

## Kindergarten

The writer drew and/or wrote a whole story.

Sara and I went to school.

The writer used pages to show what happened in order. She has constructed a beginning, middle, and end for her story.

It was sunny.

We saw a dog.

The story includes characters (including a bit about their feelings) and setting.

We were scared.

Others can read the writing: there are spaces between words, letters for sounds, and capital letters for names. Others can read the writing: there are spaces between words, letters for sounds, and capital letters for names.

We ran.

We got to school.

\*The student will likely do some of this through words and labels, and other parts through illustrations.



**NARRATIVE** Annotated Writing  
Developed through the Progressions

## Grade 1

The writer wrote about a time when she did something. The story has a beginning.

Sara and I walked to school. It was a sunny day. We were happy.

The writer wrote the parts of her story in order. She used words like *and*, *then*, and *so* to transition from one part to the next.

Then we saw a dog. It was big and hairy. It said GRRRR! and then showed its big pointy teeth.

We ran very fast and the dog chased us. I was scared. **RUN!** I yelled. Sara started to run faster.

The writer wrote an ending. In this case, after including the last thing she did, she wrote how she felt about it.

We made it to school. Our teacher opened the door for us. We ran inside and I fell on the ground. I was so tired but so happy that we escaped the dog.

The writer attempted to put the picture from her mind onto the page by including a few details in words and pictures.

Others can read the writing: there are spaces between words, letters for sounds, and capital letters for names. The writer also ended sentences with punctuation marks and used commas in dates and lists.

## Grade 2

The writer wrote about one time when she did something and worked to write a strong beginning (in this instance by using descriptive details and by telling the reader how she felt).

The writer brought characters to life with details, dialogue, and actions.

The writer chose the action, piece of dialogue, or feeling that would make a good ending.

It was the first day of school. I walked Sara to school. I was excited because it was her first day. It was a warm, sunny day. I was wearing my new sandals.

We turned the corner and then we saw a dog. It was a big, hairy dog. I thought it was a nice dog but then it growled. "GRRRR!" I was scared.

"Oh no. I can't let the dog get us!" I thought. Then we ran. I held Sara's hand and we ran as fast as we could. We ran and ran and ran.

Sara was so scared. She started crying. I said, "Don't cry." I was trying to act brave so Sara wouldn't know I was scared. Then we kept running until we got to our school.

We finally got to school. Mrs. Crowley opened the door for us and we ran inside. I gave Sara a high-five. We smiled. We made it!

The writer told the story in order by using words like *when*, *then*, and *after*.

The writer wrote more than just a line or two on most pages of her story. She chose words that would help her reader envision the sequence of events.

The writer used capital letters for names, and quotation marks to show what people said. She also used apostrophes correctly when using conjunctions like *can't* and *don't*.



## Grade 3

The writer puts the reader right into the action, beginning with a character saying or doing something. The beginning orients the reader to the character and setting.

**The Scary Dog**

The writer told the story bit by bit. She used phrases like *a little later*, or *after that* to tell the story in order.

The writer didn't just tell a story, but instead wrote in ways that help readers picture what is happening and bring the story to life.

The story has a beginning, middle, and end.

The writer showed not only what was happening *to* her characters, but *inside* her characters.

"Goodbye, Mom!" Sara and I said. We started walking to school. It was Sara's first day of school. I was happy to be walking her on her first day.

We walked past tall trees and little garden. A little later, we walked past Mr. Jordan's store. Sara and I were singing. Then we turned a corner and heard a sound. "GRRRR!" it went. I turned around to see what was making the noise. It was a big, black, hairy dog. It growled again. The dog took stepped closer and closer and CLOSER to us. It growled even louder.

"Oh no, I can't let the dog get us!" I whispered to myself. Sara started to cry because she is afraid of dogs. I held her hand and we started to run. We ran and ran and ran. The dog was still growling. "GRRRR!" It was getting closer.

"It's coming close!" Sara yelled. "I'm scared." Sara started to cry even more. The dog was huge. It looked like a monster. I saw sharp teeth sticking out of its mouth. I was scared, too.

The dog started to run after us. I saw the red doors of the school. We were almost there! Mrs. Crowley let us in.

"Good job, Sara," I said and gave her a big hug and a high-five. Then we started laughing. I couldn't believe we made it!

The writer worked to create a strong ending by choosing the action, bit of dialogue, or feeling that would bring the story to a close.

The writer punctuated dialogue correctly, with commas and quotation marks. She also used punctuation to fix and/or avoid run-on sentences.

The writer wrote in ways that help readers read with expression, reading some parts quickly, some slowly, some parts in one sort of voice and others in another.

## Grade 4

The writer wrote a beginning that shows what is happening and where, helping immerse the reader in the world of the story.

The story is written bit by bit, with some important parts going slowly, and others more quickly.

