can be drawn from those 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, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action. e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

(A) The title of the work, “Broken Promises,” immediately engages the reader’s interest. The plot begins to unfold in the first sentence in which we learn about a school principal who, according to the student, never fulfills his promises.

(B) The student established the point of view of the narrator by recounting the events that led up to the broken promise.

⁹ For background on ESL levels, turn to English as a Second Language on page 25.

The ESL Curriculum Frameworks for the transitional level, grade 6 - 8, include the following expectations related to the standards:

- Students will plan and produce a range of texts, using appropriate styles and formats to fulfill a variety of functions.
- Students will communicate effectively to resolve conflicts non-violently.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Broken Promises* Middle School English as a Second Language

- (C) The student established the setting by giving the location, an international school in Ghana, and date of the story, July 4.
- (D) The conflict in the story builds during the retelling of this autobiographical anecdote. The work is about a student who is promised a reward for an outstanding essay, but does not receive the anticipated recognition.
- (E) The student created an organizing structure by relating events sequentially and providing clear transitions from paragraph to paragraph.
- (F) As a direct result of the events presented and the tension that unfolds in the story, the student developed a complex persona with a wide range of emotions, e.g., pride in one’s work, anticipation of reward, assertiveness, disappointment, and disillusionment.
- (G) The student achieved closure by identifying this autobiographical account as being “the only broken promise that I have experience in my life.”
- This ESL student demonstrated a basic command of the rules of the English language within the context of second language acquisition at the transitional proficiency level. The errors are typical of those made by second language learners and show that the student is well on the way to mastering the conventions of written English.
- (H) The student showed a lack of appropriate use of commas. This is demonstrated in the sentence, “On July 4th 95 I was in Ghana when I went to a school called _____ International.” The teacher or a knowledgeable peer should provide assistance to the student during the editing phase.
- (I) The student used spelling based on perceived pronunciation, such as the spelling of “idea” as “idear.”
- (J) The student demonstrated an understanding of compound tenses, as in the sentence, “he hasn’t given it to me.” At the same time, the student made errors in the sequencing of tenses. At this level, the teacher needs to point out to students specific problems they can focus on when they do their own editing. ESL learners often encounter this type of difficulty with the tenses of the English language.

A → Broken Promises.

B → Mr. Bartholomew _____ is a principal who never keeps
C his promise. On July 4th 95 I was in Ghana when I went
to a school called _____ International. I had to be examined
there.

E → I went there at the appropriate time for the exam. I was
told to write any essay that I have never read from
any book. I sat down and thought about it for ten minutes
exactly. Soon I had an idea and started writing on this
topic I was saved by a bell.

My essay was the best of all. I was told that after
my essay I must read it and see if there's ~~was~~ anything
wrong. I read through and saw that nothing was wrong. I
then handed it to the teacher in charge. He read it and
sent it to the principal. He read it and told me my essay
is the most wonderful essay he had ever read.

J → I became happy when I heard that. The principal
F called me to his office and told me he was going to
reward me for my good work. He then said he would
give me a certificate and 60 cedis. The next day came and
he didn't. I thought he had forgotten. So I tried to remind
him. I told him and said he is going to do that ^{the} next
day, but up till now he hasn't given it to me.

D →

G → That was the only broken promise that I have
experience in my life.

