New ⛵ Brunswick

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

INFORMATION BULLETIN

2006-2007

PROVINCIAL EVALUATION PROGRAM

Evaluation Branch
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INTRODUCTION

In today's highly complex and competitive world, students must be able to read, write, understand, and communicate effectively. As part of the continuing provincial emphasis upon literacy, successful completion of the English Language Proficiency Assessment is a graduation requirement for a New Brunswick high school diploma.

The assessment is administered to students in their grade 9 year. Opportunity for reassessment is provided, beginning in grade 10, for students who do not achieve the provincial standards in grade 9.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The English Language Proficiency Assessment has evolved its conceptual framework around the notions suggested by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development's (OECD's) International Programme for Student Assessment (PISA). This framework reflects contemporary views on reading literacy that say students should leave school well equipped to construct, extend, and reflect on the meaning of what they have read. Their reading should extend across a wide range of continuous and non-continuous texts commonly associated with a variety of situations both within and beyond the school environment.

The term "reading", or simply decoding, has been replaced with reading literacy, defined as a tool used to acquire knowledge: "Reading literacy is understanding, using, and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society." (OECD '99) In other words, literacy allows students to contribute to society as well as to meet their own needs; they may be reading for private (personal) use, for public use, for work, and for education. Students should be able to read both continuous texts or standard prose form (classified by purpose), and non-continuous texts that are varied in form (classified by structure).

Continuous texts answer to the following:
Description – What? Descriptive texts
Narration – When or in what sequence? Narratives, reports, news stories
Exposition – How? Expository essays, definitions, explications, summaries
Argumentation – Why? Comment, specific argumentation
Instruction – Directions, procedures, rules, regulations, statutes
Hypertext – Text slots linked together to be read together in different sequences

Non-continuous texts, sometimes referred to as documents, are:
a) by structure
simple lists (booklist)
combined lists (students and marks)
intersecting lists (row and column matrix, timetable)
nested lists
combination lists (statistical lists of unemployment)

b) by format
>   forms
>   information sheets
>   vouchers
>   certificates
>   calls and advertisements
>   charts or graphs
>   diagrams
>   tables and matrices
>   lists (ordered or unordered)
>   maps

Aspects of Reading

Because it is assumed that high school students have mastered basic reading (decoding of texts), it is expected that they demonstrate their proficiency in the aspects of reading that follow:

Forming a Broad General Understanding (Consider text as a whole.)
The student identifies the central thought of a passage, including such elements as the author's main idea, theme, purpose, viewpoint, bias, or tone of a passage.

Retrieving Information (Examine independent pieces of information.)
The student recalls details and other information as stated in a passage to arrive at the new information requested.

Developing an Interpretation (Form an understanding of relationships.)
The student analyzes a passage to interpret character feelings, motives, and/or traits; to interpret events; to compare and contrast elements; or to identify relationships, such as cause and effect.

Reflecting on Content of Text (Assess content against outside knowledge.)
The student critically evaluates information in a passage in order to differentiate between fantasy and reality or between fact and opinion; to predict outcome; and/or to make other judgements.

Reflecting on Form of Text (Identify and interpret structure.) The student identifies and interprets various forms of writing and literary techniques, such as genre, story structure, figurative language, and persuasive technique.

Reading Comprehension

Assessment Requirements: Students take a timed reading comprehension test of several selected-response questions.

Overview of Test Content: The provincial reading comprehension objectives are measured by a variety of age-appropriate passages taken from traditional and contemporary writing, including prose (fiction and non-fiction), drama, and poetry that vary in length, subject matter, and style. Students read passages and answer selected-response questions which assess the strategies used to demonstrate their proficiency in reading and editing. Questions are varied; some require demonstration of critical thinking, while others require interpretation or reflection.

Writing

Assessment Requirements: Students take a timed writing test comprising a number of writing tasks.

Overview of Test Content: The provincial writing objectives are measured by writing tasks that vary in length, subject matter, and style. Students may read a passage and answer a writing prompt which assesses strategies used to demonstrate their proficiency in writing. Writing prompts may require critical thinking, interpretation, reflection, and/or a directional sequence.

The emphasis will be on the different forms and traits of writing, with encouragement towards clarity of thought, attention to audience and purpose, voice, organization, editing (including careful spell checking and punctuation) and revising, rereading final drafts, and legible writing.

In summary, the English Language Proficiency Assessment measures proficiency both through the five aspects of **reading** as outlined above, as well as through the skills evidenced to create, edit, and revise towards a piece of finished **writing**.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Registration
Early in the academic year, schools will be asked to register all grade 9 students for the English Language Proficiency Assessment; students in grades 10-12, who have not yet been successful, will also be registered.

Exemptions
Exemptions from the English Language Proficiency Assessment should be considered for those students who have cognitive deficits, multiple handicapping conditions or specific learning disabilities to such a degree as would render the assessment inappropriate and/or emotionally harmful. Exemptions will be allowed for students who have been identified with exceptionalities and have current Special Education Plans, which document the need.

The required forms should be completed by the Resource teacher in consultation with appropriate teachers and the school principal, and should be signed by both the principal and a parent/guardian. Completed forms should be sent to the district Director of Education for confirmation and signature. The Director of Education will then forward them to the Evaluation Branch. Please refer to the *Guidelines for Exemptions and Accommodations*.

Accommodations
Teachers and principals should make every effort to enable students with special needs to participate in the assessment to the best of their ability. Appropriate accommodations should be provided to preserve students' self-respect and sense of belonging. Schools are encouraged to include as many students in the assessment as possible.

1. Scribes: When circumstances require a scribe, a scribe should write **exactly** what the student dictates; scribed work is not a replacement for lack of writing ability on the part of the student. No interventions are appropriate; a scribe should not ask leading questions, offer advice, nor in any way suggest changes or elaboration to the student's responses. A scribe for a student should not be a parent or immediate family member. Scribing sessions must be recorded and the tape submitted with the student's assessment before the student's work is scored. *A Guide for Scribes*, which outlines additional information, is included with the assessment materials.

2. Additional Time: Students whose Special Education Plans require additional time to write an assessment shall be accommodated. The amount of time beyond one hundred percent extra will be determined on an individual basis by the school in cooperation with the Director of Evaluation, Evaluation Branch, Department of Education.

