

“What should good student writing at this grade level look like?”

The answer lies in the writing itself.

The **Writing Standards *in Action* Project** uses high quality student writing samples to illustrate what performance to grade level standards looks like—in action.

# Writing Standards *in Action*

## Grade 3 English Language Arts

### Narrate

*(Personal Narrative)*

Run Away Rachel



# Background Information

GRADE  
3

## FRAMEWORK / CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework  
for ELA and Literacy (2017)

### Writing Sample Title:

Run Away Rachel

**Text Type and Purpose:** Narrate

**Grade level/Content area:** Grade 3 English Language Arts

**Type of Assignment:** Personal Narrative

**Standards Addressed:** (W.3.3), (W.3.4), (L.3.1), (L.3.2), (L.3.3)

*See descriptions of these standards  
in the right column of the next page.*

### Highlights:

This sample of student work meets grade level standards. It demonstrates the following attributes of effective writing.

The sample:

- Reflects the writer's choice to develop a significant personal experience
- Demonstrates a well organized narrative sequence that maintains a clear focus
- Develops experiences and events with effective supporting details
- Uses temporal words and phrases effectively to signal event order
- Reveals an engaging writer's voice

CONTINUED ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

The student writing sample that follows includes standards-based commentary. The commentary found in this column describes how the writing meets the standards in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy (2017)* and other content frameworks when applicable.

### Understanding the Standards-Based Commentary


#### 1. Grade-specific standards addressed are:

- Listed in the column to the right of student work by strand, grade, and number (or number and letter, where applicable)
- Marked by a colored block with a letter code, also in the column to the right of student work

EXAMPLE: 

#### 2. Colored arrow blocks beneath each standard in the right column:

- Are of the same color and letter code as the block that marks the standard being addressed
- Mark standards-based commentary related to the standard being addressed
- Appear in alphabetical order

EXAMPLE: 

#### 3. Corresponding colored arrow blocks within the text:

- Set off sections of student work to which commentary applies
- Do not necessarily appear in alphabetical order—but where evidence of a particular standard exists

EXAMPLE: (begin)  section  (end)

**Instructional Practices:**

The teacher used the following practices:

- Student choice of topic
- Writing workshop model, with daily mini lessons on aspects of effective writing and on-going teacher modeling
- Teacher conferences to provide targeted instruction and feedback
- Revision and editing strategies to improve clarity
- Student sharing of their work
- Guidance through the writing process, including reference to a rubric, use of student exemplars, discovery drafting, and revising
- Access to a writing resource text

**Assignment Description:**

Students engaged in a writing workshop to write narratives based on personal experiences.

**Intended Audience:**

Teacher, peers

**Time:**

Unknown

**Writing Process:**

Alone; in class; pre-writing; organizing; drafting; revising; self-editing; peer-editing/peer response; teacher feedback; teacher-student conference; publishing

**Materials:**

A writing resource text; a rubric that reflected district standards; student exemplars

**Please note:**

The samples may contain inaccuracies in wording and content or shortcomings in the use of standard English conventions.

END OF BACKGROUND ■

**Writing Standards:****Grade 3, Standard 3 (W.3.3)**

Write narratives in prose or poem form to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, descriptive details, and clear sequences.

EXAMPLES: **A** **B** **C** **D**

**Writing Standards:****Grade 3, Standard 4 (W.3.4)**

Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

EXAMPLES: **E**

**Language Standards****Grade 3, Standard 1 (L.3.1)**

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades.

EXAMPLES: **F** **G**

**Language Standards****Grade 3, Standard 2 (L.3.2)**

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

EXAMPLES: **H**

**Language Standards:****Grade 3, Standard 3 (L.3.3)**

Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

EXAMPLES: **I**

# Narrate

GRADE  
3

## FRAMEWORK / CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework  
for ELA and Literacy (2017)

### STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

#### In this sample...

The writer relates a simple childhood adventure in the animated voice of a third grader. The story takes the reader through a complete and focused event sequence that flows smoothly from beginning to end. With sentences of various types, precise word choice, and appropriate figures of speech, the writer paints a clear picture of the narrator's spirited response to the problem posed by a pet guinea pig's escape from its cage.

#### Understanding the Standards-Based Commentary

The student writing sample that begins on this page includes in this column standards-based commentary describing how the writing meets the standards in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy (2017)* and other content frameworks, when applicable. Where they apply, sub-standards marked by letters are included.

Evidence for the commentary is noted in the text of the student writing using color-coded, numbered 'begin' and 'end' arrows.

#### For example:

**A1** marks the beginning and **A1** marks the end of the relevant section in the text.

Please note that the labeled arrows in the text do not necessarily appear in alphabetical order.

## Run Away Rachel

**A1** It all started on a half day when I had my best

**H** friends **H** (name of friend) and (name of friend) over. **A1**

**E1** **A2** We were playing with my guinea pig Rachel **I4** when

...it happened! **A2** **E1** **I4** **E2** **C** It started when **C**

**begin** section **end**

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ▶



#### Writing. Grade 3, Standard 3:

##### **A** W.3.3.a

Establish a situation and introduce a speaker, narrator, and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.

##### **A1** A1 Examples: 1

The writer establishes him or herself as the narrator and introduces the other characters in the well-crafted lead (*It all started on a half day when I had my best friends [name of friend] and [name of friend] over.*).

##### **A2** A2 Examples: 1

The writer draws in the reader with a broad hint at the sequence of events about to unfold (*We were playing with my guinea pig Rachel when...it happened!*).

## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

(name of friend), (name of friend) and I got hungry and went into the

kitchen. **E2** **I1** **G** We were dressed up in black like burglars

**I1** because we wanted to **I1** steal some cookies. **G** **I1**

**F2** When we **H** found **H** the cookies we ate **F2** what was

left of them. Then we went back to check on Rachel. **E3** **C**

**B1** When we got back her pen was empty! **C** **E3** **I4** I

couldn't **H** believe **H** my eyes! **B1** **I4** I only had Rachel for

**Writing. Grade 3, Standard 3:**  
(continued)**B W.3.3.b**

Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences or events or show responses to situation.

**B1** B1 Examples: 1

The writer conveys a sense of stunned disbelief by describing the narrator's thought process (*When we got back her pen was empty! I couldn't believe my eyes!*).

**B2** B2 Examples: 1

The writer describes strong feelings in response to Rachel's sudden disappearance (*I FELT LIK I WAS GOING TO EXPLODE MY DAD IS GOING TO KILL ME!*) The writer could have integrated the writer's friends more directly into the situation by including some dialogue that included them.

**C W.3.3.d**

Use temporal words and phrases to signal order where appropriate.

**C** C Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4

The writer signifies the passing of time with temporal words and phrases that carry the reader smoothly through the sequence of event (*It started when... When we got back her pen was empty... Then I saw something move under the T.V.cabinet... After they went home...*).

**begin** section **end**

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

two days and now she ran away! **B2** I FELT LIK I WAS GOING TO

EXPLODE MY DAD IS GOING TO KILL ME! **B2** **G** **F1**

**E3** (Name of friend), (name of friend) and I looked everywhere **E3**

but we couldn't find her. **G** **E3** **C** Then I saw something move

under the T.V. cabinet **C** **E3** and I knew who it was. **F1**

**I2** **E3** I quickly **H** crawled **H** under the T.V and pulled

out **I2** **I3** a big, fat, puffy guinea pig. **E3** **I3** **G** It was

**Writing. Grade 3, Standard 3:**  
(continued)**D** W.3.3.e

Provide a sense of closure.

**D1** D1 Examples: 1

The writer brings closure by divulging Rachel's method of escape (...I put her back in her pen and she climbed over the bars so I knew what had happened.).

**D2** D2 Examples: 1

The writer ends the narrative by circling back to the meaning of the title (*Run Away Rachel*).

**Writing. Grade 3, Standard 4:****E** W.3.4

Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**E1** E1 Examples: 1

The writer establishes the premise of the narrative (*We were playing with my guinea pig Rachel when... it happened!*).

**E2** E2 Examples: 1

The writer creates a plausible trigger for further development of the narrative (*It started when [name of friend], [name of friend], and I got hungry and went into the kitchen.*).

**begin** section **end**

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

Rachel! **G** **I3** I put the little furrball into her blanket **I3** and

kept an eye on her until (name of friend) and (name of friend) had to

go home.

**F2** **C** After they went home **C** **E4** **D1** I put her back

in her pen **F2** and she climbed over the bars so I knew what had

happened. **D1** **E4** **D2** Run away Rachel! **D2**

**Writing. Grade 3, Standard 4:**  
(continued)**E3** E3 Examples: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4

The writer organizes the events of Rachel's disappearance and recapture in clear chronological order (*When we got back her pen was empty... [name of friend], [name of friend], and I looked everywhere... Then I saw something move under the T.V. cabinet... I quickly crawled under the T. V and pulled out a big, fat, puffy guinea pig.*).

**E4** E4 Examples: 1

The writer completes the event sequence with a credible, succinct conclusion (*...I put her back in her pen and she climbed over the bars so I knew what had happened.*).

**Language. Grade 3, Standard 1:****F** L.3.1.d

Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and choose between them depending on the overall meaning of the sentence.

**F1** F1 Examples: 1

The writer combines actions and ideas by using coordinating conjunctions (*[name of friend], [name of friend] and I looked everywhere but we couldn't find her. Then I saw something move under the T.V. cabinet and I knew who it was.*).

**F2** F2 Examples: 1 • 2

The writer uses subordinating conjunctions to communicate event sequences (*When we found the cookies we ate... After they went home I put her back in her pen...*).

begin section end

END OF WRITING SAMPLE ■



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

**Language. Grade 3, Standard 1:**  
(continued)**G L.3.1.a**

Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple, compound, and complex sentence.

**G** G Examples: 1 · 2 · 3

The writer forms a variety of sentences: complex, compound, and simple (*We were dressed up in black like burglars because we wanted to steal some cookies... [name of friend], [name of friend] and I looked everywhere but we couldn't find her... It was Rachel!*).

**Language. Grade 3, Standard 2:****H L.3.2.h**

Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.

**H** H Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4

The writer demonstrates control of spelling patterns and orthographic rules including the use of /i/ before /e/ (*friends... believe*) and vowel teams such as ou and aw (*found... crawled*).

begin section end





## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

**Language. Grade 3 Standard 3:****I L.3.3.a**

Choose words and phrases for effect.

**I1** I1 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer demonstrates a sense of humor with an appropriate simile and a vivid verb (*We were dressed up in black like burglars ... steal some cookies.*).

**I2** I2 Examples: 1

The writer uses vivid verbs to create an image of urgency regarding Rachel's capture (*I quickly crawled under the T.V and pulled out...*).

**I3** I3 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer expresses a sympathetic attitude toward Rachel with precise adjectives (*...a big, fat, puffy guinea pig...*) and an appropriate metaphor that mentions the pet's blanket (*I put the little furball into her blanket...*).

**I4** I4 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer writer uses exclamations to create an animated voice and urgent tone (*...when...it happened! ... I couldn't believe my eyes!*).

begin section end