The writer stretched out the heart of the story using action, dialogue, internal thinking, feelings, and other narrative craft.

The writer's ending connects to the beginning and middle of the story. She used action, dialogue, or a final feeling to bring the story to a close.

The writer maintained a storytelling voice throughout, conveying the emotion or tone of the story through description, phrasing, dialogue, and thinking.

### *The Scary Walk to School*

"Goodbye, Mom!" Sara and I said as we walked out of the kitchen door. We held hands, swinging and skipping. I could feel Mom's eyes watching me as I walked out the door. "Don't worry, Mom. We'll be fine." I said. She smiled, but I could tell she was a little nervous for us to be walking by ourselves.

Sara and I walked down the pathway to the sidewalk. "Are you excited for your first day of school, Sara?" I asked. She smiled and said yes.

I held Sara's hand very tight. "I'll show you the way," I said. I was proud to be walking my sister by myself.

We walked down the sidewalk. We passed big trees and a garden. Just then, I heard a growl and saw a dog walking down the street. I didn't see its owner anywhere. It was big and fierce looking, with long, sharp teeth. "GRRRR!!!" it growled.

I didn't want Sara to get scared. Sara grabbed my hand tighter. My hand started to get sweaty. "I'm scared, Julie" she cried.

"GRRRR!!!" The dog stepped closer. It was as big as a pony with red eyes and huge teeth.

"Be brave, be brave," I said to myself. I grabbed Sara's hand and shouted: "RUN!"

We took off down the road as fast as we could. We could hear the dog behind us. We ran faster and faster. I thought we would never get to school. After a while, we saw the red doors of the school. We were almost there.

"Come on," I said, dragging Sara along. We reached the steps of the school and saw that Mrs. Crowley was holding the door open for us. We jumped into the doorway and almost fell to the ground. I felt like I couldn't breathe.

"We made it!" I said to Sara. Inside, I felt proud. We were safe. I gave Sara a high-five and we both smiled.

The writer showed *why* characters do things by including their thinking.

The writer used paragraphs to separate the different parts of the story or to show when a new person is speaking.

The writer included precise details and used figurative language (like similes, metaphors, or personification) to help the reader experience the story.

When writing long, complex sentences, the writer used commas to make them clear and correct.

The writer used words and phrases to show the passing of time (for example, *just then*, *suddenly*, or *after a while*, *a little later*).



## Grade 5

The writer used paragraphs to separate different parts of the story and to show when a new person is speaking.

The writer showed *why* characters do what they do by including their thinking and their responses to what happens.

The writer slowed down the heart of the story, making it longer and more developed than others. Less important parts are shorter and less detailed and may even have been summarized.

The writer included precise details and used figurative language so that readers can picture the setting, people, and events. She may have used objects or actions as symbols to bring forth her meaning.

The writer used commas to offset introductory parts of sentences (such as "One day at the park, I went on the slide."). She also used commas to show when one person was speaking directly to another.

### *Big Sister*

"Hurry up you guys, you'll be late for school!" called Mom. We ran downstairs and ate our breakfast. I was eating my favorite VERY sweet cereal, and Sara was having eggs. When I got up to wash my bowl, mom said, "You know you need to be careful today when you're walking Sara to school. It's your job to make sure she gets there O.K." Then she gave me a very serious look. I thought to myself, I wonder why Mom is making such a big deal out of this? It's Sara's first day of Kindergarten, but I can do it. I wish Mom wouldn't treat me like such a baby.

"Goodbye, Mom!" Sara yelled. She ran out the door, and I went behind her.

"Be careful!" my mom yelled.

"I will!" I said back and I ran outside. Sara was skipping down the front walkway to the sidewalk.

I grabbed Sara's hand. "Are you excited for your first day of school?" I asked, trying to sound like a grown-up. Sara smiled and nodded her head yes. Meanwhile, my mom was staring at us from the window. "When will she stop treating me like a little kid?" I thought.

"I'll show you the way," I said. I felt proud to be the older sister. We walked past beautiful gardens and big, leafy trees. Suddenly, I heard a growl and saw a dog walking towards us. He was big and fierce looking, with long sharp teeth. "GRRRR!!!" the dog growled. I didn't see its owner or anyone who could help us.

My hand became sweaty and Sara stopped walking. "I'm scared, Julie," she said. I didn't want her to be scared. I wanted to seem brave. "Everything will be okay," I said. I was trying to make my voice sound calm.

"GRRRR!!!" The dog stepped closer and we could see it was the size of a small horse—with red eyes and sharp teeth.

"Be brave, be brave," I thought to myself. I grabbed Sara's hand and shouted: "RUN!"

We took off down the sidewalk as fast as we could. I could hear Sara breathing hard. I looked back, and I saw the dog coming behind us.

