

Student Language Writing Scoring Guide: Grades 6-8 Condensed Version  
Narrative Writing

	<b>6/5: STRONG</b> <b>The writing is thorough and complex, demonstrating strong writing skills.</b>	<b>4: MEETS</b> <b>The writing is complete and demonstrates adequate grade level writing skills.</b>	<b>3: ALMOST MEETS</b> <b>The writing demonstrates progress toward meeting grade level writing skills.</b>	<b>2/1: NEEDS WORK</b> <b>The writing is limited, confusing, or too short to demonstrate grade level writing skills.</b>
<b>IDEAS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and main ideas are very clear and focused.</li> <li>• Supporting details are strong and develop experiences, events, and characters.</li> <li>• Details are specific, interesting and carefully chosen for purpose and audience.</li> <li>• Context and point of view are well established. Narrator and/or characters are introduced.</li> <li>• When used, dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection develop the experiences, events, and/or characters presented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and main ideas are easy to understand.</li> <li>• Supporting details develop experiences, events, and characters.</li> <li>• Details are appropriate for purpose and audience.</li> <li>• Context and point of view are established. Narrator and/or characters are introduced.</li> <li>• When used, dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection help develop the experiences, events, and/or characters presented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and main ideas may be too general or simple.</li> <li>• Supporting details are limited, a little off-topic, or may be simply a list.</li> <li>• Context and point of view may not be established.</li> <li>• Characters are undeveloped.</li> <li>• Dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection are not developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and main ideas are not clear. The reader may have to guess the main idea.</li> <li>• Few supporting details.</li> <li>• Many details are off-topic or are repeated.</li> <li>• The paper may be much too short to present and develop an idea.</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization and sequence of events are well-structured and very easy to follow.</li> <li>• A strong beginning is inviting and makes the reader want to keep reading.</li> <li>• A variety of transitional words and phrases are used effectively.</li> <li>• The ending is satisfying and supports the narrated experiences and events.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks are effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization and sequence of events are easy to follow with details that fit where placed.</li> <li>• The beginning introduces the plot, narrator, or characters.</li> <li>• Transitional words and phrases are used with some variety to signal shifts in time, setting, or action.</li> <li>• The ending supports the narrated experiences and events.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks help the reader follow the writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization and sequence of events may be a little unclear.</li> <li>• The beginning is underdeveloped or too obvious.</li> <li>• Some details seem out of order.</li> <li>• Transitional words and phrases sometimes work, but the same ones may be used too often.</li> <li>• The ending is too obvious or may not support the narrated experiences and events.</li> <li>• Some paragraph breaks may not be in the right places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization is not clear. The writing is hard to follow.</li> <li>• The beginning is ineffective or missing.</li> <li>• Many details are placed where they do not make sense.</li> <li>• Transitions are missing or overused.</li> <li>• The ending is ineffective or missing.</li> <li>• Paragraph breaks may be missing or incorrectly placed.</li> <li>• The paper may be much too short to show organization.</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and topic.</li> <li>• The topic comes to life. The writing shows sincerity, originality, liveliness, honesty, excitement, humor or suspense.</li> <li>• Point of view is consistent throughout the story.</li> <li>• The writer shows deep commitment to the topic and a strong personal voice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer is aware of the audience most of the time and maintains an appropriate voice.</li> <li>• At times, the writing shows sincerity, originality, liveliness, honesty, excitement, humor, or suspense.</li> <li>• The writer seems committed to the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer may not be aware of the audience. The voice is inconsistent.</li> <li>• The writer seems somewhat committed to the topic.</li> <li>• The writing may be too short to show a consistent voice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer seems to be unaware of the audience.</li> <li>• The writing is too formal or too casual.</li> <li>• The writing is flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical.</li> <li>• The writing shows no involvement or commitment to the topic.</li> </ul>

