

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.

BC Performance Standards

Writing GRADE 4

◆ **Personal Writing ... 121**

Quick Scale ... 123

Rating Scale ... 124

Sample Task: *Spring Break Journal Writing* ... 126

◆ **Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information ... 131**

Quick Scales

Reports, Articles, and Letters ... 134

Instructions and Procedures ... 135

Rating Scale ... 136

Sample Task: *A Teaching Page* ... 138

◆ **Literary Writing ... 149**

Quick Scales

Stories ... 152

Poems ... 153

Rating Scale ... 154

Sample Task: *The Cloak of Invisibility* ... 156

Personal Writing

Students 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 4, 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 4. 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.

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, grammar and sentence structure

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

The BC performance standards for Grade 4 personal writing reflect the following prescribed learning outcomes from Grade 4 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:

- ◆ write clear, focused personal writing for a range of purposes and audiences that demonstrates connections to personal experiences, ideas, and opinions [C1]

STRATEGIES (WRITING)

[C5-7] 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 relevant opinions in response to experiences and texts [C8]
- ◆ use writing and representing to extend thinking [C9]

FEATURES (WRITING)

It is expected that students will:

- ◆ use the features and conventions of language to express meaning in their writing and representing [C11]

Quick Scale: Grade 4 Personal Writing

This 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
SNAPSHOT	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development; parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.</i>	<i>The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Growing control of written language; few errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.</i>
MEANING • ideas • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> purpose or topic may be unclear few details; may be copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retells; may give some opinions few relevant details, reasons, and explanations; often relies on ideas from class discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling some supporting details, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a point of view or opinion with a sense of individuality develops ideas with some engaging details, reasons, and examples
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic language; often errors in word choice poorly constructed sentences; little variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally simple language; little variety simple and compound sentences; little variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear, direct language; some variety some variety in sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> language is varied; often tries new words flows smoothly; has sentence variety
FORM • beginning • organization and sequence • connecting words • ending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> beginning may be confusing unfocused; ideas seem unrelated to topic; may be very short disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether ending may be missing or illogical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually identifies the topic middle is often simply a list of loosely related events repeats a few simple connecting words (e.g., and, then, so); may omit them in places often omits endings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduces the topic middle is often a list of related but undeveloped reasons, examples, and details uses a variety of connecting words ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduces the topic, often in an engaging way develops topic through relevant, appropriate ideas, logically organized smooth transitions; range of effective connecting words has a conclusion
CONVENTIONS • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/ usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> frequent, repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand many incomplete or run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> several errors; these may make parts hard to follow most simple sentences are correct; some incomplete or run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some errors, but these do not affect meaning most sentences are complete; few run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> few errors; these are usually caused by taking risks complete sentences; may include some errors in long or complex sentences

Rating Scale: Grade 4 Personal Writing

Student achievement in personal writing by March–April of Grade 4 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)
SNAPSHOT	<i>The writing is often very brief, disjointed, or illogical and is flawed by repeated basic errors. The student needs ongoing support.</i>	<i>The writing presents loosely connected ideas with little development (may be short); parts may be confusing or flawed by frequent errors.</i>
MEANING • ideas • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose or topic may be unclear • few details; these are often copied or unrelated to the topic; often very short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on retelling; may include some general reactions and opinions • few details, reasons, and explanations; often relies heavily on ideas discussed in class or includes unnecessary detail
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic language; often includes errors in word choice • sentences are poorly constructed, with little variety or control (may be written as one sentence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally simple language with little variety • relies on simple and compound sentences; little variety
FORM • beginning • focus • organization and sequence • connecting words • ending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beginning may be confusing, with no clear topic or purpose • unfocused; ideas often seem unrelated to topic or to each other • little development; often very short • disjointed; overuses a few connecting words (e.g., and, then) or omits them altogether • ending may be missing or illogical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually identifies the topic in a title or first sentence • most ideas are loosely related to the topic • middle is often simply a list of events in the order they occurred • repeats a few simple connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but); may omit them in places, causing abrupt transitions • often omits endings
CONVENTIONS • complete sentences • spelling • capitals • punctuation • grammar/ usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand • many incomplete or run-on sentences • may misspell simple words; word endings may be omitted or formed incorrectly • capitals and periods often omitted or misused • frequent errors in pronouns (overuse; noun-pronoun agreement) and verbs (tense; subject-verb agreement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes several errors; these may make parts hard to follow • most simple sentences are correct; may include some incomplete or run-on sentences • most simple words are spelled correctly • most basic sentence punctuation is correct; commas and quotation marks may be inconsistent • some grammatical errors, often with pronouns (overuse; noun-pronoun agreement; incorrect form) and verbs (subject-verb agreement; tense)

