

Narrative Eighth-grade Practice Prompt #1: Books, movies, and television can offer opportunities to learn valuable lessons. Write about a lesson learned from a book, movie, or television show that proved to be of value to you.

Writing Sample A

My life is alot like Muchahitas. Its about life on lots of drama and letting boy's come in between your friend ship with your bestfriends. Before I sat down to watch Muchahitas I got in a huge arguement with my friend over a guy. So if this might of happen to you listen up!

Muchahitas was letting young girls no its a waste of time letting guys come in between friendships. They say guys come and go but friends never let go. Boys lie and bestfriends stand by.

I learned that it was true letting guys do come in between a great relation Ship. They made me understand that a friendship is very valueable and guys are something that comes and goes. A friend is there catching you when you fall, and whipping the tears when a guy makes you cry. Guys may make you fall in love and you may think its everything you ever wanted because it's the closest thing you got to magic, but ask your self, "am I that in love that I don't care to loose a friend?"

How would you score this sample?

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

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Writing Sample A
Scores & Annotations
I=2.5 O=2.5 V=3 C=2.5

Ideas

This paper shows that the author learned a lesson from *Muchachitas*. The writer shows insight and is writing from experience, but there is trouble tying the experience to the details of the show and the reader wonders what exactly happened on *Muchachitas* that taught the lesson. The main idea is clear, but the details need to be developed to give this paper a higher score in ideas.

Organization

The introduction, “*My life is alot like Muchachitas.*” catches your attention and draws you into the paper. However, the paper ends abruptly and has no noticeable conclusion. The organization of the paper flows fairly smoothly at times, but creates confusion at other times. The writer spends too much time on the obvious. The conclusion gives you the feeling that she was trying to fill the paper.

Voice

Voice is the strongest trait in this paper. *Listen up!* and *Boys lie and bestfriends stand by.* show strong voice and reveal the writer’s attitude in some places, but then she becomes somewhat general and tentative in others. Although this writer seems sincere, I’m not sure you could say that it has ‘the ring of conviction.’

Conventions

Words like *alot*, *whipping* instead of wiping, *loose* instead of lose, and *no* instead of know, distract the reader. Inaccurate use of apostrophes such as *boy’s* instead of boys, missing apostrophes in *Its* and *dont* are also errors that are difficult for the reader to overlook. Misspellings of words like *arguement* and *valueable* show a lack of understanding of some basic spelling rules. All of these spelling and usage errors would provide simple mini-lessons that could hopefully be easily learned at this level. Although the writer handles limited conventions well, especially sentence structure, there are also sentence level errors, such as *Its about life on lots of drama...* which make the text difficult to read at times.

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Writing Sample B

A lesson I learned was to never give up or quit cause giving up or quitting could get addictive and it will be tough to get rid of like a disease that can ruin everything you do but if you never give up or even quit that stows a lot of heart And that you would not be a quitter.

Also what I learned was that quitting is just something that people do because there either scared or just don t believe in what there doing, because when I see people quit it's either because they can't do it or just don't even try and that to me is something that I call dumb and ridiculous because I also see people try and try but don't succeed but people still quit and to me that's not fair.

I say quitting is just somethins that no one should do or say they'll do because even though you don't quit but you say you would it still can hurt some people because you may be just kidding or maybe just threatening it cause you maybe wanna scare someone out of their minds.

How would you score this sample?

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

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Writing Sample B
Scores & Annotations
I=2.5 O=2.5 V=3 C=2

Ideas

Although this author is clear about the lesson of never quitting, we never even learn which book, movie, or television show taught him the lesson. The purpose of the paper is not well established, and the reader must make inferences to sift out what is critical. The topic does show promise, and it is fairly easy to see where the writer is headed. With a little bit of 'filling in the blanks,' this could easily be a passing paper in ideas.

Organization

The lack of punctuation in this paper distracts from the organization as well as hurting the score in conventions. Although the sequencing is usually logical, the lack of punctuation creates some confusion. The paper tends to ramble. The progression of ideas is not well controlled and the writer spends too much time repeating the obvious.

Voice

I call that dumb and ridiculous, and I also see people try and try, are phrases that make the writer seem sincere and aware of an audience. The author communicates in an earnest manner, but in some places becomes tentative and general. The fact that the book or movie is not stated also detracts from the voice.

Conventions

This writer has a hard time with run-on sentences which distract the reader. Each paragraph has just one period at the end, much more work needs to be done at the sentence level. Misuse of words like *there* for *they're*, *cause* for *because*, and hyphenating *eithe-r* at the end of a line, between the *e* and *r*, are very noticeable and the paper would require more than moderate editing to be proficient.

