

“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 1 English Language Arts

### Narrate

*(Personal Narrative)*

From the Heart



# Background Information

GRADE  
1

## FRAMEWORK / CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework  
for ELA and Literacy (2017)

**Writing Sample Title:** From the Heart

**Text Type and Purpose:** Narrate

**Grade level/Content area:** Grade 1 English Language Arts

**Type of Assignment:** Personal Narrative

**Standards Addressed:** (W.1.3), (W.1.5), (W.1.8),  
(L.1.1), (L.1.2), (L.3.3), (L.1.5)

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

### Highlights:

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

The sample:

- Introduces an enthusiastic first-person narrator
- Establishes a clear situation
- Recounts an event sequence that unfolds naturally
- Develops experiences, events, and feelings with effective supporting details
- Includes a sense of closure that reinforces the narrator's enthusiasm
- Demonstrates strong command of the conventions of standard English
- Features a variety of sentence types that contributes to the overall effect of the narrative

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 the 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 the student work

EXAMPLE: **A**

#### 2. Colored 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:**

Unknown

**Assignment Description:**

Unknown

**Intended Audience:**

Teacher, classmates, community, family

**Time:**

Unknown

**Writing Process:**

Unknown

**Materials:**

Unknown

**Writing Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 3 (W.1.3)**

Write narratives in prose or poem form that recount two or more appropriately sequenced events or experiences, include some details about what happened or was experienced, use temporal words to signal order where appropriate, and provide some sense of closure

EXAMPLE: **A**

**Writing Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 5 (W.1.5)**

With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

EXAMPLE: **B**

**Writing Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 8 (W.1.8)**

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

EXAMPLE: **B**

**Language Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 1 (L.1.1)**

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.

EXAMPLE: **C D E**

**Language Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 2 (L.1.2)**

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

EXAMPLE: **F**

**Language Standards:**

**Grade 3, Standard 3 (L.3.3)**

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

EXAMPLE: **G**

**Language Standards:**

**Grade 1, Standard 5 (L.1.5)**

With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

EXAMPLE: **H**

**Please note:**

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

END OF BACKGROUND ■



# Narrate

GRADE  
1

## FRAMEWORK / CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework  
for ELA and Literacy (2017)

### STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

#### 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 normally 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 labeled arrows in the text do not necessarily appear in alphabetical order.

#### In this sample...

The writer creates a sophisticated narrative that recounts cherished memories in a cleverly developed sequence of events that flows smoothly from beginning to end. Vivid descriptions convey a clear picture of the actions and experiences of an enthusiastic first-person narrator. Correctly formed sentences of various types and carefully chosen words and phrases reveal the narrator's initial disappointment and ultimate delight in a Valentine's Day surprise. The writer's strong command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling enhances the overall effectiveness of this narrative.

## From the Heart

*(This sample comes from a booklet that was produced by the writer's home district, that went through a formal publication process, and that was disseminated to the community.)*

**A1** **E** Have you ever had a day where you've gone

from sad to happy in an instant? Well I did! **E** It happened

**begin** section **end**

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



### Writing. Grade 1, Standard 3

#### **A** W.1.3

Write narratives in prose or poem form that recount two or more appropriately sequenced events or experiences, include some details about what happened or was experienced, use temporal words to signal order where appropriate, and provide some sense of closure.

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

The writer exceeds the standard by introducing an enthusiastic first-person narrator and establishing a clearly defined situation (*Have you ever had a day where you've gone from sad to happy in an instant? Well I did! It happened this past Valentine's Day. I woke up and raced to my mom's bedroom. I expected that she would have something for me, and I was disappointed when I found out that she did not.*).

## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

**A5** this past **C** Valentine's **C** Day. **A5** **A3** I woke up and  
 raced to my mom's bedroom. **A3** **A4** I expected that she would  
 have something for me, and I was disappointed when I found out  
 that she did not. **A1** It **G** made me feel so blue, **G** because I  
**D** had cut out and decorated **D** hearts just for her. **A4**

**Writing. Grade 1, Standard 3**

(continued)

**A2** A2 Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4

The writer organizes a sequence of events that unfolds naturally from the established situation (*I left my mom's bedroom, went downstairs, and plopped myself into a chair... I heard my mom in the snack closet... she pulled out the best present in the world! ...I named my bear Snuggly Bee.*).

**A3** A3 Examples: 1 · 2 · 3

The writer exceeds the standard by describing actions that develop events and experiences (*I woke up and raced to my mom's bedroom.... I threw my arms around my mom.... I snuggle with Snuggly Bee every night, and I dress her up in clothes that I don't wear any more.*).

