

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 7

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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 7, 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 7. 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

- ◆ demonstrates clarity and some variety in language

FORM

- ◆ begins with a clear introduction and follows a logical sequence through to a conclusion

CONVENTIONS

- ◆ follows standard conventions for basic spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure; has been checked for errors

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

The BC performance standards for Grade 7 personal writing reflect the following prescribed learning outcomes from Grade 7 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 a variety of clear, focussed 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 critique, express personal responses and relevant opinions, and respond 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 7 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
SNAPSHOT	<i>The writing consists of loosely connected ideas; often includes serious errors.</i>	<i>The writing is somewhat general, but completes the basic task; may be flawed by errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, with some insight and development.</i>	<i>The writing is expressive, with some sophistication or complexity.</i>
MEANING • ideas and information • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose or point of view unclear • relies on retelling or listing • ideas are not developed; information may be misinterpreted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant reactions and ideas • straightforward and direct • uses details and examples; some may be inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reactions and ideas with some insight • may speculate, generalize • accurate details, examples; logical explanations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some insight and originality • often uses humour or comparisons • details, examples, and explanations develop analysis or arguments
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple, repetitive language • short, simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some descriptive or expressive language • variety of sentence lengths; repeats simple patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear and varied language • variety of sentence lengths and patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language is varied for effect; some precision • flows smoothly; variety of sentence structures
FORM • opening • organization and sequence • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • weak introduction; abrupt conclusion • sequence may be confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction is often effective; middle and end undeveloped • “stream of consciousness” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often starts strong, then develops in predictable ways • logical sequence and connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong opening; well-defined middle and end • logical sequence and connections; effective paragraphing
CONVENTIONS • complete sentences • spelling • punctuation • grammar (e.g., agreement, verb tense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent errors in simple words and structures • no control of sentence structure; often runs on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that do not interfere with meaning • may include some run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include errors in complex language, but these do not interfere with meaning • most sentences are correctly constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include occasional errors in complex language, but these do not affect meaning • sentences are correctly constructed

Rating Scale: Grade 7 Personal Writing

Student achievement in personal writing by March-April of Grade 7 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)
SNAPSHOT	<i>The writing consists of loosely connected ideas; often includes serious errors. The student may need a great deal of help.</i>	<i>The writing is somewhat general but completes the basic task; may be flawed by errors.</i>
MEANING • ideas and information • use of detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose or point of view may be unclear or seem illogical; often very brief • often relies on retelling or listing without explanation or analysis • few relevant details and examples; in some cases, information is copied or misinterpreted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offers some relevant personal reactions and ideas; little insight or analysis • generally straightforward and direct; may be somewhat confusing or illogical in places • includes some relevant details and examples to develop ideas; parts may be misinterpreted or irrelevant
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple, repetitive language; may include some description • relies on short, simple sentences that are often not connected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language is clear; may include some descriptive or expressive language • variety of sentence lengths; relies on two or three relatively simple patterns
FORM • opening • organization and sequence • conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction does not engage the reader and may be vague or confusing; the ending is often abrupt • sequence may lapse, especially toward the end • ideas may be connected using simple words (e.g., <i>then, but, and</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often has an effective introduction, with the middle and end less developed • sequence may not be clear or effective—tends to be “stream of consciousness” • uses a variety of simple connecting words to link ideas; relationships may be unclear in places
CONVENTIONS • complete sentences • spelling • punctuation • grammar (e.g., agreement, verb tense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent errors in simple words and structures often interfere with meaning • no sense of control in sentence structure; often includes run-on sentences • frequent spelling errors in basic vocabulary • capitalization may be inconsistent • frequent errors in grammar and word choice (e.g., adjective instead of adverb form; wrong pronoun or verb form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning • most sentences are complete; may include some run-on sentences • most familiar words are spelled correctly • uses capitalization and sentence end punctuation correctly • may include some errors in grammar and word choice (e.g., adjective instead of adverb form; wrong pronoun or verb form)