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Writing Sample C

I love Money a game show, people compete for a \$75,000 in Mexico. They live in a houses and compete with each other.

They play games and every time Someone loses the challenge they are eliminated off the island. As you know people aren't so nice in the Island, people talk about each other and some players are not that good. And what I leared that Don't talk about other people and Dont be mean to other around you.

From watching this show Im thing to myself why go on a game show to be laught at and you could be hurt while playing for money.

Why just get a job and earn the money.

For myself I think its pretty stupid becaues, whats the point of doing this if your eliminated in the show and Dont have any money to go home with. that's what I leared from this show.

How would you score this sample?

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

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Writing Sample C
Scores and Annotations
I=2 O=2 V=2.5 C=2

Ideas

Although this paper shows promise, the writer seems to have no clear sense of purpose. The reader is required to make inferences about what the lesson is that the writer learned from the television show even though we read, *I leared that Don't talk about other people and Dont be mean to other (people) around you.* The support doesn't consistently reflect this lesson, and instead talks about getting a job, not winning, and being laughed at, in addition to people talking about each other and not being nice.

Organization

The writer starts by telling us that he loves *Money a game show*, and concludes with *thats what I leared from this show*, but the lack of clear organization makes the connections between ideas confusing. Random thoughts, like *Why (not?) just get a job and earn the money.* distract the reader and provide hard to follow leaps between points.

Voice

The writer seems to want to engage the reader, but struggles with finding the words to connect with the reader. At times, the author is revealed tentatively, as when he says, *why go on a game show to be laught at and you could be hurt.* But, the problems with conventions hurt voice as well, since we have to guess at missing words and meaning.

Conventions

Although the paper is readable, there are multiple problems with both internal and external punctuation as well as capitalization. Problems with spelling, such as *laught, leared, and thing* (for thinking) distract the reader and interfere with meaning.

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Writing Sample D

I learned a valuable lesson from the movie “Honey.” The movie is about a girl, about 17 years old, who teaches hip hop classes for kids who are underprivileged. She helps take these few young boys away from a gang, and keep them from selling drugs. At the end of the movie, she wants to create her own dance studio, but doesn’t have enough money. They have a charity fund raiser to make money and everything works out.

I learned many things from this movie. Never give up, even when times are hard, always believe in yourself, think about others, and always try to make the right choices.

All of this has helped me alot in school and dance. An example is after watching that movie, I didn’t really care what people thought of my decisions, as long as I felt my choice was right. I still feel like that too.

I absolutly love that movie, and I am glad that I learned some lessons from it.

How would you score this sample?	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

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Writing Sample D
Scores and Annotations
I=3 O=3 V=3 C=4

Ideas

The writer is developing the topic in reasonably clear and purposeful way. The supporting details, *after watching this movie, I didn't really care what people thought of my decisions, as long as I felt my choice was right*, and the lessons she learned from watching the movie show promise, but are not explicit, detailed, expanded, or personalized. For this paper to achieve a higher score, the writer could easily add some relevant anecdotes or details.

Organization

The paper has an introduction and conclusion that are certainly recognizable, but very predictable. The progression of ideas is controlled and the reader can see that this author worked to: 1) introduce the topic, 2) explain what the movie was about, 3) tell what she learned, 4) give an example, 5) conclusion. This is certainly a logical organization, but quite obvious and not necessarily compelling.

Voice

There is no strong connection with the reader, although the writer seems sincere. The reader can tell that the author loved the movie, but the connections between the movie and the author's life hide as much as they reveal. Although the author says, *"I absolutely love that movie,"* we are left wondering exactly why, since the writing tends to become general, vague, and abstract. In this paper, the 3 in voice is tied to the 3 in ideas, where we need more details, connections, and commitment to genuinely feel the writer's passion for the topic. We know that the author tells us she *learned many things from this movie*, but the connections between what the movie was about and what she learned are abstract.

Conventions

The strength of this paper is its conventions. The ending punctuation is correct and the author uses internal punctuation correctly as well. Misspelling of words like *absolutly* and *alot*; along with a few grammatical mistakes, e.g. *She helps ...young boys.. and keep them from...* prevent this paper from receiving an even higher score in conventions.

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Writing Sample E

On the show American Idol there are many lessons. The lesson of taking a chance is one I value the most.

First there's the auditions for the show. Those who show up to audition are taking chances that could change their lives. They could be good enough to go to Hollywood. They're even one step closer to possibly becoming famous artists.

