

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 8

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Writing Personal Views or Response

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 8, 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 8. 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 proofread

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

The BC performance standards for Grade 8 personal writing reflect the following prescribed learning outcomes from Grade 8 of the *English Language Arts 8 to 10 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 meaningful **personal texts** that explore ideas and information [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:

- ◆ write and **represent** to explain and support personal responses to texts [C8]

FEATURES (WRITING)

It is expected that students will:

- ◆ use and experiment with elements of **style** in writing and **representing**, appropriate to purpose and audience, to enhance meaning and artistry [C12]
- ◆ use and experiment with elements of **form** in writing and **representing**, appropriate to purpose and audience, to enhance meaning and artistry [C13]
- ◆ use **conventions** in writing and **representing**, appropriate to purpose and audience, to enhance meaning and artistry [C14]

Quick Scale: Grade 8 Writing Personal Views or Response

The Quick Scale is a summary of the Rating Scale that follows. Both describe student achievement in March-April of the school year. Personal views or response 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 addresses the topic but is seriously flawed by problems in logic, style, and mechanics. May be very short.</i>	<i>The writing presents relevant ideas about the topic but does not develop the topic to any extent. Often vague; parts may be flawed by errors.</i>	<i>The writing is clear and logical, with some analysis and development of a central idea. Provides sufficient material to meet requirements.</i>	<i>The writing is clear, analytic, and shows some insight. It features some engaging ideas or language.</i>
MEANING • ideas and information • use of detail • generalizations or connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents some ideas; may be illogical or inappropriate • inaccurate, illogical, or insufficient details • connections may be omitted or confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents a series of related ideas • generally accurate details, examples, and explanations; may not link to central idea • some difficulty making connections beyond the immediate and concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sense of purpose; tries to deal with complexities • relevant and accurate details, examples, and explanations; includes some analysis • makes connections or generalizations beyond the immediate topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purposeful, with some individuality, insight; deals with complexities • some engaging details, examples, explanations; includes analysis, reflection, speculation • puts topic in a broader context; logical generalizations, connections
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no sense of fluency or flow; sentences are often short and choppy or long and awkward • limited, simple language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some sentence variety; uses complex sentences • conversational language; generally appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a variety of sentence types and lengths • language is clear, appropriate, and varied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flows smoothly; uses a variety of sentence types and lengths effectively • varied and effective language
FORM • beginning, middle, end • organization and sequence • transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often begins with introduction, assuming that the reader knows the topic and context • ending is ineffective • lapses in sequence • may shift abruptly from one idea to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beginning introduces the topic • ending is often weak, formulaic • related ideas are together; may be listed rather than developed • simple transitions; sometimes ineffective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduces topics and purpose • explicit conclusion (often formulaic) • logical sequence; related ideas are together • transitions connect ideas clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishes purpose and context in clear and often interesting introduction • logical conclusion • smooth and logical sequence; explicit paragraphing • variety of natural and smooth transitions
CONVENTIONS • complete sentences • spelling • punctuation • grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent errors in simple words and structures often interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • errors in basic words and structures are noticeable but do not obscure meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • errors in more complex language are sometimes noticeable, but meaning is clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include occasional errors where the writer is taking risks with complex language; these do not interfere with meaning

Rating Scale: Grade 8 Writing Personal Views or Response

Student achievement in writing personal views or response by March–April of Grade 10 can generally be described as shown in this scale.