3. Alternate Setting: An alternate individual or small-group setting may be provided for students whose learning difficulties make concentration a problem, or whose behavior may distract other students.

4. Provision of the Test in Different Format: Large print or Braille format may be provided for special-needs situations.

5. Extended use of Technology: Where appropriate, documented students may respond using a word processor.

6. For Reading Assessments: Only verbatim reading of directions should be used. (Reading comprehension passages and questions accompanying them may not be read out loud to students.)

7. Use of Sign Language or Personal FM System

The required forms should be completed by the classroom teacher or Resource teacher and signed by the principal. Completed forms should be returned to the Evaluation Branch with copies sent to the Director of Education.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned guidelines, any assistance provided to students must be restricted to clarifying directions and procedures and helping students to record their responses. Since this assessment involves reading and writing, students must not receive assistance in understanding the content or in constructing their written work. Reading passages chosen to test comprehension should not be read to students.

Administration Schedule

Both components are written within two to four sessions, during the same week, as determined by the individual schools.

Reading Comprehension – Part One
     Selected-Response Questions – 90 minutes

Writing – Part Two
     Writing I – 60 minutes
     Writing II – 90 minutes
     Writing III – 60 minutes

If any school has to close on one of the days designated for the administration of any part(s) of the test, the component(s) should be rescheduled in cooperation with the Director of Assessment and Evaluation in the Department of Education. Time will be designated to provide opportunities for make-ups. If a student misses any part of the assessment and provides an excuse acceptable to the school administration, the student is then obligated to complete the missed activity. A more detailed set of guidelines, instructions, and administrative recommendations will be made available for both principals and teachers.

All parts of the assessment must be attempted by every student. If a student does not fulfill this requirement, it is unlikely he/she will be able to successfully pass the assessment, and his/her report form will indicate an incomplete performance.

All materials are to be packaged and returned to the Department of Education by the specified date. Materials received after the specified date may not be accepted for marking.

Opportunity to Rewrite
If unsuccessful, students may take the assessment again in the following year. Depending upon the component(s) already passed, such students may retake one or both parts (Reading and/or Writing) of the assessment.

Security Procedures
The principal, or a designate, is responsible to ensure security of the assessment instruments in the school, both before and following administration. The principal is also responsible for making sure that no unauthorized copies of the materials are reproduced or retained in the school.

Scoring Procedures
Exemplar selection and refinement of performance standards will gain input from New Brunswick educators, as well as Department of Education evaluation and curriculum consultants, to ensure reliable scoring sessions.

Part One (Reading Comprehension – Selected-Response Questions) will be machine scored.
Part Two (Writing) will be scored by marking teams.

Papers containing inappropriate language or markings will be referred to the Director of Evaluation who will decide whether the paper should be rejected. Decisions on any further action will be made in cooperation with the school principal and/or district office.

Release of Results
Assessment results will be reported as detailed below.

The **Superintendent** and **Director of Education** for each district will receive individual results for all students who participated in the assessment, as well as a list of those students officially exempted.

Each school principal will receive individual results for all students in that school who participated in the assessment.

The **student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s)** will receive a personalized and confidential report of performance. A label will also be placed in the student's cumulative school record with a notation indicating successful or unsuccessful achievement of the English Language Proficiency Assessment.

Required Performance Standard
Successful completion of the assessment will be achieved by the student who performs at an 'appropriate' or 'strong' level on both components (Part One – Reading Comprehension and Part Two – Writing) which comprise the assessment. Successful completion of the English Language Proficiency Assessment is a requirement in order to graduate with a New Brunswick diploma.

ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Part One – Reading Comprehension (90 minutes)
Students will read several passages of both continuous (fiction, non-fiction, drama, and poetry) and non-continuous text. They will then respond to selected-response questions. The questions will be varied to demonstrate the students' ability to form a general understanding of the passages, as well as, to retrieve information and develop an interpretation allowing for reflection on the content and form of the text. Students will also demonstrate skills for editing and revising.

Part Two – Writing
Students will perform various writing tasks in response to such prompts as a specific situation, a topic theme, a picture, and/or personal choice. They must follow the specific written instructions to develop a personal interpretation and/or reflection on the prescribed topic. They must work independently using appropriate register (e.g., appropriate use of contractions, appropriate use of *you*, and appropriate level of vocabulary). Students should draft, revise, and edit their work for well-structured sentences and paragraphs. They should proofread their final work to ensure clarity of their intended message. Students will also edit and revise a piece of writing to correct errors.

Writing I (60 minutes)

Students will be asked to present a piece of original narrative prose of approximately 200-250 words on a topic of their choice or on a topic from suggestions provided through pictures or words.
Topics may be:
- personal choice
- specific topics
- a picture

Writing II (90 minutes)

A. Students will be asked to present a short piece of writing in response to a prescribed task. Topics could include themes such as:
   - an organization of information through charts / diagrams / outlines
   - a recount of particular circumstances of an incident
   - a thank-you / request letter
   - a diary / journal entry
   - a factual account of personal social (or work) activities
   - guidelines on safety in the classroom, in the gymnasium, etc.
   - directions for crafts / recipes / sequence of events

B. Students will be asked to revise and edit a piece of writing that contains several errors: grammatical / punctuation / capitalization / spelling / paragraphing, etc. They must use strategies that prove skills toward the conventions of good writing.

Writing III (60 minutes)

Students will be asked to write to a specific situation provided, composing a piece of writing of approximately 200-250 words.

Sample Reading Passages and Questions

THE COMICS

Read the passage, *The Comics*, and answer questions one to three on the next page.

Who and what are behind the comic strips in your newspaper? Meet Lynn Johnston, whose comic strip "For Better or For Worse" appears in more than 1500 newspapers around the world.

    Q.   Where do you get your ideas for the strip?
5   **A.**   I'm on RECORD all the time, getting ideas. "Spot" ideas work well, like the image of a son talking on the phone all day but never saying a word to his mother. He's talked out!

    Q.   Do you only create the artwork?
    A.   Some cartoonists work with writers, but I do both the writing and the drawing.
10   There's only a limited space for the message and I am very demanding of myself. I write and rewrite the words for each strip. By the time I reach the last panel, I need a punch line or a play on words (pun) or a strong remark.