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

	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
	<i>The writing reads smoothly and shows some insight and development.</i>	<i>The writing is expressive and interesting to read; shows some sophistication or complexity.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offers reactions and views that show some insight and individuality • usually focuses on straightforward, concrete ideas; may include some speculation, generalizations, or humour • develops ideas and analysis through relevant details, examples, and logical explanations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explores personal views and opinions with insight and originality • tries to deal with more complex or abstract ideas; often uses humour or draws comparisons • uses details, examples, and explanations to develop analyses or arguments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tries to select language to fit the mood or purpose; generally clear and varied • variety of sentence lengths and patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language is varied for effect; shows some precision; may use specialized language where appropriate • sentences flow easily; a variety of complex sentence structures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often has a strong opening that draws the reader in; development and ending tend to be predictable • logical sequence with related ideas grouped together • ideas and sentences are linked by appropriate connecting words (may be some lapses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong opening sets the stage for developing ideas; middle and end are well defined • writing follows a logical sequence; uses paragraphs effectively • transitions between ideas are natural and smooth; connecting words help to make relationships between ideas clear
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include errors in more complex language that do not interfere with meaning • most sentences are correctly constructed; may include some errors in longer or more complex sentences • most familiar words are spelled correctly • uses capitalization and sentence end punctuation correctly • generally grammatically correct; may include some errors in grammar and word choice (e.g., adjective instead of adverb form; wrong pronoun or verb form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include occasional errors where the writer is taking risks with more sophisticated language; these do not interfere with meaning • sentences are correctly constructed • spelling is correct • correct capitalization and punctuation; may experiment with more sophisticated punctuation (e.g., semicolon, dash) • may include minor errors in grammar or word choice, particularly in more complex structures (e.g., pronoun or verb agreement involving a compound subject)

Sample Task: Personal Writing

CONTEXT

These samples come from several different classrooms in which teachers completed the same series of tasks. In all of the classrooms, students frequently wrote responses and reactions to themes and issues they encountered in literature, content areas, or current events. They had access to computers on a regular basis and frequently used word processors to complete their work.

In most of the classrooms involved, students had previously studied the novel *The River*, by Gary Paulsen.

PROCESS

The activity took two class periods: one for discussing survival and planning their writing; a second for writing.

Students reread an excerpt from *The River* (pages 55–63) and discussed what the excerpt revealed about survival and overcoming obstacles, including a discussion of the idea that not all obstacles are physical. They were asked to work in small groups to discuss the following questions, then share their ideas with the class.

- ◆ What does *survival* mean to you?
- ◆ What are some of the things that you and others your age need in order to survive?
- ◆ What kinds of obstacles have you (or others) overcome?

Students were asked to write their own personal accounts of surviving or overcoming obstacles. The classes reviewed some tips for effective personal writing. These included:

- ◆ let your personality come through
- ◆ have an interesting beginning
- ◆ organize your ideas in a logical way
- ◆ use description and details that make your writing clear and interesting
- ◆ use different kinds and lengths of sentences
- ◆ check for mistakes

Teachers suggested that the writing should be approximately one word-processed page in length.

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observation

The purpose of the writing is not clear; the work features repeated, serious errors.

- ◆ purpose is unclear
- ◆ includes some relevant details
- ◆ simple language
- ◆ short, simple sentences
- ◆ frequent errors in simple words and structures

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Lost at my Friends House

Me and my friend Everitt who lives in Merrit got lost looking for his Tyko Rebound racing car. We new it was on his property so we went looking for it.

We walked prettydeep into the forest.

When me and Everitt got lost we looked every where to find are way back to his house.

After we ate some black berries we found Everitt's Tyko Rebound racing car we where happy that we found that. We still hade to find are way back so we decided to look for the fence because it would lead to Everitt's house.

We looked for that about an hour later we finnaly found the fence then Everitt

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We looked for that about an hour later we finnaly found the fence then Everitt said "I know where we are we arn't to close to my house It's about an hour walk." So we started to walk we got bord and hungary again so we stopped. We finnaly got back at dinner time we didn't have much fun that day and for the rest of the week we stayed in the front yard because we didn't want to get lost again.