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)
SNAPSHOT	<i>The writing addresses the topic but is seriously flawed by problems in logic, style, and mechanics that make it difficult to follow in places. May be very short.</i>	<i>The writing presents relevant ideas about the topic but does not develop the topic to any extent. Often vague; parts may be flawed by errors.</i>
MEANING • ideas and information • use of detail • generalizations or connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents some ideas about the topic; these may be illogical or inappropriate and often fail to address the task (e.g., may retell rather than analyze or react) • provides weakly related or inaccurate details; may be too short to complete the task • generalizations or connections to personal experience or prior knowledge are often missing or illogical (may contradict own points) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents a series of related ideas; topic is clear but purpose may be vague—reader may have trouble inferring the “big idea” • provides generally accurate details, examples, and explanations, but tends to focus on details, without establishing their connection to a central idea; some material may be vague • has some difficulty making connections beyond the immediate and concrete (may offer no generalization at all or overgeneralize, especially about cause-effect)
STYLE • clarity, variety, and impact of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult to read; no sense of fluency or flow; sentences are often short and choppy or long and awkward • language is often highly colloquial and may be inappropriate; appears to draw on a limited vocabulary • no evidence of rhetorical strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some variety in sentence length and pattern; uses complex sentences frequently (sometimes subordination is not effective) • language is conversational and generally appropriate although may lapse in places • may attempt simple rhetorical strategies (e.g., rhetorical questions); these are often inappropriate or ineffective
FORM • beginning, middle, end • organization and sequence • transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often begins in the middle, assuming that the reader knows the topic and context • ending is ineffective (does not provide a conclusion) • sequence is generally logical; may lapse in places or wander into new topics • may shift abruptly from one idea to another, leaving the reader to infer the connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beginning introduces the topic • ending is often weak • related ideas are grouped together but tend to be listed rather than having a sense of development • uses simple transitions to connect ideas and sentences; sometimes ineffectively
CONVENTIONS • impact on meaning • 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 • frequent run-on sentences or sentence fragments • frequent spelling errors in basic vocabulary often involving plurals, possessives, contractions, word endings, missing letters, homonyms, and apparent careless errors • includes errors in capitalization and basic sentence punctuation; commas are often omitted or used incorrectly • frequent basic errors in grammar and word choice (e.g., adjective instead of adverb form; wrong pronoun or verb form; illogical shifts in tense) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • errors in basic words and structures are noticeable but do not obscure meaning • most sentences are complete but may be awkward; often includes some run-on sentences or fragments • most words are spelled correctly; however, there are some errors, often involving homonyms, plurals, possessives, contractions, word endings, or complex words • capitalization and sentence end punctuation are generally correct; may have problems with commas • some errors in grammar and word choice (e.g., adjective instead of adverb form; wrong pronoun or verb form; placement of modifiers)

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

	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
	<p><i>The writing is clear and logical, with some analysis and development of a central idea. Provides sufficient material to meet requirements of the activity.</i></p>	<p><i>The writing is clear, analytic, and shows some insight. It features some engaging ideas or language.</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents a clear, logical, central idea or point of view; has a sense of purpose; tries to deal with complexities or abstract aspects • develops central idea through relevant and accurate details, examples, and explanations; includes some analysis • makes connections beyond the immediate topic or issue, drawing on own experiences and prior knowledge to attempt generalizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents a reasonable and purposeful central idea or point of view with some individuality and insight; deals with complexities and abstract aspects of the topic • develops central idea or argument through the use of some engaging details, examples, explanations; includes analysis, reflection, and sometimes speculation • puts the topic or issue in a broader context, making logical generalizations through connections to personal experience, prior knowledge
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a variety of sentence types and lengths (attempts at more complex structures may be awkward) • language is clear, appropriate, and varied; appears to draw on a wide conversational vocabulary • may use simple rhetorical strategies (e.g., rhetorical questions) to engage the reader (most often in introduction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flows smoothly; uses a variety of sentence types and lengths effectively (sense of deliberation—e.g., choosing inverted sentence for effect) • language is varied, with some evidence that the writer is choosing words to create a deliberate effect • uses some rhetorical strategies (e.g., questions, repetition, humour, “asides”) to engage the reader
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction establishes the topic and purpose • provides an explicit conclusion • follows a logical sequence and development; related ideas are grouped together but paragraphing may be implicit (i.e., writer may forget to indent.) • uses transitions to connect ideas; relationships are usually clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a clear and often interesting introduction or thesis statement that establishes purpose and context • provides a logical conclusion • follows a smooth and logical sequence and development; paragraphing is explicit and effective • uses a variety of transitions to connect ideas naturally and smoothly
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • errors in more complex language are sometimes noticeable, but meaning is clear • follows basic rules for sentence construction; may include errors in longer or more complex sentences • most familiar words are spelled correctly • punctuation is generally correct, including commas and parentheses • may include minor errors in grammar or word choice (e.g., incorrect pronoun or verb form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may include occasional errors where the writer is taking risks with complex language; these do not interfere with meaning • most sentences are correctly constructed; may be some awkwardness and occasional errors in more complex structures • spelling is correct • punctuation is correct • generally grammatically correct; may have minor errors in more complex structures (e.g., pronoun or verb agreement involving a compound subject)