    Q.   How do you draw the panels in your strip?
    A.   I use a template (a pattern) and draw the four panels on my board. Since my
15   hands perspire a lot, I wear a cotton glove (with the fingers cut off) to keep the cartoon clean. In each panel, I sketch the drawings and print the words in pencil. Then I use ink and two different pens to write over the words and finish the picture. If I make a mistake in the drawing, I use white animation paint to cover it. When the paint is dry I can draw over it. Sometimes I cut out a new panel and glue it over the one with the mistake.

20   **Q.**   How far ahead do you work?
    A.   I work on the daily strips six weeks ahead of when they'll appear in the newspapers. The weekend coloured strips are done eight weeks ahead. That means at Christmas, I'm already thinking about the Easter strips.

    Q.   We hear about "writer's block." Is there such a thing as "cartoonist's block?"
25   **A.**   There are dry times when I have no ideas. It's good that I'm always working so far ahead on the strip, just in case it happens. Sometimes I stop working and take a long walk. Or I read something funny to get in a good mood. Even sleep can help. Sleep can be part of the creative process.

    Q.   Can you offer any tips to young people who would like to become comic-strip
30   artists?
    A.   Practise a lot. Copying isn't bad unless you say someone else's work is yours. Be honest. Develop your own style. A cartoonist's style is as personal as his or her signature. It takes a long time to get both the way you want them. Learn from others. I learned a lot from my favourites, like the artists in Mad magazine. And never say, "I'm good"; say, "I
35   could
be better."

Linda Granfield

1.   **The format of this passage shows that it is**

    A.   a play.
    B.   a report.
    C.   an outline.
    D.   an interview.

2.   **Lynn Johnston wears a glove when she works in order to**

    A.   keep her hand clean.
    B.   keep her hand warm.
    C.   avoid making mistakes.
    D.   avoid smudging her work.

3.   **The expression "cartoonist's block" (line 24) refers to a cartoonist**

    A.   planning ahead.
    B.   feeling uncreative.
    C.   being unable to sleep.
    D.   reading something funny.

Read the poem below and answer the questions on page 11.

BLIZZARD

The big city is rude to snow.
Trees shrug snow from their branches.
Sidewalks won't let snow stick.
Gutters refuse it too —
5   And so the snow melts into slush,
pretends that it never was.

Sometimes though,
a snowfall captures the city,
sheets its statues,
10   tangles its streets.
Corners vanish: their policemen
whistle for them in vain.
Bus-bulls, tires spinning, snort and paw.
Even snowplows sniff at it — and stall.

15   A great snow hushes
the big sounds of the city.
Small sounds come out of hiding:
drops drumming on tin,
shovels strumming on narrow paths,
20   voices ringing in air
as clear as an empty glass.

City kids have wished all winter
for this morning.
They rush out,
25   hugging the snow with their bodies.

Judith Thurman

1.   **The stanza that MOSTLY appeals to the sense of hearing is**

A.   stanza 1.
B.   stanza 2.
C.   stanza 3.
D.   stanza 4.

2.   **The words "Bus-bulls, tires spinning, snort and paw" (line 13) are effective because they describe how buses are**

A.   stopping suddenly.
B.   making lots of noise.
C.   struggling in the snow.
D.   speeding through the snow.

3.   **During the winter, the city described in this poem**

A.   is prepared for major storms.
B.   receives many major blizzards.
C.   is damaged by heavy snowfalls.
D.   receives snow that melts quickly.

SCORING METHODS AND CRITERIA

- A student's performance on the selected-response questions will be determined by the number of individual test questions correctly answered; these questions will be machine scored.

- A student's performance on the writing assignments will be determined by marking teams following a prescribed rubric based on the Writing Performance Standards; these writing assignments will be averaged for the final result.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Detailed criteria for the performance standards are found on page 13. These should be shared with students and used in conjunction with classroom writing activities. It is important that students are familiar and comfortable with the qualities of writing described as the standard. Also, writing performance standards for previous grade levels (Grades 2, 4, and 6) are included in Appendix B.

STUDENT EXEMPLARS

Included in Appendix A are student writing exemplars that model many of the expectations of effective student writing. Each demonstrates the features of writing which meet the criteria associated with Appropriate or Strong levels of performance. These levels have been chosen because they represent average, but appropriate, achievement; as well as, strong achievement. The models should be useful to teachers seeking evidence to confirm their own beliefs about what constitutes language strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, students may find reviewing the work of peers a benefit to their own writing decisions.

It is suggested that teachers share the exemplars (models) with students and engage in discussion about the presence or absence of the specific traits described in the Writing Performance Standards.

Please note: The exemplars in Appendix A are exact copies of the students' work; no amendments or corrections have been made to the original pieces of writing.

Writing Performance Standards – English Language Proficiency Assessment

Appropriate Performance	Strong Performance
An <u>appropriate</u> performance will illustrate writing that	*A <u>strong</u> performance will illustrate writing that*

Appropriate Performance

Content
- introduces a main idea
- attempts to elaborate on the main idea, often generalizing details, maintaining focus but with minimal distractions

Organization
- effectively introduces with a clear introduction and an adequate ending
- generally uses a clear organizational pattern
- makes some connections and transitions

Narrative/Imaginative writing
- establishes a situation, plot, setting, and conflict
- creates some structure to organization without extraneous details and inconsistencies
- generally uses dialogue and suspense in development of characters and plot
- establishes a logical conclusion from the events presented

Information text
- follows conventions of selected form (reports, letters, persuasive writing, invitations, etc.) by prescription
- uses special text features (charts, diagrams, etc.) to explain content
- uses introductions that clearly present purpose and audience
- uses text in a logical sequence of chronology or cause/effect
- uses a logical and effective conclusion

Word Choice
- consistently uses clear and appropriate words

Voice
- is appropriate, but ordinary, for audience and purpose
- provides evidence of strong feeling and individuality throughout
- lends itself to sharing aloud

Sentence Structure
- uses some variety in sentence length and structure
- is generally fluid and easy to read, but may have some choppy sentences

Conventions
- uses grade appropriate conventions with fairly regular control
- needs a final edit
- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization functionally correct
- uses conventions with enough skill to make the text readable

Strong Performance

Content
- includes a strong main idea that is well supported with details and examples
- stays focused on the main topic throughout, providing supportive reasoning for that idea

