

## To PIE parents, regarding the B.C. Writing Performance Standards Package:

The papers you have just received make up a package that shows parents and students what the B.C. education system's expectations of a student's writing ability are for the end of the year at your child's grade level. Our goal is to provide a step-by-step overview of the expected development in your child's **personal writing** from the beginning of a school year to the end of the year, using the rating scale and the progression from 'not yet meeting expectations' to 'fully meeting expectations.' We believe that this package will be of benefit to you in assessing your child's learning, and guiding each of them in improving their pre-writing and writing strategies and abilities. Our first priority is to improve student learning.

The BC performance standards describe levels of achievement in key areas of learning. The performance standards answer the questions: "*How good is good enough?* What does it look like when a student's work has met the expectations at this grade level?" We divide the expectations for writing for each grade level into four categories (which are probably familiar to you from the report card format that we use): not yet meeting expectations, meeting expectations at a minimal level, fully meeting expectations, and exceeding expectations. In the package we've given you, you will find an explanation of what each of those categories means in the areas of meaning (what the piece of writing is about), style (how language is used), form (following the models of writing) and conventions (following the rules of writing).

Each package also includes a writing sample that gives an example of what a student's writing might look like in each of the four categories of expectations, including some general observations on why each sample fits into that category. These are intended to be helpful in assessing your own child's writing, and in giving direction to you as parents in guiding each of them to improve their writing skills.

Some ways that B.C. performance standards can be useful are:

- They provide feedback to students about their writing;
- They support self-assessment by each child;
- They provide a consistent standard of assessment among teachers, students and parents;
- They document evidence of student growth from the beginning of the year to the end;
- They provide examples teachers and students can refer to.

Some practical suggestions for using these performance standards are:

- Using the rating scale as a checklist with your child to keep track of improvement and growth;
- Using the rating scale with your child(ren)'s teacher at each reporting period to help in assessing your child's progress in writing;
- Using the writing samples provided to help you in evaluating your child(ren)'s own work in order to challenge them and focus on specific learning goals in writing.

We are looking forward to using these performance standards as a shared tool with you to encourage writing skills, to make reporting on writing more meaningful, and to engage your children in assessing their own writing and improving the quality of their personal writing. Please let us know if you have any questions – as partners in education we are truly committed to working with you in encouraging each child's full potential, and we know that this is an excellent way to do that.

## Writing GRADE 3

### ◆ Personal Writing . . . 81

Quick Scale . . . 83

Rating Scale . . . 84

Sample Task: *Journal Entries* . . . 86

### ◆ Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information . . . 91

Quick Scale . . . 93

Rating Scale . . . 94

Sample Task: *Travel Brochures* . . . 96

### ◆ Literary Writing . . . 107

Quick Scale . . . 109

Rating Scale . . . 110

Sample Task: *Animal Stories* . . . 112

# Personal Writing

**S**tudents are frequently asked to write about their thoughts, feelings, and opinions in reaction to current issues, materials they have read or viewed, or their own experiences.

In Grade 3, students often write journal entries, record their responses to reading and viewing, offer views on current issues, and share their experiences. In some cases, these pieces of writing are eventually crafted for an audience; however, most often, they are not revised and edited, and the audience is the teacher or the student himself or herself.

## Key Qualities

The following is a summary of the key qualities of each aspect of personal writing in Grade 3. The *Quick Scale* and *Rating Scale* provide more details regarding specific criteria related to these key qualities.

### MEANING

- ◆ comes from thoughts, feelings, opinions, memories, and reflections

### STYLE

- ◆ is generally reflective
- ◆ demonstrates clarity and some variety in language, but has not been revised or edited

### FORM

- ◆ begins with a clear introduction and follows a logical sequence
- ◆ ideas are connected, although the writing reflects a “stream of consciousness”

### CONVENTIONS

- ◆ follows standard conventions for basic spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure

## Prescribed Learning Outcomes

The BC performance standards for Grade 3 personal writing reflect the following prescribed learning outcomes from Grades 3 of the *English Language Arts K to 7 Integrated Resource Package*. Using the writing performance standards in a comprehensive way will provide teachers with many opportunities to assess these learning outcomes.

