

Prompt: Think of something you have done that brought you satisfaction, pleasure, or a sense of accomplishment. Tell a story about this activity or event.

Student Sample A

“Straight A’s”

When I got straight A’s on my report card I felt really good inside. I got A’s on my class work too. In order to get the straight A’s I had to be really smart and study because if I wasn’t smart or if I didn’t study that wouldn’t get the good grades like A’s. Also I had to think to get A’s because if I didn’t think than I wouldn’t have got the A’s.

Sometimes I needed help from my teacher or mom and dad so they helped me get straight A’s. Also I had to read books to get A’s because books like math book or spelling books, they helped me get straight A’s

I was ready for anything at school because if I wasn’t ready then I wouldn’t know what to do, I will not get an A. Also I had to work had to work hard in order to get A’s. I HAD to work hard. I also had to consintrate to get an A because if I didn’t consitrate then I would’ve done it wrong and I would not get aA.

How would you score this sample? (1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample A

Scores: I=3 O=3 V=3 C=3

Ideas

The paper is clear and focused, and the writer obviously felt a sense of accomplishment when she got straight A's. The ideas are reasonably clear, but to earn a 4, they need to be expanded, personalized, and more detailed as a means to share insight and "fill in the blanks." "*Sometimes I needed help from my teacher or mom and dad...*" and "*Also I had to read books...*" provide enough details that support the topic and show promise.

Organization

The organization moves the reader through the paper. The progression of ideas is fairly well controlled, but the writer sometimes spends too much time on the obvious. The introduction, "*When I got straight A's on my report card I felt really good inside.*" doesn't create a strong sense of anticipation, but is certainly recognizable and sets the tone for the paper. The conclusion, "*I also had to consintrate to get an A because if I didn't consitrate then I would've done it wrong and I would not get a A.*" leaves the reader a bit confused and without a sense of conclusion. The overall organization of the paper certainly is strong enough to move the reader from point to point with minimal confusion.

Voice

The writing communicates in an earnest manner, and although the writer seems sincere, the writing becomes general, vague, tentative, or abstract in other places. The writer tells us she had to *study* and *think* to get straight A's, but doesn't help the reader to establish a connection that would bring the topic to life. This paper hides as much of the writer as it reveals.

Conventions

The writer demonstrates reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Although the problems do not get in the way of the meaning of the paper, there are times that noticeable errors distract the reader. Spelling and capitalization are mostly correct, and the problems with usage and grammar are not serious enough to distort meaning. The run-on sentence in the first paragraph is an example of where moderate editing would be needed prior to publication: "*In order to get the straight A's I had to be really smart and study because if I wasn't smart or if I didn't study that wouldn't get the good grades like A's.*" External punctuation is almost always correct, but there are several sentences where internal punctuation is incorrect or missing.

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Student Sample B

“When I did the play”

Something that made me feel proud of myself was, when I did the play. I’m going to tell you a story about when I did the play. It all started one February in Mr. Carter’s class, and I was aditioning for Narrator part two. And porsha, and kaitlyn were aditioning for the part too. And then I started reading and I shooked Mr. Carter up there. And I got the part. Then I started to practice my part, incase I hade any difficult words. then it was February 29, and it was show time! And I almost started sweeting on the stage and I almost wet my pants too! Then every body invited was there. So me and Sara started reading the story the Sager Children. Then we were done and we took a bow. So we went to the lunch room to give the costumes to the other classes. When the other classes play’s were over we sang a song called Oh Suzanna! Then we went to the class room and I was tired. So then Mr. Carter said good Job to the class. Then he told me I did an awsome Job! And in my head I thought I made his day. And that’s my story. Bye!

How would you score this sample? (1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample B

Scores: I=3 O=3 V=3 C=2.5

Ideas

This paper is clear and focused on the topic of feeling proud about doing a play. The writer is developing the topic, but more information is needed to fill in the blanks and earn a higher score. The author adds so many specifics that we sometimes have trouble sifting out what is critical; on the other hand, the supporting details give the reader important information that he or she could not personally bring to the text. This could be a stronger paper with a snapshot of the nerves and excitement of the play and the pride the author and her teacher feel.

