GRADE 4

FRAMEWORK / CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:
Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy (**2017**)

"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 4
English Language Arts

Narrate
(Personal Narrative)

Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Comeback

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

Background Information

GRADE 4

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Writing Sample Title:

The Comeback

Text Type and Purpose: Narrate

Grade level/Content area: Grade 4 English Language Arts

Type of Assignment: Personal Narrative

Standards Addressed: (W.4.3), (W.4.4), (L.4.3), (L.4.4), (L.4.5)

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:

- Includes a strong lead to engage the reader's interest
- Maintains a consistent focus on the topic
- Follows a logical, chronological sequence from beginning to end
- Incorporates a variety of sentence types, lengths, and beginnings
- Demonstrates a precise choice of words
- Builds the excitement to a climax through strategic description of major developments in the plot
- Includes a strong ending that contrasts with the image created in the beginning

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: 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)

Background Information

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Instructional Practices:

The teacher used the following practices:

- Student choice of topic within the confines of a general writing prompt
- Writing workshop model, including on-going mini lessons on aspects of effective writing, followed by guided practice
- Teacher conferences with students to provide targeted instruction and feedback
- Sharing of personal narratives
- Development of a writing plan and first draft
- Revision and editing of the first draft
- Production of a final draft

Assignment Description:

As part of a two-day district writing assessment, the writer addressed the following prompt: *Everyone has a favorite thing to do. Write about a time that you had fun doing your favorite thing. Use everything that you know about good writing to show the reader about your favorite thing.* On day one the writer composed a first draft during the hour allotted; on day two, during a second hour allocated for rewriting, the writer revised and edited the first draft and produced a final draft.

Intended Audience:

Teacher

Time:

2 hours—one hour per day

Writing Process:

Alone; in class; pre-writing; organizing; drafting; revising; self-editing; production of a final draft

Materials:

Writing prompt, student-created web organizer

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 4, Standard 3 (W.4.3)

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

EXAMPLE: A B C D

Writing Standards:
Grade 4, Standard 4 (W.4.4)

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

EXAMPLE: E

Language Standards:
Grade 4, Standard 3 (L.4.3)

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

EXAMPLE: F

Language Standards:
Grade 4, Standard 4 (L.4.4)

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 4 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

EXAMPLE: G

Language Standards:
Grade 4, Standard 5 (L.4.5)

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

EXAMPLE: H

Narrate

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STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

In this sample...

The writer captures the significance of a young bowler's attempt at a come-from-behind win. Skillful organization enables the reader to appreciate the narrator's apprehension, frustration, elation, and ultimate satisfaction. Carefully crafted sentences, idiomatic usage, and sophisticated sensory and subject-specific language amplify the strong voice of the narrator. The writer demonstrates awareness of the audience by helping the reader understand relevant bowling facts and scoring subtleties. From the well-crafted lead to the convincing ending, the writer constructs a vivid personal life experience.

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.

The Comeback

A E "Mwahahaha!" A C2 Jack bragged. C2 E

G He had knocked down his last bowling pin on his last turn to make the score 57 to 72, and, A I was losing. G I was bowling with my friend, Jack, A and we both had a terrible game.

begin section end

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES

Writing. Grade 4, Standard 3:

A W.4.3.a

Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a speaker, narrator, and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.

A **A Examples: 1 · 2 · 3**

The writer engages the reader with a taunting laugh *(Mwahahaha!)*, sets the stage for unfolding the story with a significant hook *(I had one turn to catch up, and things weren't looking so good.)*, and introduces the first person narrator and other main character *(I was losing. I was bowling with my friend Jack…)*.

A B1 E I had one turn to catch up, and things weren't looking so good. E B1 A C1 G Just to let you know, on the last turn, if you get a spare or a strike on your second stroke, you get one extra stroke. G C1 I was hoping for that right now. H Jack was relaxing on a bench, and it looked like he had this game in the bag. H I threw the ball. C2 F1 Ah, the beautiful sound of pins clattering C2 met my ears. F1 B2 But when I opened my eyes, I gasped in horror. B2 B3 The room felt small and far away. C2 I fell to the ground and moaned. C2 B3

begin section end

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES

Writing. Grade 4, Standard 3: (continued)

B W.4.3.b

Use dialogue and description to develop experiences or events or show responses to situations.