MEETS EXPECTATIONS (MINIMAL LEVEL)

Teacher's Observations

The writing is easy to read and includes some detail. The work is somewhat disjointed, however, partly because the purpose is never made clear.

- ◆ little insight or analysis
- ◆ generally straightforward and direct
- ◆ language is clear
- ◆ relies on short, simple sentences
- ◆ includes some errors, but these do not interfere with meaning

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Big White

It all started about a year or two ago. It was before Spring break when Nick asked me if I wanted to go to Big White. I pleaded to my mom and she finally said yes. We left on Friday after school to Big White. "The reason why we were going to Big White was because he owned a cabin near the mountain. It was a long 6 and a half hour car drive. When we got there I was amazed at how big the cabin was. I thought we would be sleeping on the ground but we were sleeping on beds. The next morning we got up to go skiing. It was only a one minute walk to the slope and we got skiing fast.

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We went up and down the slope a couple of times until I said lets go down some mogos. We saw a little opening in the side of the run were people had gone skiing before we decided to give it a try. We planned we were going to cross over to another run but to uor surprise the ski run turns away and we were stuck some were in the middle of two slopes. Nick and I decided to go down through the trees. Nick ran into a fence. He got up and saw a cabin in front of us. We followed the fence for ten minutes and then found our self looking at the village. We both noticed the clock in the centre of the village, now Nick knew were he was. He directed me to his cabin. We finally reached his cabin. As soon as we got in we collapsed of tiredness, and got something to eat. The next day we went skiing again and didn't get lost.

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writer shows some insight and individuality in developing ideas about overcoming the obstacles of moving.

- ◆ develops ideas through relevant details, examples, and logical explanations
- ◆ focuses on straightforward, concrete ideas
- ◆ includes a variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- ◆ has a strong opening that draws the reader in
- ◆ ideas and sentences are linked by appropriate connecting words (some lapses)
- ◆ most sentences are correctly constructed

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

The Journey to the Country

Different friends, different school, and an all together different house. These are only some of the things that my family and I had to go through in our journey to the country. In my life I have moved twice to finally get to where we are now the house of our dreams. I was born in a nice family house in Walnut Grove, where everything to me was perfect. I met my best friend for life there, I learnt to ride

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Different friends, different school, and an all together different house, These are only some of the things that my family and I had to go through in our journey to the country. In my life I have moved twice to finally get to where we are now the house of our dreams. I was born in a nice family house in Walnut Grove, where everything to me was perfect. I met my best friend for life there, I learnt to ride my bike, I had my first birthday there, my sister and brother were born there too, we had our first dog there, and to sum it all up the first part of my life was there in that house that will always be in my mind. When the day came that we were moving I wasn't even here, I was in Disneyland with Nana and cousin. So I wasn't there to

sleep the last night in the old house as I call it now. We moved to a neighbourhood where we were in a cul-de-sac. There I had to go to a new school and meet all new friends. After a while I decided that it wasn't that bad after all because I met a whole bunch of new friends and the whole idea of a new house grew on me. I liked the new house because I had my own room and I thought I was really cool. Then a year or two later after I had met new friends and started to like the new house my parents told us that we were moving again to my grandparents property because they couldn't take care of it anymore. My parents told my siblings and I that we would love this new house because there was lots of property there and we could have horses and dogs so we were getting excited until a couple of weeks before we moved disaster struck.

My grandpa that owned the property fell and broke his hip and past away a couple of months later. Then a week later the dog at the property died and the barn where people keep there cars and stuff was broken into. Then my family and I moved in there and we were in an old house so we decided that we were going to build a new house. That's when our dreams came true we built a 4600 square feet house and I got my own big bedroom where I have a T.V. and a phone. I went to the new school the next year and to me it is a really neat school because their is only 130 kids there and the teachers there are great. Also the experience life on a farm is wonderful. I am glad that we moved twice because I think that the last move was the best move that ever happened to us.

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing is expressive and interesting to read, with some emotional impact.