Organization
- begins with a compelling statement as introduction and closes with a thought-provoking idea
- enhances understanding of the text with a clear organizational pattern
- connects sentences and ideas through fluid transitions

Narrative/Imaginative writing
- clearly establishes the situation, plot, setting, and conflict with significant events
- creates an organizing structure, including concrete language and sensory details that maintain a consistent focus
- uses a wide range of appropriate strategies such as dialogue, tension, pacing, etc. to develop complex characters and plot
- establishes significant conclusions drawn from detailed and sequenced events

Information text
- follows conventions of selected form (reports, letters, persuasive writing, invitations, etc.) with unique twists
- uses special text features (charts, diagrams, etc.) to enhance meaning and clarity
- uses striking introductions that boldly announce purpose and capture the audience
- uses text in a logical sequence of chronology or cause/effect, etc. with fluid transitions
- consistently uses a logical and strong conclusion

Word Choice
- effectively uses precise and original words, understanding shades of meaning, and is concise and clear

Voice
- is sincere and ideally suited to audience and purpose
- explodes with energy and is appealing to reader due to strong feelings portrayed
- compels the reader to share aloud

Sentence Structure
- uses a striking variety of sentence length and structure, logically connecting ideas with smooth transitions
- is a smooth and natural easy-to-read piece of writing

Conventions
- uses a wide range of grade appropriate conventions with control
- is ready to publish work with possible minor corrections needed
- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization consistently correct
- uses conventions skillfully to enhance meaning and voice

"Dear Grammy and Grampy…"

1. Dear Grammy and Grampy,
2.   Thank you so much for the wonderfull
3. birthday present you gave me! I know how much
4. I've been at you all these years for one. Therefore
5. I am writing you this letter to show you how
6. thankfull I am.
7.   For a long period of time I've always
8. wished for a computer of my own. Due to
9. the reason of always having to take turns
10. with my sister on the family computer. Now
11. I don't have to worrie about it, because I
12. have my own computer. I also don't have to
13. think about needing to take turns. It is now
14. so much easier to work on projects, especially
15. at times when my sister and I have projects
16. at the same time. Therefore it doesn't give
17. us much time on the computer, which I
18. normaly need for a long time. The laptop was
19. a very smart and usefull birthday present.
20.   Now that I have my own computer,
21. this gives me more time to do other things.
22. When teenagers have their own computer

"Dear Grammy and Grampy…"

23 parents are worried that they will stay
24 up in their room all day on it. However
25 you don't have to worrie about this with
26 me. I am as you know very active and
27 always love to spend time with my family,
28 so when I use the laptop I can still be
29 with the one's I love.
30   Thank you again for making this past
31 birthday an unforgettable one and also
32 the best one so far.
33
34 Sincerely,
35   Erica

SAMPLE I

"Dear Grammy and Grampy,"

Content
- introduces a main idea *of thanking someone for a gift*
  lines 2-3   "Thank you so much..."
  lines 5-6   "...to show you how thankfull I am."

- attempts to elaborate on the main idea, often generalizing details, maintaining focus but with minimal distractions
  lines 7-8   "...I've always wished for a computer of my own."
  lines 12-13   "I also don't have to think about needing to take turns."

Organization
- effectively introduces with a clear introduction and has an adequate ending
  lines 2-3   "Thank you so much..."
  lines 30-32   "Thank you again for making this past birthday an unforgettable one and also the best one so far."

- generally uses a clear organizational pattern
  uses an introduction, two developing paragraphs, and a conclusion

- makes some connections and transitions
  line 4   "Therefore"
  line 7   "For a long period of time"
  line 8   "Due to"
  line 10   "Now"

Word Choice
- consistently uses clear and appropriate words
  lines 2-3   "...wonderfull birthday present"
  lines 7-8   "...I've always wished for..."
  line 26   "...as you know..."

"Dear Grammy and Grampy,"

Voice
- is appropriate, but ordinary for audience and purpose
  lines 3-4   "I know how much I've been at you all these years for one."

- provides evidence of strong feeling and individuality throughout
  lines 18-19   "The laptop was a very smart and usefull birthday present."

- lends itself to sharing aloud
  This piece of engaging writing gives reasons why the computer will be useful.

Sentence Structure
- uses some variety in sentence length and structure
  lines 13-16   "It is now so much easier...at the same time." (complex sentence)
  lines 20-21   "Now that I have my own computer,..." (complex sentence)

- is generally fluid and easy to read, but may have some choppy sentences
  lines 8-10   "Due to the reason..."

Conventions

The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.

- uses grade appropriate conventions with fair control
  lines 2, 7, 20, 30

- needs a final edit
  line 2   "wonderfull"
  line 6   "thankfull"
  line 11   "worrie"
  line 18   "normaly"

- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization functionally correct
  line 1   "Dear Grammy and Grampy,"
  lines 34-35   "Sincerely, Erica"

- uses conventions with enough skill to make the text readable

"This essay will describe my personal transition..."

1. This essay will describe my personal
2. transition from Middle School to High
3. School. In this essay, I will include
4. the advice I recieved, how I felt the
5. first day and how I feel now.
6. Going from Middle School to High
7. School can be a big change. For me,
8. it meant going from a small middle
9. school in my town to High School in
10. the city. Some advice that I recieved
11. was from my parents. My father attended
12. my high school and told me a little
13. about his experiance. My mother gave
14. me some organizational skills and
15. studying advice.
16. On the first day of school, I
17. felt a little sick and scared. I
18. had butterflies in my stomach, I was
19. so nervous. When I got to the
20. auditorium, I didn't see any of my
21. friends. They came shortly after and
22. I started to calm down. after I had

"This essay will describe my personal transition..."

23 calmed down quite a bit, I really

24 began to enjoy my day.

25 Now, it feels like I've been here

26 forever. I enjoy coming to school

27 everyday and I'm really enjoying

28 my classes. I am also involved

29 in a lot of extra-curricular

30 activities that my High School

31 has.

32 In conclusion, even though

33 my first week was a little

34 scary, I am really enjoying

35 myself now. I am almost

36 certain that my High School

37 years will be some of the best

38 years of my life.

39

40

41

42

43

SAMPLE II

"This essay will describe my personal transition..."

Content
- introduces a main idea of *moving from middle school to high school*
  line 4   "the advice I recieved, how I felt..."
  line 5   "first day and how I feel now."