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

Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><i>The writing presents relevant, easy-to-follow ideas with some detail and explanation. Shows growing control of written language; few errors.</i></p>	<p><i>The writing is clear, focused, and developed with some elaboration and individuality.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offers some analysis and reaction, often connected to retelling an experience; there is an emerging sense of individuality • elaborates main idea(s) with some supporting details, reasons, and explanations (e.g., how student felt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develops a point of view or opinion with some sense of individuality or originality; personality of the writer comes through • develops ideas through some engaging details, reasons, and examples, often with some emotional impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally relies on clear and direct language, with some variety (e.g., adjectives, interesting verbs) • some variety in sentence length and pattern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language is varied and increasingly precise; often experiments with figurative language or with new words and expressions • flows smoothly, with a variety of sentence patterns and lengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduces the topic or issue • sticks to the topic; ideas are relevant (but may not be developed) • middle often consists of a list of related reasons, examples, and details; organization is easy to follow • uses a variety of ordering or connecting words (e.g., next, then, so, because, after, when, but) to make connections among ideas; may omit these in places • ending may be abrupt (i.e., ends, but does not conclude) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduces the topic or issue in a clear and often engaging way • clearly focused; selects relevant and appropriate material to develop the topic • sequence is logical • transitions are smooth; uses an increasing range of transitional words to make connections among ideas • includes a conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some errors, but these do not affect meaning • most sentences are complete; few run-ons • most familiar words are spelled correctly, including capitals and apostrophes • basic sentence punctuation is correct; may be errors in use of commas as they try to write longer, more complex sentences • most pronouns and verbs are correct; may be some errors in subject-verb agreement, especially where there are compound subjects, and in pronoun form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few errors; these not do interfere with meaning and are usually caused by taking risks with newly acquired or complex language • sentences are complete; longer or more complex sentences may include some errors • most words are spelled correctly; may include errors in complex, specialized, or technical words • basic sentence punctuation is correct, including commas and quotation marks • pronouns and verbs are correct; may be occasional errors in long or complex sentences

Sample Task: Spring Break Journal Writing

CONTEXT

Students in this class write daily journal entries about specific topics. This activity took place immediately before and after spring break. Before spring break, students wrote about their plans; after spring break, they reflected on their activities. Most of the samples included here were written after spring break.

PROCESS

As a whole class, students were invited to share their thoughts and feelings about their spring break experiences. The teacher asked students to think about memorable experiences they may have had during their holidays. Initially, students shared with a partner, and then the partner had one minute to summarize the experience and present it to the whole class.

Students were asked to write about their personal experiences in their daily journals. The teacher asked them to include the most interesting or exciting things that happened to them and to elaborate on their main ideas and provide supporting details and explanations about how they felt. They spent approximately 15 minutes writing independently.

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing is brief, disjointed, and flawed by repeated basic errors.

- ◆ few details
- ◆ basic language that often includes errors in word choice
- ◆ sentences are poorly constructed
- ◆ little development
- ◆ most ideas are loosely related to the topic
- ◆ repeated errors make the writing difficult to understand in parts
- ◆ many incomplete and run-on sentences

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

the next day I we went to
a Bather part all 5 of us Sony
went a lots of ther kid
were there to we had a lot
of fun and after all 5 of us
went to go see a mive is and it
was fun. on Sunday all of us
Went to one of my friend house

TRANSCRIPT

On Friday I went With my Dad to his friend house my little siste came to We sou
a meive at my dad friend house and the me and my little SiSter went to go and
eat something We had Some Cowen. I had Three and my had two. the next day
I we went to a Bather part all 5 of us Soney went a lots of ther kid were there to
We had a lot Of fun and after all 5 of us went to go see a mive is and it was Fun.
On Sunday all of us Went to one of my friend house he had three boy we had fun
went them.