H ←

J ←

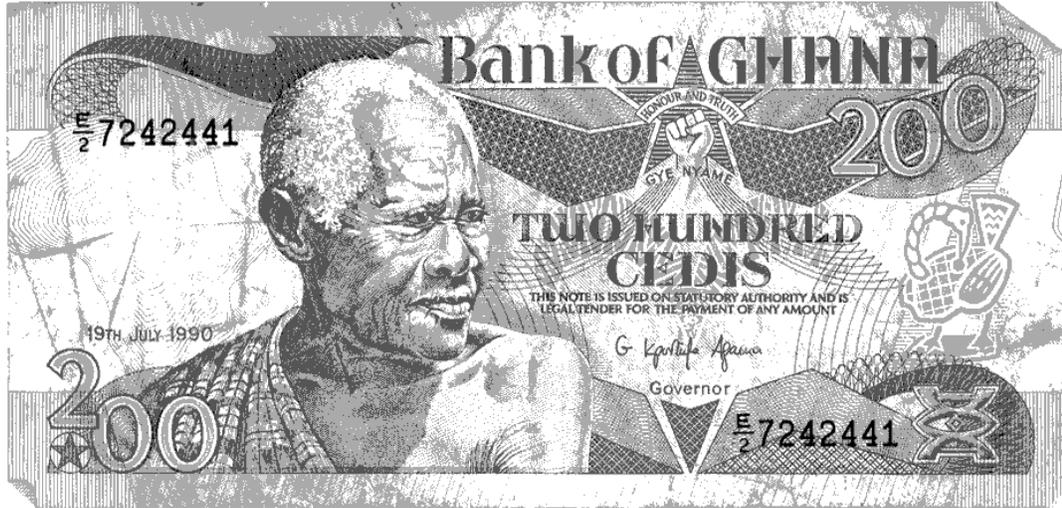
I ←

J ←

J ←

J ←

Work Sample & Commentary: *Broken Promises*
Middle School English as a Second Language



Work Sample & Commentary: *Ojos* Middle School Spanish Language Arts

The task

After reading “Hairs” from the book *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, students were asked to write a narrative account incorporating some of the techniques used in this short story. This student chose to write about “Ojos” (Eyes).

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 b Writing: Produce a response to literature.

E4 a Conventions: Demonstrate an understanding of the rules of the Spanish language.

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

What the work shows¹⁰

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 and of conclusions that can be drawn from those 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, tension or suspense, naming, and specific narrative action. e.g., movement, gestures, expressions;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

The work engages the reader through an initial introduction to the family which also establishes the context. This description of the family also creates the persona of the narrator as that of an affectionate, observant child. The student continued to develop reader interest by describing a specific family characteristic, i.e., the eyes, using figurative language.

The student advanced a judgment of the text indirectly by incorporating the author’s techniques and style into the description of the student’s family. The student demonstrated a recognition of the nuances and complexities of the author’s text by reinventing it using

¹⁰ For background on Spanish Language Arts, turn to page 28.

personal experience. The use of strategies similar to those used by the author also demonstrates the student’s understanding of the literary work.

(A) The student used personal experience to create rich and vibrant images of the family members. These images draw on familiar events from the student’s culture, experience, and environment, such as making coconut candy and comparing the mother’s eyes to strong, black coffee.

(A) The careful selection of language is apparent in such images as “Café Bustelo, acabado de colar...” (Bustelo coffee, just brewed). The imagery created here is visual and olfactory. The work depicts a familial scene that symbolizes warmth and security in the student’s cultural environment. The use of the brand name here adds authenticity and credibility to the work.

The student provided a sense of closure to the writing by describing her own eyes. This completes the sequence created at the beginning: “Mi mama...mi padrastro...y yo.” (My mother...my stepfather...and me.)

E4 a Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the Spanish Language. The student independently and habitually demonstrates an understanding of the rules of the Spanish 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 work demonstrates an overall understanding of the rules of the Spanish language. Minor spelling and grammatical errors do not detract from the work. For example, the student has made some errors in constructing the plural (“lleno” should be “llenos” and “claro” should be “claros”). This is a common error as the final “s” is often dropped in pronunciation. The error in the fourth line of the final paragraph (“bastate” instead of “bastante,”) appears to be a typographical error rather than an error of spelling.

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

The work demonstrates an understanding of the conventions of poetic prose. The student created a series of descriptions that include a variety of sensory details, e.g., sight: color, lit matches; taste: sweetness, chocolate, hot coffee; smell: hot coffee; touch: warmth; and emotions: anger and happiness.

The student used a variety of poetic techniques, such as:

(B) similes, such as, when the student compares the stepfather’s eyes with honey or the sun’s glow on a rainy day;

(A) (C) vivid imagery, such as the comparison of the student’s eyes to dry, autumn leaves;

(D) metaphors; and

(E) personification.

Work Sample & Commentary: *Ojos*

Middle School Spanish Language Arts

NOTE: The student's computer application does not provide the opportunity for proper punctuation in Spanish (e.g., accent marks, inverted question marks, etc.)

Ojos

A

Mi familia está formada por tres personas. Mi mamá, Angela, mi padrastro, Salyador y yo. Mi mamá tiene unos ojos que me recuerdan al "Cafe Bustelo" acabado de colar. Caliente, espeso y sin leche. Sus ojos se parecen a la barra de chocolate que me como todos los días después que salgo de la escuela. Sus ojos están tan lleno de dulzura, que se parecen a la melaña que mi mamá usaba cuando hacía los dulces con coco. Sus ojos son tan pequeñitos como una hormiga.