- attempts to elaborate on the main idea, often generalizing details, maintaining focus but with minimal distractions
  lines 10-11   "Some advice...my parents."
  lines 11-15   Mother's and father's advice

Organization
- effectively introduces with a clear introduction and an adequate ending
  lines 1-5
  lines 32-38

- generally uses a clear organizational pattern
  lines 6-15   advice from parents
  lines 16-24   feelings on the first day
  lines 25-31   feelings now

- makes some connections and transitions
  line 6   "Going from middle..."
  line 7   "For me,..."
  line 16   "On the first day of school,..."

Word Choice
- consistently uses clear and appropriate words
  lines 16-17   "...I felt a little sick and scared." (unsophisticated but appropriate word choice)
  lines 22-23   "After I had calmed down quite a bit..."

"This essay will describe my personal transition..."

Voice

- is appropriate, but ordinary for audience and purpose
  lines 1-3   "This essay...School."(unsophisticated mechanical opening)

- provides evidence of strong feeling and individuality throughout
  line 17   "sick and scared"
  line 18   "butterflies in my stomach"
  lines 27-28   "I'm really enjoying my classes."

- lends itself to sharing aloud
                        This piece is readable and shows feeling.

Sentence Structure

- uses some variety in sentence length and structure
  lines 1-3   simple sentence
  lines 3-5   simple sentence with introductory prepositional phrase – also contains
                        listing that is properly punctuated
  lines 11-13   compound sentence
  lines 19-21   complex sentence

- is generally fluid and easy to read, but may have some choppy sentences
  Most sentences are subject/verb construction lacking variety in syntax.

Conventions

The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.

- uses grade appropriate conventions with fairly regular control
  Verb tense is consistently correct using present, past and future.

- needs a final edit
  line 4   "recieved – review "i" before "e" rule
  line 13   "experiances"

- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization functionally correct
  line 25   "I've" apostrophe used correctly in contraction
  line 29   "extra-curricular" hyphen used correctly; "a lot" correctly written as
                        two words

- uses conventions with enough skill to make the text readable
  This is a good example of a grade-level "appropriate" piece of writing.

"With obesity on the rise..."

1 Exercise

2 With obesity on the rise, doctors

3 are saying that exercise is the way

4 to go. It is a key part to good health and

5 long life.

6 When you think of exercise, you do

7 not neccessarily have to think of big

8 machines or pricey equipment. A simple

9 cardio routine like walking or running,

10 works the heart, strengthens leg muscles,

11 and burns fat. Cycling is a good, yet

12 enjoyable form of exercise. To shake up

13 your routine, try kick boxing. It is fun,

14 fast-paced, and gives you a great workout

15 Strengthening is another form of

16 exercise. There are many strengthening

17 workouts, all that work a different muscle

18 of the body. Weight-lifting is a common

19 strengthening exercise and works the

20 triceps and biceps. For an all-inclusive

21 workout, invest in an all-in-one (home) gym.

22 These provide an array of exercises

"With obesity on the rise..."

that work your arms, legs, and abdominals
    An easy and affordable way of exercising
is to rent a couple of exercise videos from
your local library and use them for the
week. You do not have to use the same
video twice and best of all, they are free!
    Exercise need not be boring. With so
many choices, you can choose a routine
that is right for you!

SAMPLE III

"With obesity on the rise..."

Content
- introduces a main idea of *the benefits of exercise*
  lines 4-5   "It is a key part to good health and long life"
  lines 15-16   "Strengthening is another form..."

- attempts to elaborate on the main idea, often generalizing details,
  maintaining focus but with minimal distractions
  The piece has three paragraphs which develop the different ways to get exercised.
  lines 6-8   "When you think...pricey equipment."
  line 15   "Strengthening..."
  line 25   "Exercise videos..."

Organization
- effectively introduces with a clear introduction and an adequate ending
  lines 2-5
  lines 29-31

- generally uses a clear organizational pattern
  The student developed three topics within three paragraphs.
  line 15   Strengthening...
  line 25   Exercise videos...

- makes some connections and transitions
  line 6   "When you think of exercise..."
  lines 12-13   "To shake up your routine..."
  line 20   "For an all-inclusive workout..."

Word Choice
- consistently uses clear and appropriate words
  line 9   "cardio routine"
  line 14   "fast-paced"
  lines 19-20   "works the triceps and biceps"
  line 24   "an easy and affordable way"

"With obesity on the rise..."

Voice

- is appropriate, but ordinary for audience and purpose
  It is written in a conversational manner and maintains second person throughout.
  line 6   "When <u>you</u> think of exercise..."
  line 27   "<u>You</u> do not have to use..."

- provides evidence of strong feeling and individuality throughout
  lines 2-3   "...exercise is the way to go."
  lines 11-12   "cycling...exercise."
  line 14   "a great workout"

- lends itself to sharing aloud
  It is a pleasantly persuasive piece.
  line 28   "best of all they are free"

Sentence Structure

- uses some variety in sentence length and structure
  lines 2-4   simple sentence beginning with a prepositional phrase
  lines 6-8   complex sentence
  lines 12-13   imperative sentences

- is generally fluid and easy to read, but may have some choppy sentences
  It is fluid with no choppy sentences.

Conventions

The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.

- uses grade appropriate conventions with fairly regular control
            Conventions are handled well.

- needs a final edit
  line 30   transcription error – "chose" instead of "choose" as in draft

- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization functionally correct
  line 13   kick boxing needs a hyphen
  line 28   comma missing before "best of all"

- uses conventions with enough skill to make the text readable
            insignificant errors in a well-written piece which lacks the
            sophistication of a "strong" performance

"A lot of information is needed when working on a school project."

1   DIFFERENT WAYS TO COLLECT INFORMATION FOR

2   A SCHOOL PROJECT.

3

4   A lot of information is needed when working on

5   a school project. There are several ways to collect this

6   information. For example the computer and its different tools

7   are organized and make everything easier. The library

8   and its varied resources are really useful too, but the

9   easiest way to collect data is by reading and using the

10   notes from class and the textbooks. This modern world gives

11   the students everything they need and all the tools are

12   there whenever they need it.