Sample Task: Survival

CONTEXT

Students in this class frequently discussed the television show *Survivor* among themselves. The teacher sought to build on their interest and deepen their thinking with a broader discussion of what survival and surviving meant. After the discussion, students were given this writing assignment.

PROCESS

Students were asked to write an impromptu in-class essay on their thoughts about “Survival.” Students completed their work independently. The teacher encouraged them to use classroom resources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, class posters). Students did not have opportunities to consult with others or to make substantial revisions, but they were encouraged to proofread carefully.

NOT YET WITHIN EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The story is simple and straightforward. It is difficult to read due to serious errors in spelling and sentence structure.

- ◆ fails to address the task—e.g., retells rather than analyzes or reacts
- ◆ difficult to read; sentences are often short and choppy or long and awkward
- ◆ appears to draw on a limited vocabulary
- ◆ ending is ineffective
- ◆ sequence is generally logical
- ◆ frequent errors in simple words and structures interfere with meaning
- ◆ frequent spelling errors in basic vocabulary, often involving missing letters
- ◆ includes errors in capitalization

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Survival

One day me and a bunch of friends were working up slasse mout. we pland this trip of a moth and today was the day we started up the mout.

TRANSCRIPT

survival

One day me and a bunch of friends were working uo slusse mout. we pland this trip of a moth and today was the dat we started up the mout.

We were planing that it wood tuck abuot a week well that was not we thot it wood tack. but it did not chern out sou good.

The frest nigh it was good, wen we wock up we were all fiting becuase 2 people wunted to go home but we sed no a week later we molmost med it to the top!

we mad it to the top bithen we ran out of food. we were starvin we trid to cume
down butt I brock my lug. sow we neded Hlep.

evrey day I trid tocking them in to leving me there because I nuw that I was
going to did. two days later thay degred to leven me there. I sied go I Whent to
did.

Two years luter.

I was Liveing on the top of the mout.

The End.

MEETS EXPECTATIONS (MINIMAL LEVEL)

Teacher's Observations

The writing addresses the topic but does not develop it.

- ◆ presents a series of events; topic is clear, but purpose is vague
- ◆ provides details and examples, but tends to focus on details, without establishing their connection to the central idea
- ◆ has some difficulty making connections beyond the immediate and concrete; overgeneralizes about cause and effect
- ◆ some variety of sentence length and pattern; uses complex sentences frequently
- ◆ language is conversational
- ◆ related ideas are grouped together but tend to be listed rather than having a sense of development
- ◆ errors in basic words and structures are noticeable but do not obstruct meaning
- ◆ includes some run-on sentences
- ◆ frequent spelling errors in basic vocabulary
- ◆ includes errors in capitalization

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Survival

I think survival can be done in many different ways throughout our lives. Such as school, surviving teasing, test, and quizzes another stage of our life that we need to survive is leaving home and living alone. Actually our whole life is one long survival show because we are being challenged the second we are born.

TRANSCRIPT

Survival

I think survival can be done in many different ways throughout our lives. Such as school, surviving teasing, test, and quizzes another stage of our life that we need

to survive is leaving home and liveing alone. Actually our whole life is One long Survivor show because we are being challenged the second we are born.