B1 **B1 Examples: 1 · 2**

The writer conveys characterization by skillfully balancing the outward actions of the main character and revealing internal thoughts and feelings *(I had one turn to catch up and things weren't looking so good… Jack snickered. I felt like I was going to blow up any second.).*

B2 **B2 Examples: 1 · 2 · 3**

The writer communicates the narrator's earnest voice, lending intensity to the narrative. *(But when I opened my eyes, I gasped in horror… Amazing!...My heart was thumping so loud, I could feel my whole body shaking.).*

B3 **B3 Examples: 1**

The writer slows the pace at opportune times *(The room felt small and far away. I fell to the ground and moaned.).*

B4 **B4 Examples: 1**

The writer creates a concisely expressed turning point *(I started dancing and Jack started mumbling.).*

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STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

E G The evil split was attacking! The two pins were really far apart. G B1 Jack snickered. E I felt like I was going to blow up any second. B1 C1 F2 The only way to knock a split down is to hit one of the pins from an angle, so it skids and knocks down the other pin. C1 I aimed, shot, and closed my eyes. C2 Pins clattered. C2 I opened my eyes. B2 Amazing! F2 I knocked down a split! B2 F1 I jumped for joy. F1 Jack was astonished. I got the extra stroke. If I knocked down six pins, I'd

begin section end

WRITING SAMPLE CONTINUES

Writing. Grade 4, Standard 3: (continued)

C **W.4.3.d**

Use concrete words and phrases, figurative language such as similes and metaphors, and sensory details to convey experiences or events precisely.

C1 **C1 Examples: 1 · 2**

The writer selects topic-specific bowling terms to add authenticity to descriptions of events *(Just to let you know, on the last turn, if you get a spare or a strike on your second stroke, you get one extra stroke … The only way to knock a split down is to hit it from an angle, so it skids and knocks down the other pin).*

C2 **C2 Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5**

The writer conveys experiences vividly throughout the narrative with strong verbs *(Jack bragged… Ah, the beautiful sounds of pins clattering… I fell to the ground and moaned… Pins clattered … One pin was wobbling).*

D **W.4.3.e**

Provide a sense of closure appropriate to the narrated experiences or events.

D **D Examples: 1 · 2**

The writer crafts a conclusion that brings the narrative full circle, back to the heart of the story and the significance of the event *(I started dancing and Jack started mumbling…I was so excited, and from then on, Jack has been a little afraid to go against me in bowling.).*

win this game. B2 My heart was thumping so loud, I could feel my whole body shaking. B2 I aimed and shot again. The pins got hit. Four were down. C2 One pin was wobbling. C2 It fell and knocked down two pins! E Six pins were down. B4 D I started dancing and Jack started mumbling. D B4 E

D I was so excited, and from then on, Jack has been a little afraid to go against me in bowling. D

begin section end

END OF WRITING SAMPLE ■

Writing. Grade 4, Standard 4:

E W.4.4

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

E E Examples: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4

The task was to write a coherent narrative about having fun doing a favorite thing – in the writer's case, bowling. The writer develops a suspenseful, coherent narrative about a close, exciting win over a friend gloating about his lead. *(Mwahahaha! Jack bragged… I had one turn to catch up, and things weren't looking so good…. The evil split was attacking! The two pins were really far apart. Jack snickered… Six pins were down . I started dancing and Jack started mumbling.)*.

Language. Grade 4, Standard 3:

F L.4.3.a

Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

F1 F1 Examples: 1 · 2

The writer uses precise words and phrases to convey satisfaction and to appeal to the reader's senses. *(Ah, the beautiful sound of the pins clattering met my ears…I jumped for joy.)*.

F2 F2 Examples: 1

The writer crafts sentences of varying length that effectively convey the rise and fall of the action *(The only way to knock a split down is to hit one of the pins from an angle, so it skids and knocks down the other pin. I aimed, shot and closed my eyes. Pins clattered. I opened my eyes. Amazing! I knocked down a split!)*.

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STANDARDS-BASED COMMENTARY

Language. Grade 4, Standard 4:

G **L.4.4.a**

Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

G G Examples: **1 · 2 · 3**

The writer provides context clues to help the reader understand bowling rules and terms *(He had knocked down his last bowling pin on his last turn to make the score 57 to 72, and, I was losing… Just to let you know, on the last turn, if you get a spare or a strike on your second stroke, you get one extra stroke…The evil split was attacking! The two pins were really far apart.)*.

Language. Grade 4, Standard 5:

H **L.4.5.b**

Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.

H H Examples: **1**

The writer demonstrates understanding of the meaning of an idiom by using it purposefully *(Jack was relaxing on the bench, and it looked like he had this game in the bag.)*.

begin section end