B

Mi padrastro, Salvador, tiene ojos como la miel. Son tan claros como la luz del sol cuando llueve. Son tan pequeños como los ojitos de mi nariz, y tan arrugados como la piel sin crema que le da mucha luz del sol.

D

C

Mis ojos se parecen a dos fosforitos, que están encendidos porque están felices. Se apagan si están tristes. Se parecen a las hojas secas en el otoño. Cuando estoy enfogonada, mis ojos se parecen al lugar donde hay bastante fuego, y los seres humanos se queman eternamente. En ese lugar vive Lucifer. Con mis ojos y sus movimientos, yo me puedo comunicar con otras personas. Si la persona me cae bien, yo sonrío con mis ojos. Si me cae mal, le doy una mala mirada llena de desprecio y odio.

E

Work Sample & Commentary: *¿Qué veo a mi alrededor?* Middle School Spanish Language Arts

The task

Students were asked to write a poem about their neighborhood as part of a unit called “Explorando nuestros alrededores” (Exploring Our Surroundings). This student chose to write about his neighborhood in “¿Qué veo a mi alrededor?” (What Do I See Around Me?).

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:

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

What the work shows¹¹

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

(A) The student used the metaphor, “Soy el vecindario,” to create the principal image of the poem. This not only creates the context for the poem but also shows the student’s connection to the neighborhood through personification. This image is reinforced by its repetition at the beginning of each stanza.

(B) The poem is constructed around this metaphor paired with a series of rhetorical questions in the second line of each stanza. Each question refers to one of the five senses and this prepares the reader for the kinds of images in each.

The student used a variety of poetic techniques such as the use of stanzas to organize the poem. The repetition of “Soy el vecindario,” at the beginning of each stanza gives the poem symmetry while keeping the reader focused on the subject.

The student demonstrated an understanding of figurative and precise language, for example:

(C) the use of sensual imagery; and

(D) the use of verbs in the progressive tense to convey the mood of activity within the neighborhood.

The poem concludes by thanking everyone who has contributed to the existence of the neighborhood and gives a message of continuity by changing the verb tense from present perfect to future, i.e., “...los que han hecho...los que lo harán.” The student’s use of the ellipses here adds the optimistic note of the neighborhood’s continuation into the future.

The student demonstrated an overall understanding of the rules and the conventions of the Spanish language. Minor spelling errors do not detract from the work. For example, “quidan” in the last line of the third stanza should be “cuidan.” This error demonstrates second language interference in the first language. Also, “su” in the last line of the fourth

¹¹ For background on Spanish Language Arts, turn to page 28.
New Standards Performance Standards
New York City—First Edition

Work Sample & Commentary: ¿Qué veo a mi alrededor? Middle School Spanish Language Arts

stanza should be “sus” for the plural. This error may have occurred because sometimes the final “s” sound is dropped in pronunciation.

NOTE: The student's computer application does not provide the opportunity for proper punctuation in Spanish (e.g., accent marks, inverted question marks, etc.)

Proyecto: Explorando Nuestros Alrededores
Academia: Media
Poema: ¿Qué veo a mi alrededor?
Nombre: _____

A → . Soy el vecindario...
¿Qué veo?
Veo gentes muy hermosas pasando por las calles.
Las mujeres luciendo sus vestidos
Con hombres a su lados divertidos.
Veo niños jugando y corriendo.

B → . Soy el vecindario.
¿Cuáles olores siento?
El olfato me dice que los restaurantes y cuchifritos
están cocinando.
Están llenos de clientes.
...y yo viéndolos.

D → . Soy el vecindario.
¿Qué toco?
Toco los jardines floridos,
y sobre ellos el aliento de la primavera.
Siento el aire que respiran,
los que me cuidan y me miman.

B → . Soy el vecindario.
¿Qué oigo?
Puedo oír el ruido de los motores de los carros
y el del " bus" que pasa por mí.
Puedo oír a los hombres trabajando,
para llevar el pan de cada día a su casa.

C → . Soy el vecindario
¿Qué puedo saborear?
Saboreo con gusto el sabor de las comidas que las
esposas preparan a sus esposos, y familiares.

Soy el vecindario, y como tal
Doy gracias a todos los que han hecho algo por mí
y a todos los que lo haran...