The first part of life I would like to talk about is school because thats the part im at right now. The first thing i've had to survive is teasing seeing as i've been teased from practicy the fourth grade. So I know alot on this subject but ill start at grade five. Well at the begining of the year I was at school which wasent very bad because I had lived there since grade one. But like anyone I had some enemies the worst enemie was danial he really hated me but i still havent found out why. I dont know if it was my hair, cloths our the way I talked but ohh well because thats over and I dont think I could have survived that without my freind — as we called him reeses peices. He was my best freind ever we never orguid or even yelled at each other so that was great untill my family moved to and i had to go to Elementry. Now im not very good at making mew freinds so right away I had a challenge luckily in my class there was a person named — he was my new best freind. Almost as much as reese and as usual all the teachers thought I was great and I guess thats not a bad thing. I alson had very few enemies as I like to call them untill the next year grade six. It actually started as a great year because my grade one and most favorit teach had come to Tyson and was my grade six teacher. This year was also a good year because I got voted secritary in the schools student councell. I was also on all the sports teams then the sutvivavl part starts there were three boys who were really good freinds like they did everything together the liked me at the beggining then it got worse for the rest of the year. Then in grade seven it still went on so after second term I did home school. But now its grade eight and im haveing the best year ever.

So The way I learned to get over teasing is to get more freinds. Also not to take it personally becasure I think im a good person.

FULLY MEETS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing addresses the topic, makes personal connections, and is clear and logical.

- ◆ presents a clear, logical, central idea; has a sense of purpose
- ◆ develops the central idea through relevant details, examples, and explanations
- ◆ draws on own experiences and prior knowledge
- ◆ language is clear and appropriate
- ◆ uses simple rhetorical strategies to engage the reader
- ◆ introduction establishes the topic and purpose
- ◆ provides an explicit conclusion
- ◆ has problems with commas
- ◆ includes minor errors in word choice
- ◆ spelling is correct

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

Surviving a Middle School

Many new kids to [REDACTED] Middle School worry about surviving through the school year. They have questions about: finding your classes, being late, lunch and break, lockers, and being picked on. I am going to answer some common questions, in the following paragraphs.

TRANSCRIPT

Surviving a Middle School

Many new kids to ——— School worry about surviving through the school year. They have questions about; finding your classes, being late, lunch and break, lockers, and being picked on. I am going to answer some common questions, in the following paragraphs.

Finding your classes is not the end of the world. You have maps, teachers, and fellow students to help you. The halls are big but you always find your way. The biggest fear of a new student is, "Where do I go?" Don't worry you'll find your way.

One of my many fears was, "Will I be late?" The first week teachers are very forgiving. Even for lunch they understand. People are always late for lunch. You will figure out where to be, and when.

"How do I open my locker?" A common question everybody has. In your advisory, you'll get a big buddy. They'll help you open your locker, and get the feel of it. No you will not get pushed in your locker. I know it happens on movies, but it doesn't happen here. It doesn't happen here because of two reasons; a) our lockers aren't big enough, and b) you don't get bullied unless you ask for it (which doesn't happen very often).

So as you see, the trouble is not surviving, it's believing you can survive.

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear, analytic, and shows some insight.

- ◆ presents a reasonable and purposeful central idea with some insight
- ◆ develops central idea through the use of details and examples; includes analysis, reflection, and speculation
- ◆ makes logical generalizations through connections to personal experiences and prior knowledge
- ◆ flows smoothly; uses a variety of sentence types and lengths
- ◆ uses some rhetorical strategies such as questions and quotations to engage the reader
- ◆ provides a clear introduction that establishes purpose and context
- ◆ provides a logical conclusion
- ◆ occasional errors do not interfere with meaning
- ◆ punctuation is correct
- ◆ most familiar words are spelled correctly

	Not Yet	Meets	Fully	Exceeds
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Survivor

Survival, everyone talks about it in these days. There has even been T.V. shows about it! Whenever you think "survivor" you either

TRANSCRIPT

Survivor

Survival, everyone talks about it in these days. There has even been T.V. shows about it! Whenever you think "survivor" you either think of the show or being lost in the cold barren north or stranded on some island with no food or water. But what is survival really? Well in this essay, I will be answering that age old question. At least I hope I will be.