- ◆ explores personal views with insight and originality
- ◆ deals with complex and abstract ideas
- ◆ language is varied for effect
- ◆ sentences flow easily, with a variety of complex sentence structures
- ◆ transitions between ideas are natural and smooth
- ◆ sentences are correctly constructed
- ◆ minor errors in grammar

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Surviving Unpopularity

I think that one thing that kids our age would have to survive would be unpopularity. Being unpopular may not just mean being teased, it can lead to humiliation, getting beat up, even to the point of getting seriously injured, or killed, or being so depressed that you commit suicide.

In grade six, I was very unpopular, but since I am only in elementary school, I don't think it was as serious as what I said above. Being a geek didn't really make me sad or anything, but it was really, *really* annoying. Nobody, but my closest friends ever wanted to talk to me. My friends even thought I was a nerd, but, (hopefully), they were still my friends. The reason I was such a geek was because of my haircut, it was short, like a boy's. There may have been other reasons, like me being in grade six, the lower grade in my 6/7 split class, or being very immature, but it was mainly my hair. The people who usually tormented me were a group of about four or five of the most popular people in the school, (I'll call them S.N.O.B.S. - Stuck-up, Nosy, Obsessive, Bratty,

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being in grade six, the lower grade in my 6/7 split class, or being very immature, but it was mainly my hair. The people who usually tormented me were a group of about four or five of the most popular people in the school, (I'll call them S.N.O.B.S. - Stuck-up, Nosy, Obsessive, Bratty, Selfish). At first I thought that snobs will bug anyone, and that they would stop after awhile. My parents told me that if I ignored them, they would eventually get tired of teasing me, but they never did. I learned to stop asking my parents for advice with big problems, or talking to anyone at all for that matter. Once the S.N.O.B.S. started whispering about me, they began teasing me, taking my stuff, making fun of my friends, my clothes, basically everything I did, and even threatening to beat me up.

I often played ping-pong with my friends at lunch. This was good because the S.N.O.B.S. usually walked around the school gabbing about who liked who, and the ping-pong table is inside, near the girl's bathroom. Once the S.N.O.B.S. knew that I hung out there at lunch, they followed me in there, and about thirty seconds into the game, announced that they were playing and promptly stole the ball. This was their favourite "game". The rules were: My friends and I go find ping-pong rackets and a ball, set up the net, start playing, and they steal the ball. We make pitiful attempts to get it back but with no success. We leave with the rackets, and they leave the ball somewhere hard to find. The result, my friends and I get blamed for losing the ball in the school's ping-pong set.

Near the end of the year, they quite often threatened to beat me up. But by then the group who still went out of their way to bug me had narrowed down to two people. A guy and a girl. The girl thought she was so tough. The guy thought he was so macho. I hated them both *a lot*. Once when I insulted the girl, she asked me if I wanted to repeat that to her face, something that most people wouldn't dare do to *her*. I did, which really surprised her. The look on her face was priceless.

I really didn't mind being unpopular, I could deal with it. What really made me mad was that people could judge somebody on how they look. I mean, not just teasing, since they were so popular, they got the whole school to hate me.

Now I am in grade seven, and the ringleaders of the S.N.O.B.S. have gone to high school. No one really bugs me anymore. No one says any annoying things that I actually stop to think about. People in the "cool crowd" even ask me to partner up with them sometimes. I now have a friend who was one of the ones who thought I was a geek last year. Her so-called friends dumped her, and now I know I shouldn't have let anything they said get to me, because they were jerks. I don't think I would ever want to be really popular, I mean, I would want to have friends, but I wouldn't want to be a snob.

BC Performance Standards

Grade 7 Writing

Additional Samples

The BC performance standards for Grade 7 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 7 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

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Grade 7: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Sample 1: Favourite Place

Context

Most classes in this school complete two pieces of impromptu, personal writing each year—one in the fall and one in the spring. This helps teachers plan for effective instruction and monitor student progress. The information from the impromptu writing is combined with results of a variety of other writing assignments that students develop as part of their portfolios.