Organization

The introduction is recognizable, but does not create a great sense of anticipation, "*Something that made me feel proud of myself was, when I did the play.*" could be a fill in the blank lead that anyone could write. The conclusion, "*And that's my story. Bye*" makes you really wish that this author had left those lines off the paper and concluded with how proud the teacher was. The organization moves the reader from point to point, but sometimes spends too much time, as in the beginning where we take half the page to get to the exciting part of the play starting; or spurts ahead, as when the play was done, *we went to the lunchroom, gave the costumes to the other class, sang a song, and went back to class.*

Voice

This writer occasionally speaks directly to the reader, but then occasionally hides again. We hear her nerves, "*I almost started sweating on the stage and I almost wet my pants too!*" and we hear her pride, "*...he told me I did an awesome job! And in my head I thought I made his day.*" In other places, she starts listing what happened in a manner that is flat, "*Then we were done and we took a bow.*" which makes us wonder how it all went. The writing and word choice occasionally interest and move the reader, but sometimes becomes general and abstract.

Conventions

This paper makes too many errors in conventions to receive a solid 3. Capitalization is sometimes missing, as in *sara* and *porsha*. Spelling is sometimes incorrect even on common words such as *hade* for *had*, *shooked* for *shook*(?), and *sweeting* for *sweating*. Although external punctuation is generally correct, the writer has trouble with internal punctuation. Apostrophes are used incorrectly, and the errors in conventions are noticeable and occasionally get in the way of the meaning. More than moderate editing would be required.

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Student Sample C

“A garden”

One day my mom asked me if I wanted to plant a garden with her So I said “Okay”! It was exiting and boring at the same time I was sad that my sisters didn’t get to help with gardening but they were in trouble so they couldn’t help anyways.

Later me and my mom went outside to the garden and started planting. We planted corn, tomatoes, bell peppers and strawberries. I had lots of fun planting in my mom’s garden with her.

A few months later we went back out to the garden and saw all of the yummy vegies we had planted before. My friend lived next door and she loved strawberries so I went and got a basket from my house picked all of the strawberries and walked to her house to give them to her. We ate them together. They tasted good.

In the end I had lots of fun planting a new garden with my mom.

The End.

How would you score this sample?
(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample C

Scores: I=3.5 O=3 V=3 C=3

Ideas

The writer is developing the topic in a reasonably clear and purposeful way. It is clear that the writer is writing from experience, but to achieve a higher score, the ideas must be expanded and personalized. The writer offers good development in the planting: *corn, tomatoes, bell peppers and strawberries*; and in the sharing of the strawberries with the neighbor, but doesn't go far enough in expanding the details or adding new insights. The supporting relevant details add to the paper, and the topic is developed in a way that is controlled and somewhat higher than a 3.

Organization

The organization moves the reader through the paper, and although the progression of ideas is 'fairly well controlled' the writer doesn't always deliver only the needed information at just the right moment and then move on. "*It was exiting and boring at the same time. I was sad that my sisters didn't get to help with gardening but they were in trouble so they couldn't help anyways.*" is an example of spending too much time on insignificant details. Giving the strawberries to a friend would be an opportunity to describe the friend's reaction or talk about how good they tasted, and the writer simply spurts ahead. The transitions help guide the reader through the paper, but we jump from *One day*, to *Later*, to *A few months later*, to *In the end*, requiring inferences about the direct connections. The introduction and conclusion are recognizable, but not necessarily satisfying.

Voice

The writer seems aware of an audience, but hides as much as she reveals. She tells us that she "... *had lots of fun planting a new garden with my mom.*" But as earnest as she seems, her attitude seems quite tentative and vague in places. The word choice helps the paper in places: "*yummy vegies,*" "*she loved strawberries,*" but remains quite flat in others, "*good,*" "*fun.*" A mini-lesson on word choice would certainly help the voice in this paper. There is some connection with the reader, and the writer demonstrates some commitment to the topic; however, to receive higher than a 3, the writer would need to speak in a way that is more individualistic, expressive and engaging.

Conventions

This writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Misspellings of *exiting* for exciting, and *vegies* for veggies, distract the reader, but are really quite minor. Most words are spelled correctly although the writer doesn't take many chances on difficult words. Sentences are generally correct, and external punctuation is almost always correct. The use of internal punctuation is quite limited, and is sometimes required but missing. Sentences are mostly simplistic, and run-ons are present, but do not impede meaning.

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Student Sample D:

Untitled

My first Bike I got it at K markt when I got it I was so Happy I sayed I can't bulive it I was Happy my Dad was Happy to when my cause got His He was So Happy me and my case we rideied in nighttime this is all i won'ld OH and I can't rillazi How this Begin I am still Happy this is the grat time evey I sayed and now I am gron up now I sill Ride that Bike and when I ride My Bike I remeberwher I got it.