"Come on," I said. I wanted to make Sara go over faster. I thought, "Please let us make it. Please let us make it." Then we saw the bright red door of the school. Mrs. Crowley held it open as we threw ourselves inside, then we bent over and tried get our breathing back to normal.

"We made it!" I said to Sara, giving her a high-five.

Then I said, "Let's not tell mom, about this, okay? I think we'll go to school a different way tomorrow."

The writer maintains a storytelling voice throughout, varying the sentence structure to affect the pace and tone of the narrative.

The writer used transitional phrases to show the passage of time, sometimes in complicated ways. For instance, she might have showed things happening at the same time (*meanwhile, at the same time*) or created a flashback or flash-forward (*early that morning, three hours later*).

The writer developed characters, setting, and plot throughout the story, but especially during the most important parts. She did this by using a blend of description, action, dialogue, and thinking.

The writer connected the ending back to the main part of the story. The character says, does, or realizes something at the end that comes from what has happened in the story. She gives the reader a sense of closure.



## Grade 6

The writer's beginning not only sets the plot in motion, but it also hints at the larger meaning the story will convey.

The writer developed realistic characters and developed the details, action, dialogue, and internal thinking that contribute to the deeper meaning of the story.

The writer developed character traits and emotions through what characters say and do. She also developed some sense of relationship between characters to show *why* they act and speak as they do. In this way, she told the internal as well as the external story.

The writer used punctuation to help set a mood, convey meaning, or build tension in the story.

The writer wrote an ending that connects to what the story is really about. She gave the reader a sense of closure by showing a realization or insight or a change in the character/narrator.

### *My One Chance*

It was the first day of school, and my sister Sara was going to her very first day of Kindergarten. She looked grown-up in her new clothes. I thought about when she was just a baby, and now she was in school.

"Come on down here and eat your breakfast!" yelled mom. We went downstairs and we got to pick out what we wanted to eat because it was the first day of school. I picked my favorite cereal with lots of sugar and Sara had eggs. My mom said to me that I had to be very careful and look before I crossed the streets, and hold Sara's hand the whole time. "OK," I said to my mom, but inside I felt annoyed. Then she kept talking about how she could trust me. I thought, "Why does she keep saying how she can trust me? It makes me think maybe she doesn't really trust me."

Then it was time to go, and we put on our new school shoes and got our bags. We hugged mom and said good-bye.

"Don't worry, Mom," I said. "I promise I'll take care of Sara."

Sara was already outside. She was skipping across the front yard. Mom was watching us from the kitchen window. I felt like she was watching because she didn't trust me. I grabbed Sara's hand so mom could see I was being responsible.

"Are you excited for your first day of school, Sara?" I asked, trying to make my voice sound like Mom's. Sara smiled and nodded her head yes. Her bow shook up and down. "Come on. I'll show you the way." I thought about my first day of school. Mom and Dad walked me and I was really nervous. I wondered if Sara felt nervous too.

We walked and saw trees that were bright green and flowers blooming. I felt happy and proud. I thought that I would finally prove I could be treated like a grown-up. But then suddenly I heard a growl.

We both saw it.

It was a large dog, with black hair and a big chain around its neck. It came closer and growled even louder. "GRRRR!!!" Sara jumped behind me.

I grabbed her hand again, hoping she wouldn't feel that my palm was sweating with fear. "I'm scared, Julie," she said.

"Everything will be okay," I said in my calmest voice. "I've got you."

"A plan. I need a plan," I thought to myself. "Be brave."

As the dog got closer I could see it was the size of a small pony, its fur standing up on its neck. "Maybe I'm not ready to be in charge," I thought.

I whispered to Sara. "When I say 'run,' run! Okay?"

I said, "Ready, set, RUN!"

We ran down the sidewalk. My feet hurt because I had new shoes. I yelled for Sara to go faster. "Run! Run!" Just then the bright red door of the schoolhouse came into view. Mrs. Crowley held it open as we ran in. We threw ourselves through the door and practically fell over trying to catch our breath.

"We did it," I said to Sara, giving her a high-five. "We made it."

I thought back to Mom's words earlier that morning. *I'm trusting you to get your sister to school safely.* "Maybe this whole grown-up thing is over-rated," I thought to myself.

Turning to Sara, I smiled. "Hey, Sara, I bet Mom will give us a *ride* to school tomorrow!"

The writer wove together precise descriptions, figurative language, and perhaps even symbolism to help the reader picture the setting, actions, and events and to bring forth meaning.

The writer used language that fits the story's meaning (e.g., in parts that have dialogue, different people use different kinds of language).

The writer chose several key parts to stretch out and others to move through more quickly.

The writer used paragraphs purposefully (perhaps to show time or setting changes, new parts of the story, or to create suspense for the reader). The sequence of events is clear.

The writer used transitional phrases to connect what happened to why it happened.