In each of us is a will to survive. Whether it be in the Amazon or at school; we want to live to see tomorrow. Even though the road of life could be very bumpy with hills and valleys, we keep on going. That's what so amazing about the human race, our determination to live and succeed. For instance, the hardships of Early Man, no one would be here if it wasn't for their determination and will to survive. And that I think is one out of many definition of survival; the will and determination to survive.

Of course that isn't the only type of survival; emotional and mental are also there. I once readsome-where, and I quote, "One must battle the demons within and without to survive." That's just got me thinking because I've been feeling depressed and felt as if I was losing the battle. If you get rid of the funny talk and the mythological aspects the message is quite clear. Survival of the mind and battling the inner doubts is just as important, if not more, than physical survival.

That doesn't mean that physical survival isn't important. To survive a car crash or a shipwreck is still defined as Survival. For instance, all those poor hungry people in third world countries. That would be physical survivors.

That would be physical survivor but in a way, it would also be mental and emotional. Some poor lady might have to give her child away for the sake of survival and a better life but then have to deal of the sinking feeling of depression that she was a awful mother and not worthy of living, this starting the emotional survival. This could also work the other way around. Going back to the hungry starving people in Africa and other third world countries; why don't they just give up and die? Their will to survive and deciding to try (mental survival) stops them.

So in conclusion, I think that all aspects of survival are important but in the end, I feel that mental survival is the most. My reason is that you have to decide to survive and work through the problems. If you don't,

You Won't Be A Survivor.

The End

GRADE 8 WRITING: Additional Tasks/Samples

Personal/Impromptu Writing 4 tasks

Writing to Communicate Ideas and Information 6 tasks

Literary Writing 4 tasks

Grade 8 Personal/impromptu Writing: Additional Sample 1

Wishes for a Better World

Context

Although most of their writing is developed through a workshop process, students in this class also frequently write impromptu, in-class essays on topics provided by the teacher or suggested by the class.

Process

Students were asked to write a first-draft, in-class essay on the topic “Wishes for a Better World.” Their wishes could be global or personal. The teacher encouraged them to use classroom resources (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, class posters). Students did not have opportunities to consult with others or to make substantial revisions, but they were encouraged to proofread carefully.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing presents relevant ideas about the topic but the writing wanders towards the end.

- provides examples, but does not always establish their connection to the central idea
- over-generalizes about cause and effect
- language is conversational and generally appropriate
- beginning introduces the topic
- ending is weak
- errors in basic words and structures are noticeable but do not obscure meaning
- most sentences are complete
- some errors in grammar or word choice
- frequent spelling errors in basic vocabulary

If I had 3 wishes would be more self confident, try to involve myself more in school and try to pick up my garbage when I am done. Hopefully my wish will come true.

Fully Meets Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear and logical and includes some analysis.

- presents a clear, logical point of view; has a sense of purpose
- develops the central idea through detail, example, and explanation; includes some analysis
- uses a variety of sentence types and lengths
- introduction establishes the topic and purpose
- offers an explicit conclusion
- uses a simple, rhetorical device (a question) in the introduction to engage the reader
- paragraphing is explicit and effective
- follows basic rules for sentence construction
- punctuation is generally correct, including commas
- errors in capitalization

Transcript:

3 Wishes for A Better World

If a person could change three things in this world by simply making a wish, would they take that opportunity or let nature run its course.

If I could make a wish that would change the way the world is today, I would.

My first wish would be to end all the problems in Poverty stricken countries, and to educate them on the things like medication and the importance of birth control. I would also set up a place where they could eat a good meal. I think that would be a great accomplishment.

My second wish would be to end all the world's Racism. This would be a hard task to meet, but I feel that all people should be treated equal, and nobody should have to go through life being called so many rude, disgraceful, and disrespectful names.