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<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate, strong, specific, powerful words energize the writing.</li> <li>Vocabulary is striking and varied, using sensory language to create vivid images of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</li> <li>Precise words and phrases capture the action and convey experiences and events.</li> <li>Words are natural, effective, and not overdone. Figurative language may be used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words communicate meaning, but may not energize the writing.</li> <li>Words are functional and clear in conveying the intended ideas and events.</li> <li>Many different words, including sensory language, are used to describe characters, events, and setting.</li> <li>Descriptive or figurative language may occasionally seem overdone.</li> <li>Overused sayings or expressions (clichés) are usually avoided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words lack accuracy and variety. Words are general and not specific.</li> <li>Some words are repeated too often.</li> <li>Occasionally, wrong words may be used.</li> <li>Some sensory language may be used to describe experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</li> <li>Overused sayings or expressions (clichés) may appear often.</li> <li>The writing may be too short to show variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words are inaccurate, colorless, or flat.</li> <li>Word choices are extremely limited.</li> <li>Words are repeated over and over again or they do not make sense.</li> <li>Descriptions or experiences, events, setting, and/or characters are dull, repetitive, or missing.</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm.</li> <li>Sentences glide along, with one sentence flowing smoothly into the next.</li> <li>Strong and varied structure makes oral reading easy and enjoyable.</li> <li>There is great variety in sentence beginnings, lengths, and patterns.</li> <li>Dialogue is effective and sounds natural.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is easy to read out loud. It sounds natural.</li> <li>Sentences begin in different ways.</li> <li>Some sentences are shorter and some are longer.</li> <li>Simple sentences read smoothly, but more complex sentences may not be as smooth.</li> <li>Dialogue usually sounds natural.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parts of the writing are easy to read out loud, but other parts are difficult.</li> <li>Some sentence beginnings are the same and some are different.</li> <li>Many sentences are about the same length.</li> <li>Simple sentences read smoothly, but more complex sentences are awkward.</li> <li>Dialogue may not sound natural.</li> <li>The writing may be too short to show variety and control.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the writing is difficult to read out loud. The reader has to slow down or re-read.</li> <li>The writing does not sound natural.</li> <li>Many sentences begin in the same way.</li> <li>Sentences may be short and choppy or long and rambling.</li> <li>Words in sentences may be out of order.</li> <li>Dialogue is awkward or ineffective.</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences are complete with correct punctuation. There are no run-ons, comma splices, or fragments.</li> <li>A wide range of conventions including higher-level punctuation (e.g., colons, semi-colons, ellipses, parentheses, etc.) are used correctly.</li> <li>Even difficult words are spelled correctly.</li> <li>Grammar is correct.</li> <li>Dialogue is correct.</li> <li>Capital letters are correct.</li> <li>Few errors. Little or no need for editing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences are complete with correct punctuation. There are few, if any, run-ons, comma splices, or fragments.</li> <li>Punctuation within sentences is usually correct.</li> <li>Spelling is usually correct.</li> <li>Grammar is usually correct.</li> <li>Verb tense is usually correct. Subjects and verbs go together.</li> <li>Dialogue is usually correct.</li> <li>Capitalization is usually correct.</li> <li>Errors require moderate editing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sentences are complete with correct punctuation. There may be run-ons, comma splices, or fragments.</li> <li>Sentences may contain errors in punctuation.</li> <li>Spelling of common words is sometimes incorrect.</li> <li>Verb tense, subject and verb agreement, and other grammatical errors may appear.</li> <li>Dialogue may contain errors.</li> <li>Capitalization errors are present.</li> <li>Errors distract the reader and require significant editing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences may be incomplete. There are many run-ons, comma splices, and/or fragments.</li> <li>Sentences contain many errors in punctuation.</li> <li>Many spelling errors make reading difficult.</li> <li>Many grammatical errors.</li> <li>Dialogue contains many errors.</li> <li>Capitalization may seem random.</li> <li>Errors require extensive editing.</li> </ul>