Second is when there is the top twelve and a very good majority of them are thinking I'm glad I took this chance at becoming someone I want to be. They also are probably thinking that if I didn't take this chance, I never would have known how far I could actually go.

Third is when there is the final two left and no matter what they know that both of them will most likely get a record deal. The whole time they're on stage, they probably feel great because of their fans and their new found confidence.

The whole point is you never know what could happen if you don't take chances. You could go a long way!!

How would you score this sample?	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

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Writing Sample E
Scores & Annotations
I=3 O=3 V=3 C=4

Ideas

This paper is clear and focused on the topic of what lessons the author learned from the show American Idol. The ideas are clear and purposeful, but the relevant details don't give the reader insights that are fresh and engaging in a way that would enhance the paper beyond a 3. The writer seems to be writing from experience, but the author needs to go further to expand, clarify, and personalize the paper. The author talks about the participants on the show, referring to them or they, but needs to add personal anecdotes and details to insight and creativity to the topic.

Organization

The introduction, "*On the show American Idol there are many lessons. The lesson of taking a chance is one I value most.*" sets the stage for the paper. The conclusion, "*You could go a long way!!*" leaves the reader with a sense of completion. Although the introduction and conclusion are not necessarily compelling, they are logical. The sequencing is logical but obvious, e.g. *First... Second... Third*. The progression of ideas is controlled and moves the reader from point to point.

Voice

The writer seems sincere, yet not necessarily committed to the topic. In order to bring personal involvement to the paper, the writer needs to clarify her own connection to *the lesson of taking a chance*, and how **he or she** feels about the value of American Idol.

Conventions

Conventions are the strength of this paper, and the paper is generally correct. The writer doesn't vary her sentence structure much. She would need to expand her use of a wider variety of standard writing conventions, including demonstrating her grasp over quotation marks in paragraph three in order to improve her score to a 5.

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Writing Sample F

Learning lessons through books, movies, shows and many other things is extremely important. You can't just keep living life based on what you already know.

I've learned many things from movies I've watched and books I've read. To me, the one thing that stood out was Teens Truth Live, a video 30 minutes long based on bullying. Using school violence as an example of what the outcome of bullying could be. This video allowed me to see that bullying isn't a matter to be taken lightly.

A simple rumor could send someone into a deep state of depression. A lie could cause someone to never trust again, and excluding them could make them lonely. Suicide might be their answer, urges for revenge could overwhelm the person. Phone calls, texts, emails, and chatting are just as bad. Just because everything is all pixelated and in technology, it could hurt like a slap across the face.

From this video I've learned that including is important. Try to be nice to everyone, even if you don't like them. Violence isn't the answer, talk it out. I'll admit I'm the type of person to throw harsh words around carelessly without even stopping to think about how someone else feels about it. Because of this video, I'm trying to use nicer words, give a compliment or two, not joke with someone so rudely, accept someone for who they are and not try to change them nor discriminate. That is my lesson learned from a video called Teen Truth Live.

How would you score this sample?	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

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Writing Sample F
Scores & Annotations
I=4 O=3.5 V=4 C=4

Ideas

This paper is detailed and well developed about the writer's connection to the Teens Truth Live video. She adds details which provide insight and interest, especially as she relates to *technology*, *suicide*, *lies*, and *rumours*. There is no doubt that the writer learned important lessons from the video, and she brings clever anecdotes and details to help the reader feel her experiences and emotions.

Organization

The introduction is clear, but the author spends too much time on the obvious in a way that distracts from the flow of the paper. She moves the reader through the text, in a logical and effective way, but sometimes spurts ahead too quickly or spends too much time on the obvious. The details seem to fit where they're placed, and the organization moves the reader through the text. The conclusion, *That is my lesson learned from a video called Teens Truth Live.* is not strong and doesn't necessarily leave you with a satisfying sense of conclusion. The pacing of this paper keeps it from getting a higher score in organization.

Voice

The writer uses word choice that makes this paper come alive: *It could hurt like a slap across the face. I'll admit, I'm the type of person to...* The paper is individualistic and clear about the author's attitude towards the video. It has 'the ring of conviction.' It takes a while for the author to get to the meat of the topic, which prevents this paper from getting a 5; however, the expressive and engaging language moves the reader through the text allowing a connection to the writer that is very compelling.

Conventions

Occasional missing internal punctuation and a fragment: *Using school violence as an example of what the outcome of bullying could be.* keep this paper from a 5 in conventions. Indicating the title of the video with either underlining or quotation marks would demonstrate a stronger grasp of writing conventions. However, it is clear that this writer has more than a reasonable control over most standard writing conventions.