### PURPOSES (WRITING)

It is expected that students will:

- ◆ create a variety of clear personal writing and representations that express connections to personal experiences, ideas, and opinions [C1]

### STRATEGIES (WRITING)

*[C4-6] Addressing these learning outcomes helps students in using strategies to develop their writing, but the Writing Performance Standards describe the product not the processes used.*

### THINKING (WRITING)

It is expected that students will:

- ◆ use writing and representing to express personal responses and opinions about experiences and texts [C7]
- ◆ use writing and representing to extend thinking [C8]

### FEATURES (WRITING)

It is expected that students will:

- ◆ use the features and conventions of language to express meaning in their writing and representing [C10]

## Quick Scale: Grade 3 Personal Writing

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March–April of the school year. Personal writing is usually expected to be checked for errors, but not revised or edited.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<b>SNAPSHOT</b>	<i>The writing offers few ideas, and these are often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas; may be vague or hard to follow in places or flawed by frequent basic errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant and logical ideas about the topic or issue.</i>	<i>The writing flows smoothly, offers detail and elaboration, and shows some insight.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas and information • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• often very brief—a statement of opinion without support</li> <li>• details may be irrelevant, vague, or inaccurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opinion or reaction tends to be vague or unsupported</li> <li>• relies on retelling or offering factual details without explanation or analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connects to opinions, experiences, feelings</li> <li>• some explanations, details, examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connects to experiences and feelings; writer’s perspective comes through</li> <li>• supports and elaborates ideas; may make comparisons</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic language</li> <li>• sentences are often long and rambling or short and stilted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language may be vague, repetitive</li> <li>• tends to rely on simple and compound sentences; may include run-on sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is clear and shows some variety</li> <li>• some variety in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is clear and varied; some precision</li> <li>• flows smoothly</li> <li>• variety of sentence patterns and lengths</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> • opening • organization and sequence • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be very brief</li> <li>• no introduction; tends to ramble</li> <li>• repeats a few basic connecting words (e.g., <i>and then</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some sequence; connections among ideas may be unclear</li> <li>• introduces topic, but often loses focus</li> <li>• some transitions may be abrupt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logically sequenced</li> <li>• introduces and generally sticks to topic; conclusion may be abrupt</li> <li>• variety of connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logically sequenced and connected</li> <li>• clear beginning, middle, and end; sticks to topic</li> <li>• smooth transitions</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • end of sentence punctuation • correct pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent, repeated errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure often make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>• capitals often omitted or misused</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic spelling and sentence punctuation is correct; errors do not interfere with meaning, although some parts may be hard to read</li> <li>• may include run-on or incomplete sentences; may overuse pronouns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure are generally correct; minor errors do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>• may include errors with commas, quotation marks, or agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language</li> <li>• may overuse some punctuation marks or make occasional errors in agreement</li> </ul>