How would you score this sample?
(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Student Sample D

I=1.5 O=2 V=2 C=1

Ideas

The information in this paper is very limited and unclear. Although the writer has attempted to define the topic, the text reads like a collection of random thoughts. The problems with conventions make it difficult to sift through the paper and determine what the purpose might be based on sketchy details.

Organization

This writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Although there is an attempt at an introduction and conclusion, they are unclear and only add minimally to the organization of the paper. The sequencing of the details is very limited and transitions are vague or missing. The organization of the paper is hurt by the problems with conventions as the reader has no clear sense of the structure. There are hard to follow leaps and inferences need to be made to follow the connections.

Voice

This writer is clearly happy as she states many times. *“When I got it I was so Happy I sayed I can’t bulive it”* shows the writer attempting to communicate in an earnest manner. Although the writer does try to establish a connection, the overuse of the word “happy” tends to flatten the use of the word and leaves the reader wondering about the commitment of the writer.

Conventions

The reader is relieved when you get to the period at the end of the paper – the only one on the page. The errors in grammar and usage interfere with meaning and make the paper extremely difficult to read. There are frequent spelling errors, even on common words, and the capitalization is inconsistent and confusing. It would be difficult to know where to start when sitting down to extensively edit this paper with the student.

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Student Sample E

Untitled

One day my dad and I went to lego land. We had fun.

At the end of the end of the day we got a hotel and went to sleep. The next morning we went back to LegoLand and bought some chocolate coveredpretzals. Later we went swiming and ate dinner and pretzals. The next day we were leaving. The next day we were on the airplane. When I got back to Nevad I thought about what we were going to do next year.

How would you score this sample?
(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample E

I=2 O=2 V=1.5 C=2

Ideas

The writer seems to be writing from experience but has not yet begun to develop the topic in a meaningful way. The paper has a clear sense of purpose, so it is not a 1, but the paper is certainly not clear and focused. Everything seems as important as everything else even though it is fairly easy to see where the writer is headed. The author says, “*We had fun.*” but there is no evidence to support that fact. The paper is very limited, and the reader has no real sense of the writer.

Organization

The sequencing of the paper is logical, but reads like a list. The events progress, but seem strung together. Although the paper has some elements of a 3, including an introduction and conclusion, the transitions are weak and there is no clear internal structure.

Voice

This paper is flat and lifeless. The writing communicates on a functional level, but the writer does not connect with the audience. Including “*chocolate covered pretzels*” and telling us “*We had fun.*” keep the paper from a straight 1 in voice. This writer establishes no connection with the reader, although we remain interested with the hope that the writer will reveal himself.

Conventions

Sentences are simple and do not allow the reader to understand the writer’s level of ability. There are misspelled words that distract: *coverd*, *swiming*, *Nevad*; and capitalization is inconsistent. The conventions distract from the paper and make the text difficult to read.

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Student Sample F

Untitled

“Okay girls, just stay focused and have fun, you have been working hard.” The music played loudly as we waited back stage at the Pioneer Theatre. I was playing the part of a Spring fairy. With my ballet teacher right by my side, my heart was beating so hard. This was my first production and I was nervous! I had auditioned for this show three months before and I was finally going to go on the big wide stage out in front of the dark crowd under the bright lights shining down on me, my partner Holly, and an advanced dancer that danced in front of us, Megan. A piece of music started to play and I could hear the tapping of point shoes on the stage, stretching out in front of me. My dance ran through my head over and over and then with out my mind even knowing it I ran out on to the stage with a huge smile on my face and excitement in my heart.

I did my dance with excitement in every step and I felt as if that was the best that I had ever done on that dance! As the music started to slow down I knew that it was almost time for me to get off the stage. As I looked out to the crowd I felt like they we’re all there to watch me do my part, and I felt as if I was the only one on the stage even though there we’re two other dancers with me.

As I ran off the stage I could not deny that I felt amazing and that, that had been awesome! When I got back stage all I could do was smile and almost felt like I could faint. My ballet teacher congratulated me and I couldn’t wait to go see my family. Doing that gave me satisfaction, pleasure, and a sense of accomplishment!

How would you score this sample? (1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample F

I=5 O=5 V=5 C=4

Ideas

This paper is clear, focused, and interesting, and is a great example of a 5 in Ideas. It holds the reader's attention and is filled with details that enhance the story line. *"My dance ran through my head over and over and then with out my mind even knowing it I ran out on to the stage with a huge smile on my face and excitement in my heart."*and*"As I ran off the stage I could not deny that I felt amazing..."* This writer is definitely writing from experience and the ideas are fresh and engaging.