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Writing Sample G

Valuable lessons can be awarded to you through television. The following story is about a show/episode I learned a lesson from.

Hannah Montana is the name of my totally fave tv show, but it also taught me a lesson. This episode's main idea was: it's Miley's b-day and her dad was looking to buy the perfect gift for her. Now Miley's bestfriend Lily thought Miley was really lucky until she saw the closet full of the clothes Miley had gotten on previous birthdays from her dad.

All the dresses, shirts, sweaters, etc. were absolutely hideous. Miley loved her dad just not the clothes and she didn't tell him to keep him happy, so she would find any way possible not to wear them by spilling food on them and things of that nature. Miley had a great idea, Lily would go shopping with Miley's dad and pick out something Miley would like. The following day Lily picked out the perfect jacket for Miley.

It was the day of her birthday, and Miley was opening presents. Feeling confident she opened her dad's gift only to see a kitty sweater with a pop-out tail and face that sang. By now she thought if no one saw it she would be fine; to her surprise her dad had thrown her a surprise party. Everyone saw it and she was humiliated.

At the end of the show Miley overcame it all and let her dad know she didn't like it. This taught me to be honest if I don't like something; I used to be the same way.

How would you score this sample?	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

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Writing Sample G
Scores & Annotations
I=4 O=4 V=4 C=4

Ideas

The writer controls the development of the paper and shapes ideas in a creative and refreshing manner. The paper is clear and focused on the lesson learned from Hannah Montana, but more work needs to be done making the connections between the episode and the lesson for this paper to get a 5 in ideas.

Organization

Although the paper spends a long time telling the story of the Hannah Montana episode, the writer tells it in a way that moves you through the paper and the details seem to fit where they are placed. The progression of ideas in this paper is well controlled, and the organization is smooth and logical. However; the introduction is obvious, and the conclusion is not completely satisfying which keep the paper from getting a 5 in organization.

Voice

The word choice in this paper brings it to life. Words like *hideous*, *confident*, and *humiliated*, along with phrases like, *things of that nature*, and *totally fave*, help establish a strong connection with the reader and convince the reader of the writer's commitment to the topic. The writer does a nice job of inviting the reader to share in the details of the experience in a way that is appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Conventions

The spelling in this paper is perfect, even on difficult words. The only problem the author presents is with internal punctuation and ending sentences with prepositions. These mistakes are distracting enough to keep the paper from getting a 5 in conventions. This writer attempts many difficult grammatical techniques and despite the complicated usage, the internal and external punctuation contain few errors and the reader can easily skim right over most of them.

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Writing Sample H

There is a show on Oxygen called Janice Dickenson's Modeling Agency. As you may have guessed, it is about modeling. Janice Dickenson is a highly trained Supermodel, so she knows a lot about modeling. I love watching shows about beauty, fashion, glamour, clothing, etc. When I first found out about the JDMA, I knew I was going to fall in love. Let me tell you about what I have learned about modeling.

Janice Dickenson pushes her models to do their best. At the agency, Janice makes her models eat really healthy & makes them exercise a lot. Janice always brings one of her professional trainers to work out with her & her models & they work out for 1-2 hours. She also makes her models get the sleep they need, but not too much.

Janice has people from fashion, cosmetics, clothing etc. companies come & pick models to show off their line. When a client is coming to pick models, Janice has the models primed & perfect. Whenever a client comes, her models are primed, perfect & healthy.

At first, I didn't think I was going to like the show because of how she treated her models, but now I know it was only helpful criticism.

I love Janice Dickenson's Modeling Agency because I have learned to be more confident in yourself because confidence is key

How would you score this sample?	
_____	Idea Development
_____	Organization
_____	Voice
_____	Conventions

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Writing Sample H
Scores & Annotations
I=4 O=4 V=4 C=4

Ideas

This paper is clear and focused. The writer is obviously writing from experience, but she spends so much time explaining the show, that the connections to the lesson are not as explicit or personalized as they would need to be for a score of a 5.

Organization

The organization in this paper flows smoothly. The introduction and conclusion lack the sparkle of a 5, but are recognizable and logical. The writer sometimes spends too much time on some things, but is in control of the paper overall.

Voice

The writing is appropriate for the audience and the reader is convinced of the writer's commitment to the topic. The word choice, while it reveals the author's attitude in some places, becomes tentative in others and does not bring the topic to life in the way it possibly could.

Conventions

The author demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions. The errors are few, and the paper would require only light editing. Mistakes like *critisizm*, and *I have learned to be more confident in yourself because confidence is key.* can be easily fixed and don't distract greatly from the flow of the paper.