

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

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

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