My third wish would be a simple one. All I want is for everyone in this world to be themselves. In a perfect world, if everyone was themselves than teenage girls wouldn't have to wear so much make-up, or have the best clothes, hair, or body. And boys wouldn't worry about their hair, or clothes or if they had enough muscles or were tough. It wouldn't matter what you looked like at all, and nobody would ever class some people lower than others.

But, if we live in a perfect world, and nobody ever made mistakes, then nothing would be normal. So I don't really think we should be able to wish for something to change, and then one day it all of a sudden changes. We should leave it alone and let nature run its course, but little wishes are still okay.

Grade 8 Personal/impromptu Writing: Additional Sample 2

Friends

Context

In this school all students participate in a school-wide write twice a year, in fall and again in spring. Within their regular classrooms, student writes an impromptu essay of approximately 200-300 words in a 50-minute period. Essays are collected and scored collaboratively by the members of the English Department.

Process

Students were asked to write an impromptu essay of 200-300 words one of two topics provided - "Friends" or "Rules". Students were not allowed to use a dictionary, thesaurus, or spell checker.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing addresses the topic but lacks a sense of purpose.

- presents a series of related ideas; topic is clear but purpose is vague
- provides detail and examples, but does not establish their connection to the central idea
- some variety in sentence length and pattern
- language is conversational
- beginning introduces the topic
- ending is weak
- related ideas are grouped together, but tend to be listed rather than having a sense of development
- capitalization and sentence end punctuation are generally correct

Friends

The topic I chose to write on is friends. Friends are very important to us I don't think I know anybody with not even one friend. I know I could not live having no friends; my friends are my life, ~~and my soul~~ My life would be so boring with no friends. I think people with no friends would get very depressed sometimes. You have to have a friend to talk to, laugh with, and even hang out with. My life consists around ~~no~~ friends, your friends are very important to you even if you do not think so. So you would be lost without your friend.

The wrong thing kids are doing these days are picking the wrong friends to hang out with, the ones that want you to go to parties just to get drunk, or to do drugs. These kind of friends are the wrong kind of friend to have. My ~~the~~ mom always tells me that if you can count all of your friends on your right hand you have a lot of friends. So the point I am trying to get at is friends are so important you can meet them anywhere, school, mall, and when you do meet them & keep them there a treasure they are a treasure that you will never want to give up. So in conclusion ~~leave~~ live your life with lots and lots of good friends.

Fully Meets Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing has a strong, personal style, marred only by a few technical errors.

- as a sense of purpose
- develops the central idea through examples; includes some analysis
- draws on own experiences
- uses a variety of sentence types and lengths
- introduction establishes the topic and purpose
- ending is weak
- follows basic rules for sentence construction
- most familiar words are spelled correctly
- punctuation is generally correct, including commas

Friends

Friends are a wonderful thing and I think everyone should have at least one. Not one friendship is perfect because everyone has those little fights once in a while. Friendship is very important to me because friends are what makes the world go round.

I remember feeling really scared and lonely on the first day of school. I had none of my old friends in any of my classes, and I wasn't really into meeting new people at the time, but now I am really glad I did!

The first person I met was Lindsay she figure skates and enjoys the same things that I do like music, school and sports. We get along really well together and her mom is now good friends with my mom.

The second person I met was Janine, now she is more of a serious person but the first time I saw her I knew that

we would just click. She also has a lot in common with me! We love to hang together and watch cartoons while stuffing our faces with junk food. Her mom is also friends with my mom.

I met Terran, Courtney, Will and Sean through Lindsay because they all went to school together but first I would like to tell you about Terran. Terran is the kind of person that you can talk to about anything and she will give you great advice! Terran is also very kind, she will always forgive and sometimes forget.

Now Courtney is the smartest one out of the group. She gets straight A's and anything you can think of. She is fun to hang out with because she treats every body with respect and never criticizes anybody.

Will is the humoris one. He figure skates with Lindsay and he plays the drums in my band class. I love to hang out with him because he has this sense of humor that

will blow you away!

Sean is kind of a girly guy I guess. What I mean by that is I can talk to him about fashion, school and friends. He is probably the nicest guy I know!