## Rating Scale: Grade 3 Personal Writing

Student achievement in personal writing by March-April of Grade 3 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)
<b>SNAPSHOT</b>	<i>The writing offers few ideas, and these are often disjointed, illogical, and hard to understand. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas; may be vague or hard to follow in places or flawed by frequent basic errors.</i>
<b>MEANING</b> • ideas and information • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• often very brief—a statement of opinion without support</li> <li>• little explanation; details may be irrelevant, vague, or inaccurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opinion or reaction tends to be vague or unsupported</li> <li>• often relies on retelling or offering factual details without explanation or analysis</li> </ul>
<b>STYLE</b> • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic, simple language</li> <li>• may be a series of short, stilted sentences or one or more long, rambling sentence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language may be somewhat vague and repetitive</li> <li>• tends to rely on simple and compound sentences (sometimes may run on or be incomplete)</li> </ul>
<b>FORM</b> • opening • organization and sequence • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be very brief</li> <li>• may have no opening or introduction</li> <li>• tends to ramble without clear sequence or connections</li> <li>• repeats the same connecting words (e.g., <i>and then</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shows some attention to sequence; connections among ideas may be unclear in places</li> <li>• usually introduces the topic or issue</li> <li>• often loses focus; may ramble in places</li> <li>• may omit connecting words in places, which causes abrupt transitions</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • end of sentence punctuation • correct pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent, repeated errors make the writing hard to understand</li> <li>• many incomplete or run-on sentences</li> <li>• simple, familiar words may be misspelled</li> <li>• capitals and periods often omitted or misused</li> <li>• pronouns are often confusing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may include several errors, but these do not interfere with basic meaning</li> <li>• may include some run-on or incomplete sentences</li> <li>• most simple, familiar words are spelled correctly</li> <li>• uses capitals and periods correctly; may overuse exclamation marks</li> <li>• may overuse pronouns in places</li> </ul>

The rating scale may require adaptation when used for different purposes and tasks.

	<b>Fully Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>
	<i>The writing is clear and easy to follow, with relevant and logical ideas about the topic or issue.</i>	<i>The writing flows smoothly, offers detail and elaboration, and shows some insight.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions; may focus on retelling the experience rather than reacting or analyzing</li> <li>• provides some explanations, details, and examples; may include irrelevant information in places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• makes connections to personal experiences and feelings; personality and views of the writer come through</li> <li>• supports and elaborates ideas with explanations, details, and examples; may draw comparisons with other situations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is clear and shows some variety</li> <li>• some variety in sentence length and pattern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language is clear and varied; may try to be precise in places to show emphasis or make ideas clear</li> <li>• flows smoothly, with a variety of sentence patterns and lengths</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas are generally logically sequenced, although there may be some breaks; connections may not always be clear</li> <li>• topic or issue is introduced in the beginning; the end may seem abrupt</li> <li>• generally sticks to the topic; may wander occasionally</li> <li>• uses a variety of connecting words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas are logically connected and sequenced, although there may be some breaks where a new idea or point is introduced</li> <li>• writing flows smoothly through beginning, middle, and end</li> <li>• focused; sticks to the topic</li> <li>• transitions are smooth</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may include some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning</li> <li>• most sentences are complete</li> <li>• most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes</li> <li>• basic sentence punctuation is correct; the student may make errors when using commas or quotation marks</li> <li>• most pronouns are clear and correct; may be some errors in agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• few errors; these do not interfere with meaning and are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language</li> <li>• sentences are complete</li> <li>• most words are spelled correctly</li> <li>• basic sentence punctuation is correct, including dialogue; may overuse exclamation marks or commas</li> <li>• pronouns are clear and correct; may be occasional errors in agreement</li> </ul>

## Sample Task: Journal Entries

### CONTEXT

Students in this class regularly write journal entries about specific activities and experiences. This activity followed a visit to the Orpheum Theatre, during which students saw a performance of the orchestra and members of *Ballet BC*.

### PROCESS

The class discussed their trip and shared some of their ideas and feelings. Students were then asked to write about their trip. They were reminded to:

- ◆ tell about the things that were most interesting or surprising to them—things that stood out in their minds and memories
- ◆ let the reader know how they felt about the experience
- ◆ check their writing for correct spelling, capitals, and punctuation, and for complete sentences
- ◆ circle any words they weren't sure of

Students spent approximately 40 minutes writing independently. They were encouraged to use classroom word lists for some of the vocabulary related to their trip (e.g., *orchestra*, *Orpheum*) and to refer to their personal dictionaries.

The teacher responded to specific questions (e.g., “What do you call instruments like the drums?”) and encouraged students who were having difficulty thinking of things to write.



## NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

### Teacher's Observations

The student has recorded a string of activities joined with *and*.