Organization

The inviting introduction *"Okay girls, just stay focused and have fun..."* draws the reader in and from there on, the details seem to fit where they're placed and the sequencing is logical and effective. As the author moves the reader through her experience, she controls the pacing in a way that delivers the needed information at just the right moment. The reader feels the sense of accomplishment and relief when the writer says, *"When I got back stage all I could do was smile and almost felt like I could faint."*

Voice

Individualistic, expressive, and engaging are words that describe the voice in this paper. The writer establishes a strong connection with the reader and the reader has no doubt as to the writer's commitment to the topic. Writing with feeling, such as, *"I did my dance with excitement in every step..."* and *"With my ballet teacher right by my side, my heart was beating so hard."* bring honesty and a sense of the writer to the paper. Clearly, this writer is committed to the topic, and she was very satisfied and pleased with her accomplishment.

Conventions

Errors are few, but occasionally distract the reader, and keep the paper from getting straight 5's. Light editing would be all that would be required, (were vs. we're) and some problems with internal punctuation. For the most part, the grammar and usage are correct and contribute to the strength of the paper. Capitalization and spelling are correct, and the writer shows a great grasp of writing conventions for a 4th grade student.

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Student Sample G

“Swim Meet”

“Why?” I thought “did I ever say yes?” I was standing before the diving board at the Northwest Pool Swim Meet. I couldn’t believe that my dad had actually talked me into this. I could hear the excited buzz of people chatting as they watched the swimmers by the edge of the pool. I kept my eyes on the water, telling myself not to get nervous. “too late,” I thought.

Finally the speaker came on. “Swimmers” I stood up on the swimming platform. On your mark,” I bent down. Then the honk. As soon as I plunged into the pool, I forgot where I was. Gliding through the water I felt calm. It was so quiet down there. Then as fast as the feeling came over me, it was gone. Go! I urged myself on. I broke through the water. Pull. Breathe. Kick. Glide. I was already ahead. Pull. Breathe. Kick. Glide. I was halfway there. More pulling. More kicking. I could see the finish just ahead.

When I touched the wall, I knew I had won. I pulled myself out of the water. “Good job,” the judge said. She handed me my prize. It was a silver bauble head swimmer, getting ready to dive. On the side was a shiny gold plaque. I couldn't help thinking I might do this again.

Annotations for Student Sample G

I=5 O=5 V=5 C=5

Ideas

This paper grabs you from the very details, and evidence showcase the brought her great satisfaction and a developed with great control as the enhances the others that this paper

Organization

The organization of this paper is an transitions are smooth and weave t and the progression of ideas is very the reader through the paper in a c *thought*.moves the reader to read c organization is the conclusion, which amazing strength of the paper as a whole, left me expecting more.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

e way through. The anecdotes, y a very important event that r feels profoundly. The topic is . Each trait so clearly clear and balanced way.

where they are placed, and the The lead grabs your attention, es the organization and leads h with “*too late*,” I hing, the weakness in f conclusion, but with the

Voice

The reader knows this writer and her thoughts and feelings throughout this experience. You feel the “*quiet down there*” and feel her urge herself on and break through the water. The author’s word choice brings the topic to life, and along with the organization and conventions, work to establish a cohesive whole. The connection between reader and writer makes you feel that the writer is speaking to you. Anyone who has been nervous and pushed himself to do something challenging and difficult, feels for this 4th grader who is going beyond her comfort zone and sharing her experience with us. Amazingly, this is all done in a manner that doesn’t make you question if the author is really in 4th grade, since the voice is honest and appropriate for a 4th grader; it’s simply individualistic, expressive, and engaging.

Conventions

The sophistication of the conventions in this paper are amazingly well controlled for a 4th grader. From the first sentence, “*Why?*” *I thought*, “*did I ever say yes?*” the writer shows control over very advanced grammatical usage and punctuation. She punctuates dialog, including her thoughts, in a very clear and concise manner. The sentence structures are varied. The writer is very confident in the way she punctuates, *Pull. Breathe. Kick. Glide.*and repeats it for effect. Spelling is correct, except for one *already*, and even words like *bauble*, *platform*, *actually*, and *breathe*, are spelled correctly. Rarely do you see a 4th grade paper with this level of correctness and sophistication in conventions.

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