Last but not least is Katey. I just met her but I know we will be good friends. She is so cute and the best thing about is she can keep a secret without telling anybody!

Well that is all of my best friends and all I can say is that Friends are the best gifts in the world!

Grade 8 Personal/impromptu Writing: Additional Sample 3

Sports

Context

In this school all students participate in a school-wide write twice a year, in fall and again in spring. Within their regular classrooms, students write an impromptu essay of approximately 200-300 words in a 50-minute period. Essays are collected and scored collaboratively by the members of the English Department.

Process

Students were asked to write an impromptu essay of 200-300 words one of the topics provided . Topics included “Heroes”, “A Challenge”, and “Sports”. Students were not allowed to use a dictionary, thesaurus, or spell checker.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is on topic but rambles.

- presents a series of related ideas; topic is clear but purpose is vague
- tends to focus on details without establishing their connection to a central idea
- language is conversational
- related ideas are grouped together, but tend to be listed rather than having a sense of development
- most sentences are complete; includes some run-on sentences
- errors in capitalization and basic sentence punctuation

Transcript:

Sports

Most sports have a different play rate than others; Hockey is intense and fast, Baseball is slow but enjoyable. Almost every sport has a hero or heroes, such as Babe Ruth for Baseball, Wayne Gretzky and Bobby Orr for hockey, Michael Jordan for basketball. All of those heroes and more have made it where they are today by not just thinking about themselves by thinking everybody else, such as fans and teammates, coaches, and family. There isn't too much of that type of personality anymore. Most athlete stars have talent by thinking much of themselves. People in our home town, people on the Chilliwack Chiefs like Brad McFaul thinks he's awesome but the only thing he's good at is fighting, Travis Banga, just because he was the captain last year doesn't mean he's the best, Nathan Martz deserved that "C" on his jersey than anybody else did, my mom says she wishes hockey could go back to the way they were when she first watched it.

My brother is playing pro now. I think my brother is an awesome hockey player; he's good at both defense and offence, has the hardest slapshot I've ever seen, and he treats people with respect on and off the ice. My dad was awesome at sports like basketball and soccer. He had the same personality as my brother does. My mom is awesome at sports, but nothing hockey, sports like badminton, and tennis, and volleyball.

I'm good at sports, also, but I dislike being on a team. I have a really strong kick in soccer, and I don't mind getting hurt, I keep my mouth shut and play the game. I may not be as good as my brother, but my favorite sport is hockey, pure Canadian invented and full contact.

That's what's good about some sports is contact, Rugby, football Hockey. Different sports have different styles, for Golf is patience, and football is attitude. I never really paid attention to hockey when I was younger because there lots of space to run around, but when my brother started playing for the Chiefs, I had to sit down and watch the game, that's when I started loving hockey the plays, fights, and fans rubbing it in. I don't like to cheer though I just like sitting there and watching. But on every sport there's something unique about, people like different sports because everybody's different, whether your watching baseball with your family, taunting the away team, or cheering on Tiger Woods, sports will live on forever.

Fully Meets Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear, logical and conversational.

- presents a clear central idea; has a sense of purpose
- develops the central idea through relevant details and examples
- uses a variety of sentence types and lengths
- language is clear and appropriate; appears to draw on a wide conversational vocabulary
- introduction establishes the topic and purpose
- provides an explicit conclusion
- punctuation is generally correct, including commas
- most words are spelled correctly; however, there are several errors
- includes errors in capitalization

Sports

I have chosen to write about sports. The reason ~~of~~ for that is because I do lots and lots of sports, I play Hockey, lacrosse, Basketball, Rugby, ~~Football~~, cricket, soccer and my second favourite sport which is Skateboarding. In a shorter way you could say that I do almost all sports.

My favourite sport is hockey! I play rep "A" hockey. I play in the pee wee league for 12, 13 and 14 year olds. I have played rep for the last 4 years and I have only played for 6 years but my first 2 years there were no rep teams in novice. I play left defence. My friend Jay and I, are the "Bash Brothers", we have been for four years. We are the "Bash Brothers" because we are tough, rough and strong players. But we are not dirty or cheap we are fair but we like to hit.