- ◆ very brief, with no explanation or detail
- ◆ one long rambling sentence
- ◆ frequent errors make the writing hard to understand
- ◆ capitals often omitted or misused

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

My Trip to the  
Orpheum theatre  
today we went  
to the Vancouver  
symphony and  
we saw some ballet  
dance, and we

### TRANSCRIPT

#### My Trip to the Orpheum theatre

today we went to the Vancouver Symphony and we saw some ballet dance and we heard the loomy teens. and we heard the simpson and in the moode and my fauovorot instmmont is the ——— and the ——— and a som that is in a movei.

## MEETS EXPECTATIONS (MINIMAL LEVEL)

### Teacher's Observations

The student has listed various instruments and activities without explanation.

- ◆ opinions and reactions are unsupported
- ◆ offers factual details without explanation or analysis
- ◆ relies on simple and compound sentences
- ◆ omits connecting words
- ◆ errors do not interfere with meaning

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

My trip to  
the Orpheum Theatre  
Today I went to the  
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra  
to watch the people play  
the music. There was the

### TRANSCRIPT

#### My trip to the Orpheum Theatre

Today I went to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra to watch the people play the music. There was the keyboard family and the woodwind family, string family, bass family, percussion family. There was ballet and our class and all the aldeinesnt heard simpson and the perant trap, loon tune, and mad about the mouse. My favertie song is the perant trap and mad about the mouse. My favertie instrument is the fleut.

## FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

### Teacher's Observations

The student simply but clearly offers observations and opinions about a field trip.

- ◆ makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- ◆ provides some explanations, details, and examples
- ◆ language is somewhat vague and repetitive
- ◆ some variety in sentence length and pattern
- ◆ ideas are logically sequenced
- ◆ includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT			■	
MEANING			■	
STYLE		■	■	
FORM		■	■	
CONVENTIONS			■	

We went to the Vancouver  
Symphony Orchestra Theatre.  
When we went to the  
theatre I felt exited  
because it was so big

### TRANSCRIPT

We went to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Theatre. When we went to the theatre I felt exited because it was so big and there was so many people. My favorite song was the simpsons because I thought that they didn't now the Simpsons. When I go back home I will still remember how big it was and how many people where there. I was surprised how many chairs there was. The people there did a good job. The Orpheum theatre was fun.

# BC Performance Standards

## Grade 3 Writing

### Additional Samples

The BC performance standards for Grade 3 writing consist of rating scales that describe student achievement in March-April of a given year and samples illustrating typical tasks and student work at all four levels described in the rating scales.

The additional sample tasks for Grade 3 writing included here generally show two examples of student work for each task:

- one that meets expectations at a minimal level
- one that fully meets expectations

<b>GRADE 3: PERSONAL, IMPROMPTU WRITING.....</b>	<b>2</b>
SAMPLE 1: JOURNAL ENTRIES ABOUT A FIELD TRIP .....	2
SAMPLE 2: RESPONSE TO A STORY.....	8
SAMPLE 3: REFLECTIONS ABOUT A FAVOURITE PLACE .....	14
SAMPLE 4: “THE BEST THINGS ABOUT SNOW ARE . . .” .....	20
<b>GRADE 3: WRITING TO COMMUNICATE IDEAS AND INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>25</b>
SAMPLE 1: PERSUASIVE LETTERS .....	25
SAMPLE 2: SETTING UP AN OBSTACLE COURSE.....	30
SAMPLE 3: RECOUNTING AN EXPERIMENT .....	42
<b>GRADE 3: WRITING STORIES AND POEMS.....</b>	<b>45</b>
SAMPLE 1: POURQUOI STORIES .....	45
SAMPLE 2: MYSTERY STORIES .....	51
SAMPLE 3: NEW VERSIONS OF “STONE SOUP” .....	57
SAMPLE 4: PUSSY WILLOW POEMS.....	66

## **Grade 3: Personal, Impromptu Writing**

### ***Sample 1: Journal Entries About a Field Trip***

#### **Context**

Students in this class regularly recorded their experiences, observations, ideas, and feelings in journals. Sometimes students were encouraged to choose their own topics; other times, the teacher assigned a topic.

