Nevada Department of Education

Nevada Formative Writing Tools

Fourth Grade

Formative Writing Tasks

2014

GRADE 4

Nevada Department of Education

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Introduction to the Writing Tasks

The Nevada Formative Writing Tasks (Formative Tasks) were developed to help students, teachers, and administrators implement the Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts (NACS for ELA) and prepare for the administration of the spring 2015 Smarter Balanced assessments. The tasks are intended to:

- Encourage students to read closely and analyze information;
- Enable students to produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences;
- Empower teachers to shift and improve instruction to meet the demands of the NACS;
- Inform teachers and students when timely adjustments can be made; and
- Provide an early look into the types of writing performance tasks expected on the Smarter Balanced assessments.

The Nevada Formative Writing Tasks illustrate the depth of understanding of the Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts that will be measured on the Smarter Balanced assessments.

The Formative Tasks are timed, on-demand, classroom writing assignments. They include uniform student directions for writing responses and uniform teacher directions for administering the tasks. Each task was carefully created for consistency of format, content, and administration procedures, allowing teachers to monitor student progress over time. This consistency also makes it possible for teachers to participate in collaborative groups to discuss student progress and refine delivery of writing instruction.

"[Students] need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner. They must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first-draft text under a tight deadline as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it."

Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History, Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects (p. 41)

All fifth and eighth grade students are required by NRS 389.550 to participate in at least one Nevada Formative Writing Task during the 2013-14 school year. However, the NDE has provided multiple tasks for use in third through eighth grades, allowing teachers to monitor students at multiple points during the school year and adjust their instruction to match the needs of students.

Results from the Nevada Formative Writing Tasks will not be used to calculate a school's rating on the Nevada School Performance Framework. However, the NDE will collect and report participation rates on each school's report card (as required by NRS 389.550).

To improve the consistency of evaluating the tasks and other classroom writing assignments, the NDE released The Nevada Formative Writing Tools: Grade 4 Evaluation Guides (Evaluation Guides) that include:

- Analytic writing rubrics developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium;
- Checklists to support teachers when learning the rubrics and documenting student progress;
- Student writing guides to support students in all phases of the writing process (before, during, and after); and
- A glossary of terms used in the *Evaluation Guides* to establish a common vocabulary for writing.

The Evaluation Guides identify a student's level of command for each of the five characteristics of writing and can be downloaded at http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/. Knowing these levels will help teachers and students identify student strengths and areas to improve. The NDE encourages districts and schools to establish policies for how and when to use the rubrics and checklists for grading other classroom assignments.

Since the results of the tasks are relatively low stakes for schools and teachers, keep them low stakes for students by not assigning grades to them.

However, the NDE **strongly** discourages teachers and schools from using the results of the Formative Tasks as part of their grading, since they were **not** designed as summative or interim assessments. Instead, teachers and schools should use the formative tasks to gather information needed to inform and enhance both teaching and learning.

Guidelines for Administering the Tasks

WHO: All fifth and eighth grade students who are enrolled in public schools, including charter schools, are required to take at least one Formative Task during the 2013-14 school year. It is strongly recommended for students in third, fourth, sixth, and seventh grades. Students with disabilities and students classified as having limited English proficiency (LEP) must also participate.

Accommodations are made for IEP, LEP, and/or 504 students who have testing accommodation plans. The classroom teacher must make certain that all students with special needs receive permissible appropriate accommodations, as indicated in IEPs, LEPs, 504 plans, and Testing Accommodation Plans.

WHAT: The Formative Tasks have students read closely and analyze information to produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences. For the 2013-14 school year, the NDE provides tasks for the three text types in the NACS (opinion/argumentative, informative/explanatory, and narrative).

Since the tasks are formative, classroom teachers will evaluate their own students' responses using the Evaluation Guides provided by the NDE (http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/). It is strongly recommended that each task be evaluated twice: by the student's classroom teacher and by another teacher. This will facilitate collaborative teams that build a vision of good writing and can focus on using the results of the Formative Tasks to improve teaching and student learning.

The NDE will neither score student responses nor collect student results. However, the NDE will collect participation data in May from each school and each classroom in accordance with NRS 389.550. Participation rates will be published on every school's Nevada Accountability Report.

