

Student Sample H

“My Cool Teacher”
P.S. Mr Johnson is...

My cool teacher is Mr. Johnson... and you read the p.s. sign didn't you. Anyway Mr. Johnson rocks he's funny, nice, sweet. He likes me too! I wish he was a fifth and sixth grade teacher.

When ever I come to school he's nice. When ever I go home he's nice. Sometimes I forget something in the classroom I come back and he says “Hi Welcome Back!” I wish I could stay there because he's so lonley. But he has kids!

I like Mr. Johnson because he's like my Friend, and I think that sometimes Kids can be friends with teachers. They need happy thoughts in their minds because all they think about is taxes, bills, work, spelling grades, grammer grades, and lots of programs.

Thats why I'm writting this for all the moms, dads, and teachers! Mr. Johnson is important to me because he's my best friend. Go Mr. Johnson Keep beeing a teacher!

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development
_____ Organization
_____ Voice
_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample H

I=3 O=3 V=3 C=3

This paper meets standards in all four traits.

Ideas: The paper generally focuses on that cool teacher, Mr. Johnson. There are some supporting details like a glimpse of the teacher's humor when he says 'welcome back' when the student comes back to get something he forgot. The third paragraph deals with students being friends with teachers and with teachers needing happy thoughts. These details seem irrelevant and weaken the focus of the paper.

Organization: The paper barely meets standards in organization. There is a recognizable beginning, middle and end. Within the paragraphs, however, the writer seems to be free-associating. For example in the second paragraph the writer goes from the fact that he's nice to his welcome back remark to his being lonely to his having kids. The same random thoughts are evident in the third paragraph as well. The conclusion, "Go Mr. Johnson keep being a teacher." is effective.

Voice: The voice is adequate. The writer really likes his 4th grade teacher and he conveys that affection. There's a conversational tone established in the first paragraph, "you saw the p,s. sign, didn't you?" The voice also emerges again when the writer speculates about what adults think about: "taxes, bills, work, spelling grades. . ."

Conventions: The writer has a good grasp of most conventions. The sentence structure is good and even contains correct internal punctuation. Most sentences are simplistic, however. Most words are spelled correctly except for "writting" for "writing" and "beeing" for "being." The "that's" in the final paragraph has no apostrophe, and the final sentence needs commas as he addresses Mr. Johnson directly. Generally grade-level conventions are correct.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students' samples written to the same prompt. We've found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state's rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we've annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students' writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students' writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano's research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample I

WOW A Turtle!

Wow! A turtle! Oh sorry I didn't know you were there. Im Alice. I love turtles don't you. They're so cute. What I love about them is that if there in the water sleeping or there swimming then they don't need to come up for air. If there just floating there they can go up any time when they need air. Also turtles have amazing designs on thier shell. Did you know turtles can have more than 300 babies. Also did you know that when the eggs hatch and the babies have to go to the water most of the time other animals eat them. So sad. Well at least you know some facts about turtles now.

The End.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample I

I=3 O=3 V=3 C=2.5

This paper meets standards in ideas, organization and voice, but just misses meeting standards in conventions.

Ideas: This writer does have a good knowledge of turtles and conveys that to the reader. Details such as the fact that turtles have 300 babies help the paper rise above the generalities at the beginning. The focus stays on turtles throughout the paper.

Organization: While this paper did receive a 3 in organization, it would be at the lower end of the 3 continuum. The beginning is disjointed: “Wow! A turtle! Oh sorry I didn’t know you were there. I’m Alice. I love turtles. . .” While this might enhance voice, it detracts from the organization. Once the writer begins discussing the characteristics of turtles, the organization flows more smoothly. There is a good initial sentence and the conclusion, while predictable, is adequate.

Voice: The voice in this paper is conversational with the writer directly addressing the audience: “Sorry I didn’t know you were there.” While the line detracts from organization it does enhance the voice somewhat. Again as with the other traits, the voice becomes stronger in the details about turtles she shares with us, especially the sadness of the baby turtles being eaten by other animals.