#### **Process**

Following a field trip to the IMAX theatre, the class discussed the experience, and the teacher recorded their ideas on the chalkboard. The teacher asked them to write journal entries of at least one page about their experiences. Students had time to reread their work and correct surface errors, but they did not make “good” copies.

## **Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

Although the writing begins with sentences marked by capital letters and periods, the last part is written as one long, run-on sentence. The writing is repetitive. Rather than developing ideas with details, the writer has listed everything that happened on the field trip.

- opinion or reaction is vague and unsupported
- relies on retelling, without explanation or analysis
- language is vague and repetitive
- relies on simple and compound sentences
- shows some attention to sequence
- many incomplete or run-on sentences
- simple, familiar words are misspelled
- capitals and periods often omitted

In Tuesday we went to see a movie at  
The Ima theatre. It was a good movie. It was  
about space the movie was called  
Destiny in space. After we went to a cafeteria  
to eat lunch. Then we walked around the mall  
we bought some snakes. In the mall our

class got to form Dinoworld town. It cost  
\$9.50 to get in that is a lot of money to pay.  
Then we had to go back to the school  
to get ready to go home. First we had to  
take the sky train to when we left our  
bags that we parked. Well we were on the  
sky train we went over the Fraser river. It  
was very big and also it has a lot of bridges. When  
we got home at school we got home at 3:50.  
We all were glad that we went to  
see the movie and it was great to go on the sky  
train. Some times I thought we were going to fall  
off the tracks and land in the middle of  
the road now the bell rings by that you for  
come to read this passage.

## **Fully Meets Expectations**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

The writing offers a straightforward, easy-to-follow retelling of the field trip.

- focuses on retelling the experience rather than reacting or analyzing
- provides some explanations, details, and examples
- language is somewhat vague and repetitive
- some variety in sentence length and pattern
- ideas are generally logically sequenced
- includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning (e.g., *are/our; travled*)



On Tuesday, xxx xx xxx are class  
went to the Imax theatre We trav  
traveled to Imax theater with a  
sky train. Our class watched  
Destiny in space when we  
watched Destiny in space it  
felt like we were going up and  
down on Mars and Venus There  
was another class watching  
Destiny in space from a  
different school. When we watched  
it we saw the Canada  
arm. After we watched it we  
went down to the Cafeteria

We took the sky-train to the  
Imax theatre. The sky-train  
was at Surrey. We were the  
last stop. We started on  
King George. There were about 18  
stops so we stoped about 18  
times. Our class passed about  
6 rivers and 3 bridges about.  
We passed Science world, Junk  
Yards, Home Depot, and some  
other places. We passed McDo-  
nalds and some stores.

### **Grade 3: Personal, Impromptu Writing**

#### ***Sample 2: Response to a Story***

##### **Context**

Students previously had several opportunities to summarize stories they had read and to respond to literature, both orally and in writing.

##### **Process**

The teacher read to the class the story *The Northern Lights: The Soccer Trails*, by Michael Kusugak and Vladyana Krykorka. Students reread the story independently, then wrote summaries and responses. They were asked to:

- summarize the story
- respond to the story using prompts such as:
  - I liked the part where . . .
  - I didn't like the part where . . .
  - Rich language I enjoyed was . . .
  - I felt . . . when . . .
  - This reminded me of . . .
  - It surprised me when . . .
  - I wondered about . . .
- close with an opinion of the story

Students did not revise their work, but they were encouraged to check for errors and make corrections.