WHERE: It is strongly recommended that the Formative Tasks be administered by the student's classroom teacher in the regular classroom or computer lab.

WHEN: March 3, 2014, through May 9, 2014, is the timeframe for administering the Formative Tasks. Each district and school may determine exact testing days and times within this testing window. Please check with your district's test director for specific days and times within the mandated timeframe.

WHY: Descriptive feedback is widely considered an important element of improved writing performance. When students understand their **strengths and weaknesses** and are taught how to improve their writing, they learn faster and retain what they have learned longer.

The Formative Tasks and Evaluation Guides can help teachers provide constructive feedback and help students become self-regulated learners. Since the tasks and Evaluation Guides are based on the NACS and performance task specifications for the Smarter Balanced assessment, they also play an essential role in aligning teaching, learning, and assessment while allowing districts, schools, and teachers to use them to begin planning the shifts in instruction that will be required to help students meet the demands of the standards and prepare for the Smarter Balanced assessment in 2015.

HOW: The Formative Tasks are timed, on-demand classroom writing assignments. The tasks include uniform student directions for writing responses and uniform teacher directions for administering the tasks. The tasks have been carefully designed for consistency of format, content, and administration procedures, allowing teachers to monitor progress over time.

Each task is administered in two timed sessions that should not exceed 45 minutes each. Teachers may administer the sessions over two consecutive days or on the same day with a 15 minute break between sessions. The first 45 minute session involves introducing students to the writing task, helping students understand how the tasks will be evaluated, having students independently read information, and beginning to draft a well-grounded response. The second 45 minute session involves writing, revising, and editing their final draft.

Teachers should provide each student with a paper copy of the student directions for the selected task. Please check with your district to determine if the district has selected a task for the entire district to use. The NDE will not provide printed copies for schools.

Teachers may also provide each student with a copy of the Student Writing Guide that matches the writing mode of the task (i.e., the Grade 4 Student Writing Guide for Argumentative Writing for fourth grade students responding to the fourth grade argumentative tasks). These guides can be found in the Evaluation Guides at http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/.

Since the 2015 administration of the Smarter Balanced assessment is computer based, students should use a word processor (i.e., Microsoft Word) to write their responses. Using technology to produce and publish writing is part of the NACS and keyboarding skills are introduced in second grade in the Nevada Computer and Technology Standards (2010).

Students may use spell check and grammar check. They should **not** use any other electronic resources, including the Internet, during the task. All students are expected to word process their responses to the Formative Tasks. Students with IEPs may use pre-approved electronic devices as designated in their IEPs and are consistent with their testing accommodations.

In addition, each student should have at least one blank sheet of paper (lined or unlined) and a pencil. Students can use these tools to plan their writing (i.e., individually brainstorm, create graphic organizers) and create their first drafts. However, students may also word process their first drafts on computers, if they prefer.

Students may also use highlighters and colored pencils for planning, revising, and editing.

Regular paper Standard English dictionaries are also allowed for all students. In addition, paper bilingual dictionaries with word-to-word translations are approved for LEP students identified to receive this accommodation and used previously as part of regular instruction. Teachers do **not** need to cover bulletin boards, posters, or other materials used as part of daily instruction.

Teachers will NOT translate any part of the directions.

Teachers will NOT read any part of the student directions that call for the student to read, unless such accommodations are specified in a student's accommodation plan.

Teacher Checklist for Administering the Writing Tasks

Completing the following steps will help ensure successful administration of the Formative Tasks.