**A4** A4 Examples: 1 · 2 · 3

The writer exceeds the standard by showing the narrator's responses to situations described in the narrative (*I expected that she would have something for me, and I was disappointed when I found out that she did not. It made me feel so blue, because I had cut out and decorated hearts just for her... I jumped up and down and screamed one time. All I could say was "AAAAAH!" ...I love Snuggly Bear so much...*).

**A5** A5 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer uses temporal phrases to enhance the flow of events (*...this past Valentine's Day... A few minutes later...*).

**A6** A6 Examples: 1

The writer provides an effective sense of closure that reinforces the narrator's happiness with the Valentine's Day surprise (*I pretend that she's a princess from Italy, which is my favorite country. I love Snuggly Bear so much, as much as I love Italy. May be someday we'll go there together. Bonjour!*).

begin section end

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

**A2** I left my **C** mom's **C** bedroom, went downstairs, and  
**G** plopped **G** myself into a chair. **A2** **A5** A few minutes  
 later, **A5** **A2** I heard my mom in the snack closet, **A2** so I  
 thought I was about to get breakfast. My mom **D** reached **D**  
 into the closet, but instead of grabbing cereal, **A2** she pulled out  
 the best present in the world! **A2** It was a huge bear with hearts

**Writing. Grade 1, Standard 5** AND  
**Writing. Grade 1, Standard 8****B** **W.1.5** AND **B** **W.1.8****W.1.5**

With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

**W.1.8**

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**B** Overall text reference

The writer exceeds the standard by consistently providing rich details and information from personal experience to develop a captivating story line and capture the narrator's excitement.

*Note: Comment refers to the piece as a whole rather than a specific example within the text.*

**Language. Grade 1, Standard 1****C** **L.1.1.e**

Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.

**C** C Examples: 1 · 2 · 3

The writer uses correct forms of common and proper possessive nouns (*Valentine's*, *mom's*, *bee's*).

**D** **L.1.1.d**

Use verbs in sentences to convey a sense of past, present, and future.

**D** D Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4

The writer exceeds the standard by correctly using a variety of simple and compound tenses to convey a sense of past, present, and future (*had cut out and decorated*, *reached*, *reminds*, *'ll go*).

begin section end

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

all over her fur. **A4** I jumped up and down and screamed one time.

All I could say was “AAAAAH!” **A4**

**A3** I threw my arms around my mom **A3** and thanked her.

**A2** I named my bear Snuggly Bee. **A2** **E** This might

seem like a strange name for a stuffed bear, but **H** her fuzzy

fur **D** reminds **D** me of a **C** bee’s **C** fuzzy fur. **H**

**Language. Grade 1, Standard 1**

(continued)

**E L.1.1.a**

Produce and expand simple and compound sentences.

**E** E Examples: 1 · 2

The writer exceeds the standard by creating a variety of sentence types that enhances the effect of the sample (*Have you ever had a day where you’ve gone from sad to happy in an instant? Well I did! ...This might seem like a strange name for a stuffed bear, but her fuzzy fur reminds me of a bee’s fuzzy fur. I snuggle with Snuggly Bee every night, and I dress her up in clothes that I don’t wear any more. I pretend that she’s a princess from Italy, which is my favorite country.*).

**Language. Grade 1, Standard 2****F L.1.2**

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

**F** Overall text reference

The writer exceeds the standard by demonstrating strong command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

*Note: Comment refers to the piece as a whole rather than a specific example within the text.*

**begin** section **end**

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES ►



## STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

**A3** I **G** snuggle **G** with Snuggly Bee every night, and I dress

her up in clothes that I don't wear any more. **A3** **A6** I pretend

that she's a princess from Italy, which is my favorite country. **E**

**A4** I love Snuggly Bear so much, **A4** as much as I love Italy.

Maybe someday we **D** 'll go **D** there together. Bonjour! **A6**

**Language. Grade 3, Standard 3****G L.3.3.a**

Choose words and phrases for effect.

**G** G Examples: 1 · 2 · 3

The writer exceeds the standard by choosing words and phrases that enhance the effect of the sample with subtle shades of meaning (*made me feel so blue, plopped, snuggle*).

**Language. Grade 1, Standard 5****H L.1.5.c**

Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).

**H** H Examples: 1

The writer uses a real-life comparison to illustrate the texture of Snuggly Bee's fur (*her fuzzy fur reminds me of a bee's fuzzy fur*).

**begin** section **end**

END OF WRITING SAMPLE ■