The end

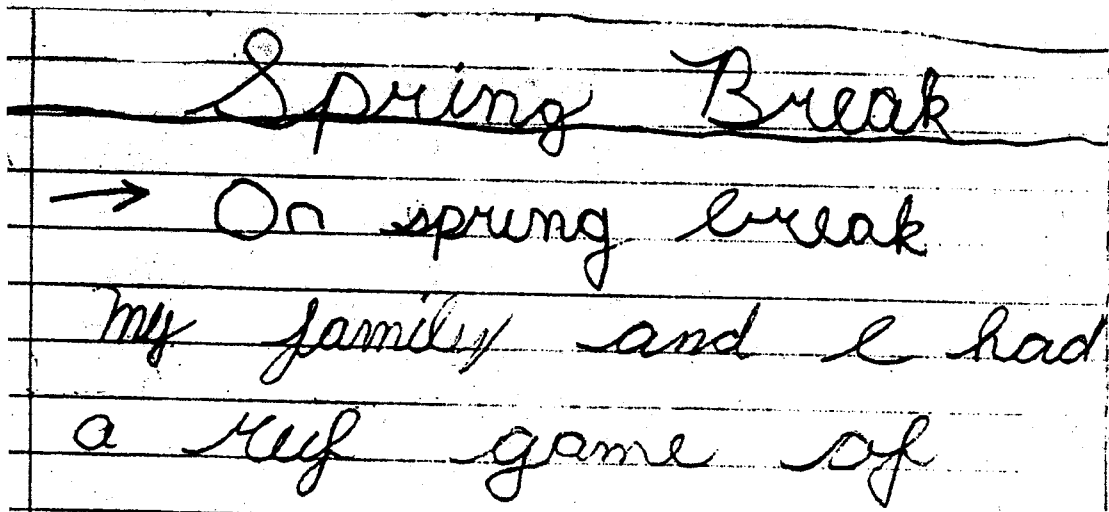
MEETS EXPECTATIONS (MINIMAL LEVEL)

Teacher's Observations

The writing is on topic but with little development.

- ◆ focuses on retelling
- ◆ few details, reasons, or explanations
- ◆ generally simple language with little variety
- ◆ identifies the topic in the first sentence
- ◆ most simple words are spelled correctly
- ◆ includes errors, but these do not interfere with meaning

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				



TRANSCRIPT

Spring Break

On spring break my family and I had a reef game of hocey at my cabin in Marshal lake. On my team it was me, sister——, cousin ——, My granpa, and my Uncel ——. We had to play in our loul's becauset the ice was real lumpy to scate on. I sure had a lot of fun!

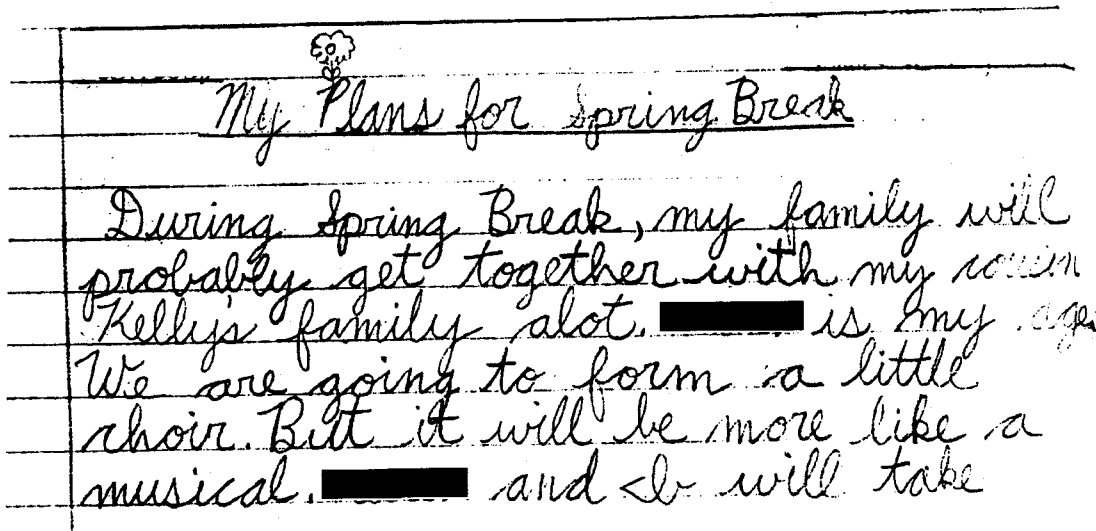
FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing is relevant and easy to follow. It shows growing control of written language, with few errors.

- ◆ elaborates on main idea with some supporting details
- ◆ clear, simple, and direct language
- ◆ sticks to the topic with relevant ideas
- ◆ uses a variety of connecting words (e.g., then, but)
- ◆ sentences are complete
- ◆ legible and clearly presented

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				



TRANSCRIPT

My Plans for Spring Break

During Spring Break, my family will probably get together with my cousin — family alot. — is my age We are going to form a little choir. But it will be more like a musical. — and I will take turns playing the piano. Then, my brother and her sister aged four and one of us will chose a topic and make up a song. I might have a sleepover at her house. We won't go on vacation But after spring break, we will go on vacation.

"Good thoughts

Good words

Good deeds!"

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing is focused and developed. It features elaboration on the topic, with a clear sense of individuality.

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

- ◆ personality of the writer comes through
- ◆ develops ideas through engaging details and examples with emotional impact
- ◆ language is varied and precise
- ◆ flows smoothly, with a variety of sentence lengths
- ◆ introduces the topic in an engaging way
- ◆ transitions are smooth
- ◆ few errors
- ◆ most words are spelled correctly, and punctuation is correct

Spring Break Adventures
I had a great spring break! The reason I said 'nothing' this morning is because the things I did were all cool!