Throughout the year, students learned a variety of strategies for generating and organizing writing ideas. The teacher also provided mini-lessons on editing and proofreading topics, including checking for complete sentences and strategies for monitoring spelling.

Process

The teacher introduced the topic and explained that students would have one class period to complete their writing. They would not be expected to make a “good” copy, but they should read over their work carefully and correct errors.

The class worked together to suggest some favourite places they might write about.

The teacher provided the following written instructions:

- What is your favourite place? Describe it and tell why it is your favourite place.
- Think about: Where is it? What does it look like? When do you like to be there? What do you like about it? What are your feelings about this place?
- Plan before you start writing—jot down your ideas, make a web, make lists. Decide on the best order for your ideas.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

The writing consists of a list of connected ideas, each beginning “When I am” There are several attempts to create an impact with descriptive language. However, these are often ineffective.

- reactions show some individuality
- generally straightforward and direct; somewhat confusing in places
- some descriptive language
- tends to be “stream of consciousness”
- some errors in grammar

Writing Page

Create an interesting title for your writing assignment.
Remember to write on every other line (double space).

Title: Up at the mountain snowboarding

One of my favorite places is up at the mountain snowboarding. Snowboarding is one of the many things that captures my interest the most. Unlike most sports snowboarding is my favorite. When I am rushing down the mountain I enjoy the fresh breeze blowing at my face. When I am getting on the chair lift and going up the mountain I love the beautiful scenery. And when I am snowboarding wildly down the mountain in the light powdery snow I feel the the snow splashing up at my face.

Writing Page

It brings joy and fun and
even laughter when I go off a
jump in the nice blue sky. As
I am surfing down the mountain
I see little kids playing in the
powdery white snow. As I am
rising high in the sky I see the
misty gray fog rising to my face.
I surf into the forest looking and
glancing at the dark green pines.
As I am landing my feet my
board wiggles, wobbles, sways and
shifts. Since I had finished my run
I wiggled and wobbled down the
hill to the chair lift.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

The writing offers a clearly written and straightforward description of a visit to Disneyland.

- reactions show some individuality
- develops ideas through relevant details and examples
- language is generally clear and varied
- variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- transitions between ideas are natural and smooth
- most sentences are correctly constructed

Writing Page

Create an interesting title for your writing assignment.
Remember to write on every other line (double space).

Title: "The Happiest Place on Earth"

The so called happiest place on earth is
is located in glorious California. If you
haven't already guessed it, it's the one and only
Disneyland in the United States. By far the best
time to visit Disneyland is in the summer.

Although everyday is like summer in California
because of the scalding hot weather. Walking
through the entrance was a magical dream. The
crowds of people covered me like a blanket
as we stood in line for our passes. Finally
after what seemed like hours, we made
it passed the never ending line. I ran
straight to my first ride the Madahorn
Mountain. Unlike my mother I was eager to

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go on it. As we entered this cave of doom
I clenched on to the handles as if there was
no tomorrow. The cave was dark and frightening
for a moment then I thought, this isn't
so scary after all. . . . I was wrong.
As the ride began to speed up monsters
popped out of the dark corners. By now
I was screaming on the top of my lungs but
the terror soon ended. After I peeled
myself out of the cart my mom was there
waiting (she was too scared to go on the ride) with
churros for all of my family. We went
on many other rides, but my favorite
would be Splash Mountain. Since my
brother was very scared I had to

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ride in front. All I can say is I had never been so scared in my whole life.

On our last day there we went on the tea cups. but they aren't very exciting to tell about. I did however meet Mickey and Minnie mouse, along with Goofy, who is my favorite.

So there you have it, Disney is and always will be the happiest place on earth.

Grade 7: Personal, Impromptu Writing

Sample 2: Memorable Moments

Context

From the beginning of the year, students in this class frequently wrote in journals to respond to experiences and issues, as well as to the selections they read and viewed. For the past month, students had been working on a variety of short narrative and descriptive pieces. Interspersed with their writing activities, the teacher had provided mini-lessons on:

- sentence variety
- sentence punctuation
- parts of speech
- spelling
- paragraphing
- writing introductions and conclusions

Process

The teacher presented the topic “Memorable Moments,” and the class brainstormed writing ideas from their own experiences. They reviewed some of the planning strategies they had learned (e.g., outlining, webbing, story mapping) and individually generated ideas for writing.