13   The computer is one of the most used tools when

14   working on a project or assignment. The information can be

15   found and collected easily by using the Internet and its different

16   websites and online encyclopedias. Some of these are Google

17   and Microsoft Encarta, where the data is arranged in an

18   easy way to follow. After the facts are found, they can be

19   set up in a formal format to create an appropriate

20   project, like when using Microsoft Word.

21   However, the computer is not the only method to

22   find and organize data. In the library, a lot of different

27

"A lot of information is needed when working on a school project."

23 resources are found. Students can also get several ideas

24 to expose their projects like the use of videos, posters,

25 pictures or even magazines. Besides, one of the good

26 things about the library is that the librarian or other

27 people can help students finding what they need in an

28 organized and effective way.

29   If the students don't have access to a computer

30 or the library, they can make use of their textbooks and

31 notes from class. School is the first place where information

32 and facts are collected. The teachers can help them there

33 and guide them by giving them some ideas about their

34 projects. Taking advantage of the benefits that school

35 gives is one of the best things students can do.

36   In conclusion, these are some of the

37 most effective and most used ways to find and collect

38 information. They are easy to work with, useful, full of

39 creative ideas and surprisingly organized. Thankfully,

40 the modern world has everything at everytime, therefore

41 students can be pleased because they have

42 all the things they need, now that projects

43 will come and go during their whole life.

SAMPLE IV

| Rationale for Strong Performance | Page 1 of 2 |

"A lot of information is needed when working on a school project."

Content
- includes a strong main idea that is well supported with details and examples *about ways to collect information for a school project*
  lines 4-6   "A lot of information is needed when working on a school project. There are several ways to collect this information."
  line 6   "the computer"
  line 7   "the library"
  line 10   "notes from class and the textbooks."

- stays focused on the main topic throughout, providing supportive reasoning for that idea
  Each paragraph contains a topic sentence that is well developed.

Organization
- begins with a compelling statement as introduction and closes with a thought-provoking idea
  The opening line is concise.
  The closing sentence is thought-provoking.
  lines 39-43   "Thankfully, the modern world has everything at every time,..."

- enhances understanding of the text with a clear organizational pattern
  Each paragraph is devoted to one method of collecting information as stated in the introduction.

- connects sentences and ideas through fluid transitions
  line 6   "For example"
  line 18   "After the facts"
  line 25   "Besides,..."
  line 36   "In conclusion,..."

  Information text
- It follows the selected form of information text, using a logical sequence with fluid transitions.

Word Choice
- effectively uses precise and original words, understanding shades of meaning, and is concise and clear
  line 8   "...varied resources are really useful too,"
  lines 16-17   "websites", "online encyclopedias", "Google", "Microsoft Encarta"
  lines 38-39   "full of creative ideas and surprisingly organized"

29

"A lot of information is needed when working on a school project."

Voice
- is sincere and ideally suited to audience and purpose
  lines 34-35   "Taking advantage of the benefits...the best things students can do."

- explodes with energy and is appealing to the reader due to strong feelings portrayed
  lines 10-12   "This modern world gives the students..."
  lines 25-28   "Besides, one of the good things about the library...effective way."

- compels the reader to share aloud
  This selection is truly informative.

Sentence Structure
- uses a striking variety of sentence length and structure, logically connecting ideas
  with smooth transitions
  lines 5-6   "There are several ways to collect this information." (simple sentence)
  lines 7-10   "The library and its varied resources...textbooks." (compound
  sentence)
  lines 18-20   "After the facts are found,..." (complex sentence)

- is a smooth and natural easy-to-read piece of writing
  The piece provides informative reading.

Conventions
- uses a wide range of grade appropriate conventions with control
  line 21   "However,"
  line 25   "Besides,"
  lines 29-31   "If the students..." (introductory adverb clause)
  lines 38-39   "easy to work with, useful, full of..." (listing)

- is ready-to-publish work, with possible minor corrections needed
  A final proofreading could enhance the work.

- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization consistently correct
  line 4   correctly spells "a lot"
  line 5   "There are"
  lines 11-12   "are there"
  lines 15-16   correct capitalization of "Internet", "Google"
  line 24   "their projects"

- uses conventions skillfully to enhance meaning and voice
  There is strong voice throughout the piece of writing.

"There once was a day..."

1 There was once a day when a meal not only
2 required time and effort, but also provided
3 ~~An~~ nutritional value. Those days are long gone.
4
5 In this day and age, you can order, recieve
6 and eat a meal in ten minutes or less,
7 and be on your way. Why, you can even do
8 this in the comfort of your own vehicle! Who
9 needs social interaction?
10
11 These fast food services have taken their
12 toll. Canada and the United States have the
13 highest rates of obesity in the world. What
14 else can we blame that on, lack of physical
15 activity due to our unpredictable Canadian
16 weather? I'm not so sure that's credible.
17
18 Let's face it, eating fast food is cheap;
19 at least when you compare it to healthy
20 eating. Why pay $15.99 for a bowl of
21 pasta when you can spend $4.99 on a
22 combo meal. This has become our mindset.

"There once was a day..."

23 We sacrifice our health for our greed.

24

25 However, do we really think about what we're
26 putting into our bodies? Certain processed cheeses
27 are only one mere molecule away from plastic,
28 Some french fries are coated in wax. Some
29 sodas can even eat through a nail! Consuming
30 these foods every day cannot possibly be
31 a good thing!

32

33 My poor family members have become
34 strangers. We go through our days alone,
35 and when we come home, there's no time to
36 prepare a meal, sit down & eat together.
37 Even if there is, the television somehow
38 finds a way to steal the conversation.

39

40 These are sad times we live in. We feed
41 ourselves poison. We exercise less, but
42 eat more. We eat in the solitude of our
43 cars, and sacrifice family time for free time.
44 Worst of all, none of these things
45 seem to bother us.

46

47 All I have left to ponder is, "where
48 can we go from here?"

SAMPLE V

"There once was a day..."

Content
- includes a strong main idea that is well supported with details and examples
  lines 11-12   "These fast food...their toll."

- stays focused on the main topic throughout, providing supportive reasoning for that idea
  Four paragraphs in the body give reasons to support the toll that fast food takes.

Organization
- begins with a compelling statement as introduction and closes with a thought-provoking idea
  lines 1-3   introduction
  lines 47-48   conclusion

- enhances understanding of the text with a clear organizational pattern
  line 13   "highest rates of obesity..."
  line 23   "sacrifice our health..."