TRANSCRIPT

Spring Break Adventures

I had a great spring break! The reason I said 'nothing' this morning is because the things I did were all cool! Except for my soccer tournament It was O.K. but not great On Monday wew went swimming. and almost got eaten 'cause we were in shark infested water! (Not! We were at Eileen—) On Tuesday my friend and I slept in the jungle and almost got eaten by piranas! (No! I almost got bitten by Kisses!) On Wednesday we were almost food poisoned. (Not! I went to ABC with my nana.) On Thursday I was almost drowned by flesh eating aliens! (You people are so gulable! My Grandma was pulling me under!) On Friday —— almost broke her arm when someone pushed her into the ocean! ("Sigh!" No she got a bruise because she slipped into a creek.) That was sure a weird spring break!

GRADE 4 WRITING: Additional Tasks/Samples

Personal/Impromptu Writing 1 task

Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information tasks

Literary Writing tasks

Grade 4 Personal/impromptu Writing: Additional Sample 1

In-Role Response to the short story 'Night of the Ray'

Context

Students in this class are frequently asked to assume roles of characters from stories or novels they are reading. They are often involved in role-playing situations from the story prior to writing their personal responses.

Process

Prior to reading the story, students responded to seven statements using an anticipation guide. They responded individually and then discussed their responses as a whole class. A short discussion on fishing developed as a result of student responses.

The teacher read the story to the class as students followed the reading in their individual copies. After hearing the story, students returned to their anticipation guides and recorded ideas conveyed in the story, with evidence to support their responses. Students shared their responses through a whole class discussion.

Students were asked to assume the role of the boy as he was yanked into the water by the ray. The teacher asked students to write how they would feel if they were the boy at this point in the story and to describe their thoughts, and feelings.

Not Yet Within Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observation

The writing is very brief, disjointed and illogical. This student needs ongoing support.

- few details
- topic is unclear
- sentence is poorly constructed (written as one sentence)
- little development and very short
- misspells simple words

I was caught by a shark and
I was scared because I got
pold over my pedal boat, and
a pte came up and I hite
it and the string broke.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The response is a series of loosely connected ideas with little development.

- focuses on retelling with some general reaction
- relies on simple and compound sentences
- beginning may be confusing with no clear purpose
- most ideas are loosely related to the topic
- includes several errors which do not interfere with the meaning
- most basic sentence punctuation is correct

My feelings would be
like I'd be very scared
and I would comsontaring
on being calm and breathing
and pulling. If I was
that boy I would't go out
at night I'd be very.

scared at the time of seeing
the stingray. I would think
like at the time of the pilings
and larnacies I'd think
I'm going to die right
if I was in his place
I would be very scared &
fritended. I wouldn't
want to be smashed
to ribbons but after I
think fishing at night
is not good

Fully Meets Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is relevant and easy to follow with some detail and explanation.

- offers some analysis and reaction
- elaborates on the main idea with some supporting reasons
- some variety in sentence length and pattern
- sticks to the topic using relevant ideas
- most familiar words are spelled correctly
- some errors but these do not affect the meaning

Night of the Ray

page 1

I was very scared, as the ray fought as hard, as it could. I tried to pull the ray out of the water but it was useless as the ray pulled me out of my little boat. The ray pulled me across the water I was catching a lot of water in my mouth. It taste terrible. All of a sudden I was pulled under water I went very deep under water. All of a sudden I hit the bottom I tried to stop the ray but the ground was all mushy I could barely hold my breathing a head I could see the pilings I hope I would die. I was getting closer every second. All of a sudden the ray pulled so hard that the rope slipped off. My hand was bleeding I was so scared.

The End

Exceeds Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear, focused and developed with elaboration and individuality.

- develops the writing with a sense of originality
- language is varied and increasingly precise
- introduces the topic in an engaging way
- sequence is logical
- transitions are smooth
- sentences are complete

Night of the Ray

I was caught. I was both scared and bewildered. The stingray was pulling me deeper and I was getting more and more frightened. I felt the blood swelling up inside my body because of the rope. It was like going down, down, down a 50 foot high hill on a roller coaster and being afraid of heights. I felt the flesh and everything. I was longing to pull away with the net but couldn't, so I gathered up all my courage and broke the net. I shot off the bottom like a bullet. I had had a tour. I did not want again. I gasped for breath at the surface and swam to the nearest rock. I quickly undid the rope and felt the blood come out. It felt dreadful. Feeling like I had committed murder I dumped the fish I had caught back into the water. I knew what it felt like and would never do it to another fish again.

The End.