**Note:** This was an integrated reading/writing activity. In this section, only the analysis for writing is described.

## **Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

The writing features personal connections to the selection, but relationships between the ideas are not always clear.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- provides some explanations, details, and examples
- language is somewhat vague and repetitive
- relies on simple and compound sentences (sentences run on or are incomplete in places)
- omits connecting words in places, which causes abrupt transitions (e.g., the last sentence)
- includes several errors, but these do not interfere with basic meaning

# Northern Lights The Soccer Trails

In this story Kataujag's problem is that the mother gets very sick and dies. But Kataujag is very sad. But she sees her mother in the sky. I felt sad when Kataujag's mother died. It reminds me of my gramma dying from a heartache. I feel really sad and so will Kataujag. I liked the part when Kataujag saw her mother in the sky because it makes me happy like if my mother died and I saw her in the moon light. I wondered about how Kataujag's mother came back to life in the sky. It is kind of strange. From one to ten I pick 5 because you would like it.

## **Fully Meets Expectations**

### *Teacher's Observations*

The writing is clear, straightforward, and easy to follow.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions; focuses on retelling rather than reacting or analyzing
- provides some explanations, details, and examples
- language is clear and shows some variety
- ideas are generally logically sequenced; connections are not always clear (e.g., connection between walrus head and firecrackers is not clear)
- includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning (e.g., verb tenses are not consistent)

# Northern Lights The Soccer Trail



This story is about a girl named Kataujag. Kataujag's mother died and Kataujag was really sad. Kataujag's grandmother told Kataujag that when you see northern lights that mean your mother is in heaven playing soccer. Kataujag was happy when her grandmother told her that. Now Kataujag is happy. I liked the part when the northern lights kick the frozen walrus head because it was funny.

It reminded me of when I saw firecrackers. I felt happy when Kataujag saw

the northern light because  
she felt happy. I think  
you should read this book  
because it is a good story.



### **Grade 3: Personal, Impromptu Writing**

#### ***Sample 3: Reflections About a Favourite Place***

##### **Context**

Students in this class frequently write on a wide range of topics. They have learned a variety of ways to generate ideas about topics, including webbing, brainstorming, and questioning.

##### **Process**

Students brainstormed a list of some of their favourite places, and the teacher recorded their ideas on the chalkboard. Students discussed what makes a place “special.” They then spent 10 minutes developing individual webs to record details about one of their favourite places. During the webbing, the teacher responded to questions and offered advice.

Students then had 20 minutes to write a first draft about a favourite place. The teacher encouraged them to reread and correct their work, but they did not make “good” copies.

## **Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

The work is characterized by short, choppy sentences that offer loosely connected ideas about a special place, Bear Creek.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- relies on offering factual details, without explanation or analysis
- language is somewhat vague and repetitive
- a series of short, stilted sentences
- has no opening or introduction
- omits connecting words, causing abrupt transitions
- includes several errors, but these do not interfere with basic meaning



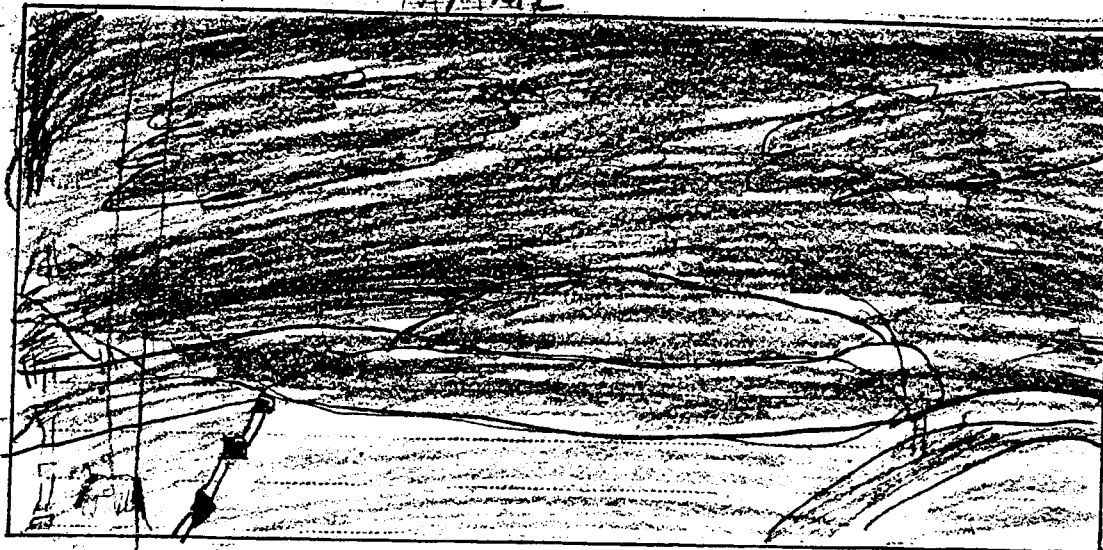
Bear Creek  
I like it because it is small. I like  
going out deep. I like it when other  
kids are there. There are nine parking  
spots. It is shady. Bear Creek has a  
lake. The lake's name is Horrasem  
Lake. The water is green. Big  
camping spots for cars and tents.  
It freeze over in the winter.