Conventions: The basic sentence structure in this paper is adequate except for the run on: “Also did you know that when the eggs hatch and the babies have to go to the water most of the time other animals eat them.” and the fragment that follows: “So sad.” The fragment could be for effect, but that is unclear. Most common words are spelled correctly except “their” for “there” and “there” for “they’re.” She does use the correct “they’re” one time. The writer continues to ask questions: “Did you know. . .” but she does not use question marks at the end of these sentences. This paper barely misses meeting standards in conventions.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students’ samples written to the same prompt. We’ve found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state’s rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we’ve annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students’ writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students’ writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano’s research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample J

Cindy

Cindy is so nice. She dose avre thing for me. She loves me. We are good frands. We have fun together. I love her so much. She haves 1 dog, 1 doter, 2 suns. We rit cards to eachother. She is like my mother. But samlir and her doter thinks I am her sister. We hang out together. And we are gowing to Jakson. for the wikind. Im living on friday for 3 days. And we are gowing to have fun. I can notwateintall I live. for the wolmanscofrans. And limgoing. I well mosle sleep, And Cindy is gowing too. I can notwat. I cantwat. I wish you can come. But sore that you cant. I love her. How she loves me.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample J

I=2 O=1.5 V=2.5C=2

This paper does not meet standards in any trait with organization being weakest and voice being strongest.

Ideas: The reader infers that Cindy is the focus of the paper, though that focus shifts to a trip they will take to a women's conference. There are details about Cindy: she has one dog, one daughter and two sons. There are fewer details and more repetition as the writer shifts to the trip she and Cindy will take. The writer brings the focus back to Cindy at the very end.

Organization: There is the suggestion of an introduction and a conclusion: "Cindy is so nice." and "How she loves me." The rest of the paper has no coherent sequencing as the writer moves from writing cards to hanging out to going to Jackson to looking forward to the trip. The final sentences shift the focus for a third time. There are no transitions except for a couple of "ands." This paper is weakest in the trait of organization.

Voice: The voice is the strongest aspect of this paper. We know the writer cares about Cindy: "She is like my mother." We also get a sense of her anticipation for the trip with the line: "I can't wait until we go." Generally, though, the writer's problems in the other traits obscure the voice.

Conventions: The most obvious convention issue is spelling with only a couple of sentences being error-free. Consistent misspelling of the most common words such as "gowing" for "going" and "dose" for "does" distract the reader throughout the piece. The writer does have a sense of sentence, but the sentences are all simplistic and predictable. There are also usage issues like "she haves" for "she has."

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students' samples written to the same prompt. We've found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state's rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we've annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students' writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students' writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano's research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample K

Parents Are Heroes

My parents are really amazing. They are so amazing because they are helpful, funny, loving, caring, smart, kind, generous, and good listeners. My parents are helpful because they help me with my hard homework, they help with chores around the house, and they help me figure out the things I don't know. My parents also help with many more things. My parents are funny because they tell jokes and play games, like Monopoly with me. What I love most is when they laugh. I think my parents are amazing because they are very loving. They are loving because they have been with me my whole life through, and I know they love me. My parents are caring and kind because they are nice and have cared for me ever since I was a baby. They are smart and generous because they know a lot more than I do and they help people who are in need. My parents are good listeners too. They are good listeners because they listen to my problems and fears. I can prove that my parents are very truly amazing.

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

Scorer Annotations for Student Sample K

I=3 O=3 V=3 C=3.5

This paper meets standards in ideas, organization and voice and is somewhat better in conventions.

Ideas: The paper focuses on the writer's parents and all the reasons they are amazing. The writer uses details like helping out with homework. However, many details remain general and vague such as "My parents are caring and kind because they are nice." "Kind, caring" and "nice" are all "telling" words that do little to create a picture in the reader's mind.

Organization: While this paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion, the middle is held together by repetition: "They are amazing because they are helpful, funny, and loving. My parents are helpful because they help me with homework. . ." This pattern repeats throughout the paper. While the repetition does hold the paper together, it makes it plodding at the same time.

Voice: The reader believes the writer's devotion to his parents. While the writer uses words such as "smart, generous," and "good listeners," the words do not entirely ring true because the writer gives no details that make the words unique to his parents. Still, the reader feels the writer's commitment to his parents.