- connects sentences and ideas through fluid transitions
  line 5   "In this day and age,..."
  line 18   "Let's face it,..."
  line 25   "However,..."

Information text
- It is a persuasive piece of writing regarding the toll of fast food in our society. It uses a logical sequence of cause and effect. It has a captivating introduction that immediately engages the audience.

Word Choice
- effectively uses precise and original words, understanding shades of meaning, and is concise and clear
  line 3   "nutritional value"
  line 9   "social intervention"
  lines 15-16   "unpredictable Canadian weather"
  line 27   "one mere molecule away from plastic"
  line 29   "sodas...eat" (personification)
  lines 37-38   "Even if there...television...to steal the conversation." (personification)

"There once was a day..."

Voice

- is sincere and ideally suited to audience and purpose
  Sincerity is apparent in the introduction with a lament for the loss of nutrition and family time. The author shows she is engaged by using the first person.
  line 25   "However, do we..."
  line 34   "We go through our..."

- explodes with energy and is appealing to the reader due to strong feelings portrayed
  line 3   "Those days are long gone."
  line 16   "I'm not so sure that's credible."

- compels the reader to share aloud
  The voice in this piece, combined with the writer's passion, engages the audience and compels them to share it.

Sentence Structure

- uses a striking variety of sentence length and structure, logically connecting ideas with smooth transitions
   lines 5-7   begins with a prepositional phrase and has a definite
                           sequential pattern (compound sentence)
  lines 7-8, 8-9   effective use of interrogative and exclamatory sentences

- is a smooth and natural easy-to-read piece of writing
  Throughout this piece of writing, the writer presents a fluent and compelling message.

Conventions

- uses a wide range of grade appropriate conventions with control
  lines 40-43   "We feed.... We exercise.... We eat..." (parallel structure)
  lines 41-42   "We exercise less, but eat more." (antithesis)
  lines 47-48   uses quotation marks for emphasis

- is ready to publish work with possible minor corrections needed
  line 5   "recieve" – wrong spelling
  line 18   misuse of semi-colon
  lines 21-22   "on a combo meal." – requires a question mark
  line 36   used sign & instead of "and"

- has spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization consistently correct
  The writer shows skill in the conventions of good writing.

- uses conventions skillfully to enhance meaning and voice
  lines 1-3   From beginning to end this piece has shown a strong command
                         of writing with the effective use of varied conventions.
  line 18   "Let's face it..."
  lines 47-48   a question builds a strong conclusion

Appendix B

Writing Performance Standards – End of Grade Two

Appropriate Performance	Strong Performance
Students who achieve appropriate performance in writing	**Students who achieve strong performance in writing**
Content • include ideas or events related to a topic; may wander off topic and include a few unrelated ideas or events • include some details to make the writing clearer; details or pieces of information may not always be relevant and there may be some gaps in details or information	**Content** • include a series of ideas or events related to a topic; maintain focus on the topic • include relevant details or information to expand on the topic or support the main idea
Organization • use simple connecting words (e.g., and, then, so) to link ideas • present ideas/information in a sequence that can be followed	**Organization** • link ideas in a variety of ways, creating some flow to the writing • present ideas/information in a logical sequence
Narrative/imaginative writing - has a beginning, middle and end; ending may be abrupt - usually identifies the characters and problem at the beginning of the story, but tends to be brief - may include dialogue - may be modeled on stories read, heard or viewed, or based on personal experiences	**Narrative/imaginative writing** - has a good beginning, a logical middle and an ending - identifies the characters and problem within the story - often includes dialogue - shows the student takes risks in the creation and expression of ideas
Information text - opening introduces the topic; the closing or concluding statement may be omitted or abrupt - shows some awareness of form (e.g., recount, basic instructions, report) - includes some details; these usually relate to obvious aspects of the topic (e.g., physical characteristics, basic procedures, simple chronology, quantities)	**Information text** - opening introduces the topic; the closing or concluding statement is evident (where appropriate to the form) - uses appropriate forms (e.g., recount, simple instructions, report) - includes relevant details and expands upon some of these
Word Choice • may include a few strong word choices; majority of word choices is ordinary with some repetition of words	**Word Choice** • include a few strong word choices appropriate to the purpose, with limited repetition of words
Sentence Structure • use mostly simple sentence structure; many sentences are complete • include a few longer sentences and/or sentences that begin in different ways	**Sentence Structure** • include some sentences of different lengths and sentences that begin in different ways • attempt more complex sentence structures; most sentences are complete
Conventions • use correct end punctuation (e.g., periods, question marks) in many sentences; may attempt exclamation marks • use capital letters for proper names (e.g., people, days of the week, months, familiar place names), first word in sentences, and pronoun "I", in many cases; may capitalize some words unnecessarily • spell many high frequency words correctly; attempt to spell longer, more complex words using phonetic approximations • use many basic pronouns and verbs correctly; may make some errors (e.g., She maked a cake.)	**Conventions** • use mostly correct end punctuation (e.g., periods, question marks; attempt exclamation marks; begin to use commas, apostrophes and quotation marks but not always correctly • use capital letters for proper names (e.g., people, days of the week, months, familiar place names), first word in sentences, and pronoun "I", in most cases; may capitalize a few words unnecessarily • spell most high frequency words correctly; spell longer, more complex words using phonetic approximations • use most basic pronouns and verbs correctly; may make a few errors

Voice is not included in the performance standards as a necessary trait for grade two students, but should be nurtured through modeling and positive comments. It will be assessed at grade three and beyond.