On ~~top~~ my 2nd favourite sport which is skateboarding. I have just recently started to skate a few weeks ago. I always go and hangout at the skate park and have a skate-session with my friends.

I have a status board with destructo trucks, speed demo barring and element wheels. I like to do alot of board slides on the barriers. The only thing wrong with skating is you can bail and get really hurt and you have nothing to prevent that from happening unless you quite. quit?

I only play Hockey and lacrosse in the Chilliwack association but all the other sports are mostly with my school. Every year I join the school basketball team. In grade 6 our team was 16-0-0 and that was really fun. Our coach was Rich gieskeman he was great!!

In conclusion I would like to say that sports are good for you because they're fun and they keep you in good shape. I would also like to say that I play as much sports as possible for the last 8 years and never once have I complained about sports because they're so ^{much} fun!!

Grade 8 Personal/impromptu Writing: Additional Sample 4
Response to a poem, “My Life is in your Hands”

Context

Students in this class maintain journals in which they frequently write about personal experiences or feelings, or at the teacher’s direction, about their responses to literary works or media.

Process

The class had studied the novel *The Outsiders*. Students listened as the teacher read aloud “My Life is in Your Hands, a poem about young girl dying in a car accident caused by a drunk driver. Students were asked to write a response to the poem, telling how they would feel about the event related by the poet.

Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is jumbled and presents some contradictory ideas and feelings.

- presents a series of related ideas
- provides explanations, but without establishing their connection to a central idea
- some variety in sentence length and pattern
- language is conversational
- ending is weak
- related ideas are grouped together, but do no sense of development
- errors in basic words and structures are noticeable, but do not obscure meaning
- most sentences are complete, but may be awkward
- capitalization and sentence end punctuation are generally correct
- some error in grammar and word choice

Journal entry

I think that the poem did help the parents realize just how bad it is to get behind the wheel even after you have had only a couple beers, But I don't think it really clicks in the heads of the kids because all they are doing is trying to impress other people so they don't care about other peoples live. If I was the mom I would have first of all been very sad, but I would have to drive the kid home so that he wouldn't do it again, or the police station or something.

I would have been very mad thought if the girl had lived because why would she get in the car in the first place, and she was also probably not wearing he seat belt so she could have saved herself from rolling all over the car.

I would have sued him for driving drunk and there would be no way he could win because the was so much evidence.

I would be verry verry sad and he should go to jail for life.

Fully Meets Expectations

	NOT YET	MEETS	FULLY	EXCEEDS
SNAPSHOT				
MEANING				
STYLE				
FORM				
CONVENTIONS				

Teacher's Observations

The writing is clear, logical, and indicates a strong personal response to the poem.

- presents a clear, logical point of view; has a sense of purpose; tries to deal with complexities
- develops central idea through relevant and accurate detail
- makes connections beyond the immediate
- uses a variety of sentence types and lengths
- language is clear, appropriate, and varied
- introduction establishes the topic and purpose
- uses transitions to connect ideas; relationships are usually clear
- follows basic rules for sentence construction
- most familiar words are spelled correctly
- punctuation is generally correct, including commas
- includes minor errors in grammar

Poetry

My life is in your hands Response

When I think about this poem it make my stomach turn and I feel sick. I would hate to know that I was going to die, and that I would never get to see my friends or family again. I'd hate the drunk driver and wouldn't care if anything ever happened to him. If I was there, and a friend that knew the girl who died, I would always want to escape, seeing a friend die when her life was in someone elses hands.

If I was the girl in the car I would regret ever getting in with the driver. I would suddenly want to live my life and do what I was supposed to, then I would realize that it was to late and feel sorry that I hadn't done, and said all I wanted to. I would close my eyes and say as much as I could of what I wanted to say before but never got around to it. Then I would get a sick feeling in my stomach as I would feel the impact of the other car and know that I had had my last breath.