“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.
Background Information

Writing Sample Title: 

Text Type and Purpose: Narrate  
Grade level/Content area: Grade 5 English Language Arts  
Type of Assignment: Poetry  
Standards Addressed: (W.5.3), (L.5.2), (L.5.5)  
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: 
• Uses poetic language effectively  
• Demonstrates skillful use of poetic techniques such as imagery, rhyme, repetition and poetic language to convey the subtleties of an experience

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: A

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: A1

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) A1 section A1 (end)
Instructional Practices:
The teacher used the following practices:

- This poem was written during a before-school poetry group run by students

Assignment Description:
None

Intended Audience:
Family members, friends, classmates (poetry group)

Time:
Unknown

Writing Process:
Alone; with peer feedback; topic chosen by student; drafting; revising; self-editing; peer-editing/peer response

Materials:
None

Writing Standards:
Grade 5, Standard 3 (W.5.3)
Write narratives in prose or poem form to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, descriptive details, and clear sequences.
EXAMPLE:  

Language Standards:
Grade 5, Standard 2 (L.5.2)
Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
EXAMPLE:  

Language Standards
Grade 5, Standard 5 (L.5.5)
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
EXAMPLE:  

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

In this sample...

This poem, written voluntarily for a peer audience of fellow poetry enthusiasts, demonstrates a strong awareness of the conventions of descriptive verse and a developing capacity to convey experience through this genre. The writer effectively uses poetic language and techniques to capture the essence of a blooming rose—its delicacy, beauty, and serenity. In addition, the poet’s allusions to the rose’s “evening close” and “open[ing] up again revealing spring” evince a symbolic interpretation of the scene. The piece includes some technical flaws (mostly mechanical), but it shows a clear sense of purpose and budding craftsmanship.

(story of three roses)

The Rose

Its rose with a light tomato skin, B3 D1 B2 B3 D1

A rose with B3 petals oh so thin, B2 B3

(Writing. Grade 5, Standard 3: A W.5.3.d)

Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences or events precisely.

A1 Examples: 1

The writer employs precise language to evoke images in the reader’s mind (A rose sitting so comfortably, Embed(ded in pure brown soil).

A2 Examples: 1

The writer evokes images using multiple senses (Avoid(ding movement or sound).

A3 Examples: 1 - 2

The writer uses alliteration to reinforce imagery (Perfect pose . . . ruby red rose).

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Writing Standards in Action Project
www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa

Page 4 SAMPLE A5-3 (Narrate—Poetry)
Sitting there,

A3 Perfect D3 B2 pose, A3 D3

One fine day for one A3 ruby red rose, A3 B2

It D3 enhances D3 the area around,

C4 C2 A2 Avoiding C4 movement or sound, A2

C2

A1 A rose sitting so comfortly,

D3 D1 Embeded D3 in pure brown soil. A1 D1

D2 C3 Nothing could let this moment spoil, C3 D2

B1 The C1 delicate C4 petles C4 of the rose finally come to a close,

The day finally comes to an end, C1

But worry not, B1

Another day will soon be in bloom,
Where the rose with a light tomato skin,
And petals oh so thin
Will open up again, reveling spring!