## **Fully Meets Expectations**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

The writing is clear and offers personal connections developed with some supporting detail.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- provides some explanations, details, and examples; includes irrelevant information in places (e.g., names of horses)
- language is somewhat vague and repetitive (e.g., *very*)
- generally sticks to the topic
- most sentences are complete
- most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes



In Clinton

I like Clinton because we got one of my mom's friends house in Clinton. It's on a lot of property. It's is very peaceful and very quiet. We get invited all the time. we ushely get invited in July. We stay for almost a month. When I am up there I feel very very happy, I feel like I could live there for ever. we sleep in the front of the horse trailer in a room that is built to sleep in.

We take me my brother my mom +  
dad. We take four of my horses Tango,  
Reinaga, Teddy and Flicer. Every morning  
we go riding on a trail. We eat porrage  
for breakfast. We swim in a lake. We  
always watch the sun set. That's my favorite  
place.

### **Grade 3: Personal, Impromptu Writing**

#### ***Sample 4: “The Best Things About Snow Are . . .”***

##### **Context**

Students in this class regularly wrote journal entries, sometimes on topics of their own choosing and sometimes in response to prompts provided by the teacher. These students live in a northern community.

##### **Process**

During the first snowfall of the year, the teacher asked students to talk about some of the things they were looking forward to doing in winter. They also discussed some of the things they were not looking forward to.

Students wrote journal entries independently in response to the prompt: *The best things about snow are . . .* The teacher noted that the stem gave some students problems because they tried to use it as the beginning of sentences about just one thing. In retrospect, the teacher would have simply given students a direct question: What are the best things about snow?

Students wrote independently for 10 minutes. They did not revise their work.

## **Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)**

### ***Teacher's Observations***

The writing offers some personal connections. It is written as one long run-on sentence, which makes it hard to follow in places.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- provides some explanations, details, and examples
- language is somewhat vague and repetitive
- most simple, familiar words are spelled correctly
- capitals and periods often omitted



The best things about snow  
are I can make snow  
forts and snowmans & snow angels.  
& pull some branches that  
have snow on them so  
they snow falls down on  
me so I have a saw  
made out of snow. the worst  
things about snow is  
its cold.

## **Fully Meets Expectations**

### *Teacher's Observations*

The writing is clear and straightforward, and it sticks to the topic.

- makes connections to personal experiences, feelings, and opinions
- provides some details and examples (e.g., “that is what I did bufor school today”)
- relies on simple and compound sentences
- most sentences are complete
- most simple, familiar words are spelled correctly, but there are several errors (e.g., *makeing, evry, sum times, shuvuling, bufor, are/our*)
- basic sentence punctuation is correct

The best things about snow are  
makeing big snow balls and  
then playing on them evry  
day after school.

I sum times like shuvuling  
the walk in the morning  
bufor school that is what  
I did bufor school today.

The worst things about are  
you can't throw snow at  
are house or at are school.