Conventions: The conventions are the strongest trait in this paper. Spelling is generally correct even on more difficult words like "generous;" usage is also generally correct. Sentences are correct, but they are simplistic and redundant and therefore keep the paper in the 3 range. Generally, however, there is very little wrong with this paper in terms of conventions.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students' samples written to the same prompt. We've found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state's rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we've annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students' writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students' writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano's research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample L

The Essay Contest

I think I am an amazing person. One amazing thing I did was win first place in an essay contest about Cesar Chavez.

My teacher gave my class an assignment. “Your assignment is to write an essay about Cesar Chavez and enter it in the contest,” he said. “You have three weeks to do this, so don’t put it off.”

I put the essay off anyway. My mom said “You need to start working on your essay. It’s due in three days.”

I went to the table to write my essay. I sat for awhile without writing anything. I was about to go read when suddenly an idea popped into my head. Then, another idea popped into my head, then another, and another. I wrote about how Cesar Chavez devoted his life to helping farmworkers and about how he is a great example. Before long I had written a whole essay about Cesar Chavez.

I still had a problem, though. The essay had to be 100 words long or under. I counted my words. Oh no! I had 129 words. I edited and revised for the next hour. Finally I had exactly 100 words.

4 days after I turned in my essay I received a surprising phone call. It was the person in charge of the Cesar Chavez Essay Contest. “You won first place in the Cesar Chavez Essay Contest!” she said. I was amazed.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample L

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

This paper exceeds standards in all four traits.

Ideas: This is a superior paper. It focuses on the Caesar Chavez essay contest and provides relevant, showing detail. An example would be the description of her revision and editing as she revises down to 100 words.

Organization: The paper begins with a bold statement: “I think I am an amazing person.” It involves the reader immediately. While the transitions do not begin immediately, they are effective when they begin in paragraph four: “before long,” and “I still had a problem though.” The conclusion brings back the idea of amazement, but with a twist as she explains that she was “amazed” to have won the contest.

Voice: The writer is committed to the topic, and the reader feels her sincere interest in Caesar Chavez. The dialogue contributes to voice, and the repetition of the ideas “popping” into her head gives the reader a glimpse into her writing process.

Conventions: With the exception of a missing comma and using “4” instead of “four” in the first sentence of the final paragraph, this paper is error-free. Impressive for this level is the correct punctuation of the dialogue throughout the paper. Spelling is correct, and there is some sentence variety.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students’ samples written to the same prompt. We’ve found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state’s rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we’ve annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students’ writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students’ writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano’s research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample M

“My friends started the food fight”

Today is Tuesday a boring old day of the week well for me 3 more days and it is friday well this is how it all begun Me Mark and Walter were playing tag We were the tagers We all had fun until one day we were playing tag We were play a kid name daniel pushed us down we got Mad ressus ended and it was lunch we dicided to eat a burito then daniel was making fun of us we got mad. We threw our burito's at his face he got super mad his face was red he stood up and said “hew threw that” every one was quit then two moments later we stood up and said “we did” the princeable wanted us we went to the princeable office and we got introuble and we went back to the lunchroom 5 min later the howl lunch room was so messy some bodysunderware was on the lunch ladies head and a monkey was their the princeable went to the lunch room she could not even breath she said “everyone to class this instance”. The next morning she had an ancement she said “everyone will be expeld un less you clean up the lunch Room today or we can call your parint's” beceeed it end ed so we did me Mark and Walter got expeled We rolled our eyes we calld our parent's we went home and the rest had no ressus the end

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample M

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

This paper does not meet standards in any trait.

Ideas: The reader can understand that there was a food fight, and the writer and his friends have to clean up the cafeteria. After that, however, the details are very confusing. They went to the principal; somebody's underwear was on the lunch lady's head. The writer and his friends were playing tag and decided to eat a burrito. There are no lack of details in this paper, but the reader does not understand their significance or what they have to do with the story.

Organization:The paper lacks organization. The opening begins the confusion as the writer talks about it being Tuesday, three days from Friday. . .and then transitioning to "Well, this is how it all began..." The paper does use transitions such as "5 minutes later" and "the next morning," but the reader is not sure what ideas these transitions are connecting. The conclusion is as confusing as the rest of the paper: We rolled our eyes we called our parent's we went home and the rest had no ressus the end."