Writing Performance Standards – End of Grade Four

Appropriate Performance	**Strong Performance**

An <u>appropriate</u> performance will illustrate writing that

Content
- includes a series of ideas/events related to a topic, generally maintaining focus
- includes relevant details or information that expands on the topic or supports the main ideas (more details or information would strengthen the writing)

Organization
- shows awareness of audience and purpose
- shows evidence of paragraphing of main ideas
- generally presents ideas/information in a logical order; overall sequence is clear
- shows use of a variety of connecting words

   Narrative/imaginative writing
   - has a good beginning, a logical middle, and an ending
   - includes story elements: characters, setting, plot and resolution
   - may be modeled on stories read, heard or viewed, or may be based on personal experiences
   - generally includes some dialogue (may be excessive)

   Information text
   - presents the topic or purpose in introduction
   - includes generally relevant information
   - elaborates main ideas with some supporting details
   - has a closing or concluding statement, where appropriate to the form (could be abrupt)
   - follows some of the elements of form (e.g., persuasive writing, basic instructions/procedures, explanations, reports)
   - includes text features (e.g., titles, headings, diagrams) where appropriate

Word Choice
- shows varied verb choices
- includes some effective descriptive words; may overuse some choices

Voice
- shows glimpses of personal style

Sentence Structure
- includes sentences of different lengths and variations in beginnings (most sentences are complete)
- includes some variety in sentence structure (some run-on sentences could result from attempts at more complex structures)

Conventions
- generally shows correct end punctuation
- generally includes correct use of commas in a series and in dates and apostrophes in contractions
- shows attempts at using quotation marks in direct speech
- includes correct use of capital letters for proper names (e.g., people, days of the week, months, common place names), first word in sentences, and the pronoun "I"; generally uses capital letters for common holidays/titles (may use capital letters unnecessarily in a few instances)
- has many familiar and commonly used words spelled correctly
- generally follows "basic" subject/verb agreement
- shows correct use of basic pronouns - subjective case (e.g., "Joe and I")

A <u>strong</u> performance will illustrate writing that

Content
- includes a series of ideas/events related to one topic, maintaining focus
- includes sufficient relevant details or information to expand on the topic or support the main idea

Organization
- demonstrates an increasing awareness of audience and purpose
- demonstrates an increasing awareness of paragraphs
- presents ideas/information in logical sequence; demonstrate some ability to create smooth transitions between ideas
- shows use of a variety of effective connecting words (e.g., although, finally, the next day)

   Narrative/imaginative writing
   - has a beginning that captures the reader's attention, a problem that is developed, and a conclusion that effectively ties up the details of the story
   - develops story elements: characters, setting, plot and resolution
   - shows originality in the creation and expression of ideas
   - includes some effective dialogue

   Information text
   - effectively presents topic in introduction
   - includes relevant information
   - elaborates main ideas with sufficient supporting details
   - has a closing or concluding statement where appropriate to the form
   - follows the basic elements of form (e.g., persuasive writing, basic instructions/procedures, explanations, reports)
   - includes text features effectively (e.g., titles, headings, diagrams, etc.)

Word Choice
- enhances meaning and imagery with strong verb choices
- includes a variety of descriptive words; may overuse some choices

Voice
- includes sensory language or detail that creates a sense of voice or personal style

Sentence Structure
- includes sentences of different lengths with a variety of beginnings, creating an easy-to-read flow; most sentences are complete
- includes a variety of sentence structures (occasional run-on sentences may occur)

Conventions
- use consistently correct end punctuation
- use commas in a series and in dates and apostrophes in contractions
- generally shows quotation marks in direct speech (not necessarily in split quotations)
- includes correct use of capital letters for proper names (e.g., people, days of the week, months, common place names), first word in sentences, pronoun "I"; and in most cases, for common holidays and titles
- has most familiar words spelled correctly
- shows correct use of basic subject/verb agreement
- shows correct use of basic pronouns
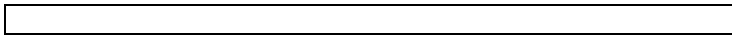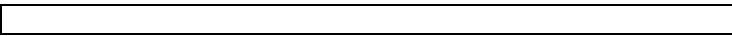
Appropriate Performance

An __appropriate__ performance will illustrate writing that

Content
- includes straightforward and predictable ideas
- includes relevant information with details to support the ideas

Organization
- gives a clear and focussed purpose
- has ideas expressed in paragraphs with supporting details for each main idea
- demonstrates control of sequence with smooth transitions

Narrative/Imaginative Writing
- has a beginning that is clear, with the main characters introduced and the conflict presented
- portrays characters who are based on familiar stereotypes and tend to be 'good' or 'bad'
- presents generally clear dialogue which contributes to character and plot development
- gives definitive endings (could be predictable and/or abrupt)

Information Text
- follows most conventions of the selected form (persuasive writing, reports, letters, invitations, directions, procedures, etc.)
- contains special text features (charts, diagrams, etc.) that are generally clear and related to content
- presents introductions that show a clear purpose
- has text that follows a logical sequence (chronological, cause and effect, etc.)
- ends with a logical conclusion (possibly over generalized)

Word Choice
- consistently includes appropriate and varied word choices to enhance meaning

Voice
- demonstrates an awareness of audience and engagement with subject
- includes glimpses of strong feeling and individuality

Sentence Structure
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and structures
- attempts complex sentence structures (occasional errors)

Conventions
- includes correct capital letters and end punctuation
- includes internal punctuation (commas, quotation marks, and apostrophes) with some competence
- has familiar and commonly used words spelled correctly
- generally follows subject/verb agreement
- incorporates generally correct verb tense

Strong Performance

A __strong__ performance will illustrate writing that

Content
- includes some original and thoughtful ideas
- shows development of information with details to support the ideas

Organization
- shows an engaging and effective introduction
- includes smooth paragraphs with strong connections throughout
- demonstrates command of sequence with fluid transitions

Narrative/Imaginative Writing
- introduces the characters and conflict in an engaging and creative manner
- shows a development of complex characters, settings and plot
- presents clear dialogue that enhances character and plot development
- gives definitive endings (could be surprising or unusual)

Information Text
- follows conventions of the selected form (persuasive writing, reports, letters, invitations, directions, procedures, etc.)
- contains special text features (charts, diagrams, etc.) that are clear and enhance content
- presents introductions that effectively establish purpose and engage the audience
- has text that follows a logical sequence (chronological, cause and effect, etc.) with effective transitions
- ends with a logical and appropriate conclusion

Word Choice
- effectively includes varied and precise word choices to enhance meaning

Voice
- demonstrates a confident awareness of audience and a sincere engagement with subject
- includes strong feeling and individuality

Sentence Structure
- includes a variety of effective sentence lengths and structures
- confidently uses complex sentence structures (minimal errors)

Conventions
- demonstrates skill with the correct use of capital letters and end punctuation
- includes internal punctuation (commas, quotation marks, and apostrophes) with competence
- includes more complex vocabulary (minimal spelling errors)
- correctly follows subject/verb agreement
- incorporates correct use of verb tense