The teacher distributed copies of the *Quick Scale for Personal, Impromptu Writing*, and the class discussed the features that described work that “fully meets” expectations. Students drafted and word processed their reflections independently.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

Teacher's Observations

The writing recounts a series of events, with little detail or elaboration. The repetition of "Another highlight is . . ." makes the writing seem like a list.

- some relevant personal reactions and ideas
- some relevant details and examples
- generally straightforward and direct
- simple, repetitive language
- most sentences are complete
- capitalization is inconsistent

Note: The following is a transcript of the student's work.

Memorable Moments of 98

The first highlight is when my grade 6 class went to Vancouver. There was a movie taking place right beside where I was staying at. The best part was when I got to go with my uncle to planet holywood.

Another highlight is when I got my braces. I never wanted to get braces but I had to. At first I thought I looked geeky. I only had to get em on the top. I picked silver for elastic bands. Its not so bad to get braces.

Another highlight is when I went to Edmonton. I got to go to a place called reds (An arcade place). It had the best arcades there. I also went to galaxy land. I stayed at my aunties house.

Another highlight is when I went bike riding at bear mountain. It was fun. Me and my dad would ride from the first parking lot to the lake. Its a long bike ride.

Another highlight is when my class went on a field trip. We went to Radar lake. We went down all the trails. We also had a forest guy there. He told what kinds of trees there were and stuff like that.

Another highlight is when I went snomobiling at Bear Mountain. I went with my dad, friend and my friends dad. We went all around Bear Mountain. We went far.

I geuss I had a fun year. Its alot better than I thought.

Fully Meets Expectations

Teacher's Observations

The writing reads smoothly and offers some development and individuality.

- develops ideas through relevant details, examples, and logical explanations
- focuses on straightforward, concrete ideas; includes some speculation, generalizations
- language is generally clear and varied
- variety of sentence lengths and patterns
- logical sequence, with related ideas grouped together
- most sentences are correctly constructed

Most Memorable Moments of The Past Year

One of the most memorable moments of the past year was first starting at Central. I was a little bit scared at first. After a while I started making new friends. I also started getting new teachers, and classmates. Central had more activities than, my other school. There was basketball, volleyball, and track + field. After about six weeks I started getting used to the school, and now I'm not so scared anymore.

Another memorable moment was going on a school outing at Radar Lake. It was pouring rain when we went. I think it was one of the worst school outings that I've been to. We all got really soaked. My friends and I had to stay in this little shack with wood piled in it, just to get dry. I think everyone disliked that trip. Well, I certainly didn't like it.

During the past year I have been in lots of sports. I joined speedskating, even though I didn't want to. In the northern winter games I won a bronze medal for speedskating. Also, I went to a basketball camp in the summer and had a lot of fun. I wanted to be ready for when basketball season came. I also joined volleyball. Our volleyball team went in a tournament, but we came in last place. I guess we just weren't ready. I really enjoyed all the sports I was in that year!

Another memorable moment, was going on holidays to Vancouver Island. It was really fun because I got to visit my relatives. The best part out of the whole trip was going rock climbing with my cousins. The rocks weren't real of course, but it was really high up. A little while later I we went to Vancouver for my cousins wedding. I really enjoyed going to that. My holidays were really fun.

One of the things I remember most about 1998 was my soccer season. I was in soccer for 3 years. Our name was "Tremblay Eagles" but they changed it to "Tremblay United." We went to a tournament and of course we didn't come in first place. I think we came in 3rd or 4th place. Soccer was the funnest sports I played that year.

I think 1998 was the best year, because I learned more then I already knew in 1997. I also improved a lot in speedskating, and made lots of new friends. It was also new for me , because I came to a new school. I think I liked 1998 the best.