Voice:The paper has enough detail to have some voice especially when the writer threw the burrito at Daniel and then details his reaction: "he got super mad his face was red he stood up and said 'hew threw that.'" Unfortunately the confusion around the chronology and the random use of details detracts from the voice in the paper.

Conventions:Conventions are very weak in this paper and make it difficult to understand. Consistent misspellings like "hew" for "who" and "ressus" for "recess" and "quit" for "quiet" make the paper difficult to understand. Sentences are run on throughout the paper. In fact, there is not a period for the first twenty one lines, and that is the only period in the entire paper. The reader seems to have a sense of sentence on some occasions, but does not use end punctuation. Overall, the reader is overwhelmed by the convention errors; they contribute to the confusion the reader feels while trying to decode this paper.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students' samples written to the same prompt. We've found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state's rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we've annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students' writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students' writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano's research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.

Prompt: There are many amazing people, things, places, and events in our world. Tell a story about one of them.

Student Sample N

My Ballet Show

Today was the day that I had to perform a ballet recite with my friends from ballet class. I met all my friends at a studio where were going to perform.

We were going to be lions and dance to the song called "I Can't Wait to Be King". My Friends and I dressed up in cute lion costumes and practiced our dance. We kept practicing until our ballet teacher was here.

A lot of people from my family came to watch my recite. My mom was carrying a bouquet of flowers that she would give to me after the recite.

My performance was third to last so we had plenty of time to practice. While we were practicing we go to watch other performers on stage. After the fourth to last performer was finish we were up. I got scared and then my mind blanked out. After that I got a little worried because my ballet teacher told us that she had a surprise for us if we did well. All of a sudden the music started, so we went on stage. I didn't know what to do but the suddenly I remembered the steps. I danced the steps! After that we had our surprise, it was cupcakes! After we ate cupcakes my mom picked me up. She gave me the bouquet of flowers and said that I was the best of the best and that my dancing was fantastic. I was satisfied with what she said, and that made me really happy.

The End

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Annotations for Student Sample N

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

This paper is above standards in all four traits.

Ideas: The paper adequately focuses on the build up to and the performance in a dance recital. There are ample showing details from the cute lion costumes to the bouquet of flowers her mother brings to her. The reader would like a few more details about the actual dance, however.

Organization:The paper has an introduction and a conclusion though the conclusion is stronger than the introduction. Although the writer uses few transitions in the first few paragraphs, she uses a variety of transitions effectively during the performance section of the paper. The progression of ideas surrounding the ballet recital is well controlled.

Voice: The voice takes a while to become evident, but it also emerges during the recital itself. The reader senses the writer's nervousness through details like, "I got scared, and then my mind blanked out." She also conveys her relief through her mother's praise. She is satisfied with her dance, and the reader is satisfied with her voice.

Conventions:The writer understands conventions well. Most words are spelled correctly except for "recite" for "recital" and "bouquet" for "bouquet." These are not common words, however. Punctuation is correct, and the writer uses interior punctuation correctly on a few occasions. Paragraphing is correct and enhances the organization. The writer also uses a variety of sentence patterns. The minor spelling errors and the run on sentences like, "After that we had our surprise, it was cupcakes." keep this paper from a 5 in conventions.

These annotated student samples are provided for two reasons:

- To help teachers learn to score their own students' samples written to the same prompt. We've found when a collaborative team of grade-level teachers works together to apply the language of the state's rubrics to our student samples, discussing where their scores differ from the scores that we've annotated, then that team can begin assessing their own students' writing with a pretty fair degree of accuracy.
- As discussion tools that students can analyze before, while, and after they write to the same prompt. When students understand how another students' writing was scored, they can begin to understand how their own writing will be scored. Having basic knowledge of trait scoring can help students in setting personal goals for themselves as they practice with multiple prompts as a way to better prepare themselves for the writing test. Robert Marzano's research cites the significant improvement that students can undergo when goal-setting becomes part of their learning process. Use this [online goal-setting sheet](#) with your fourth graders to set goals for future prompts and for the writing test.