- ☐ Carefully read all of the contents of this manual.
- ☐ Check your district testing schedule for any specific test dates for your district.
- ☐ Check with your district to determine if they have selected a task for the entire district to administer.
- ☐ Check with the special education facilitators, LEP testing coordinators, and 504 building officers for any students who need to receive special accommodations.
- ☐ Ensure that procedures and materials for testing special student populations follow those specified by the Nevada Department of Education and that students with special needs receive the appropriate accommodations.
- ☐ Ensure that you have all of the materials for administering the formative task:
  - ___ Print copies of the student directions
  - ___ Optional: Print copies of the student guide that matches the task (i.e., opinion guide for opinion task) (see page 13-15 in The Nevada Formative Writing Tools: Grade 4 Evaluation Guides at http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/)
  - ___ Pencils
  - ___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)
  - ___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)
  - ___ Bilingual dictionaries with word-for-word translations (only for LEP students approved to receive this accommodation and who use them as part of their classroom instruction)
  - ___ Highlighters and colored pencils or pens during testing sessions (if students have been using these during regular classroom instruction)
  - ___ Printer paper (optional for printing hard copies of student essays)
  - ___ Books for students to read if they finish early (paper only)
- ☐ Check computers to make sure they are ready.
- ☐ Check with your school/district for special procedures on how to save essays on the school/district network.
- ☐ Review computer procedures with your students:
  - ___ Open a new blank document
  - ___ Maintain default font size and color (i.e., 12 point and black)
  - ___ Save documents
  - ___ Print files
- ☐ Make arrangements with another teacher to exchange and evaluate tasks.
- ☐ Make plans for how you will provide feedback to students for improving their writing (i.e., conferences).

Teacher Checklist for Evaluating the Writing Tasks

Completing the following steps will help ensure consistent evaluation of the Formative Tasks.

- ☐ Work with another teacher so that each student's essay is evaluated twice.
- ☐ Reread the Evaluation Guides (rubric or checklist) for the type of writing that matches the task (opinion/argumentative, informative/explanatory, or narrative) and highlight or underline key information. (Evaluation Guides can be downloaded at http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/)
- ☐ Reread the exemplar papers for the type of writing that matches the task and review how the characteristics of the paper relate to the level of each trait. (Argumentative Exemplars can be downloaded at http://www.doe.nv.gov/Nevada_State_Writing_Assessment/)
- ☐ Read entirely each essay before assigning a level for each of the five traits.
- ☐ Refer to the language in the rubric and the exemplar papers when assigning levels.
- ☐ Cover the first evaluator's levels before the essay is evaluated the second time (this is optional but many teachers find it helpful if they don't know how the first teacher evaluated the papers).
- ☐ Discuss the levels, understanding that it is normal for some traits to have some split levels (1-2 or 3-4).
- ☐ Discuss any discrepant levels. Levels are discrepant when one teacher evaluates a trait as proficient (4 or 3) and another teacher evaluates that same trait as not proficient (2 or 1).

  When a trait is rated 1-3, 1-4, 2-3, or 2-4, both teachers should review the rubric, checklist, and exemplar papers to determine if the paper is proficient or not (for feedback purposes).

Proficient (Meets or Exceeds Standard)		**Not Proficient** (Below Standard or Emerging/Developing)	
4 Thorough Understanding	3 Adequate Understanding	2 Partial Understanding	1 Minimal Understanding

- ☐ Identify trends (i.e., overall, what traits were strong or weak) and how that will impact instruction.
- ☐ Prioritize the weakest trends and plan instruction to remediate weaknesses.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task A

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about a historic building that may be torn down. Take notes as you read. You will later write a speech based on what you have read.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about the historic Walker building. Take notes to use later while writing your speech. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "Springfield's Historic Walker Building"
- "Government Announces Plan for New Office Building"

As you read, find details to convince people to save the building.

STEP 2

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Pretend that you are John Walker and you are going to give a speech to the city council. Write a speech to convince them to save the building that is named after you.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus
- Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

Springfield's Historic Walker Building

1 The Walker Building is one of the oldest buildings in downtown Springfield. In 1883 a wealthy merchant named John Walker moved to Springfield. He soon decided to build a large, first-class hotel. He wanted his hotel to be in the center of downtown. Springfield was growing rapidly in those years. The city didn't have enough hotels or boarding houses. More important, the city only had cheap hotels. Businessmen and rich people wanted to stay in nice hotels. Walker wanted to build the best hotel in town. He knew that a quality hotel would make him a lot of money.

2 Walker hired a young man named Thomas Farina to design the new hotel. Farina also designed Springfield's courthouse and post office. The First National Bank is another Farina building. Because of these famous buildings, Thomas Farina is one of the most important people in Springfield's history. For Walker, Farina made plans for a four-story hotel. His hotel had thirty large rooms. These rooms all had a bed, a table and chairs, and gas lights. Each room also had its own bathroom. The hotel had a large restaurant and a big ballroom as well. Walker even hired a famous artist to paint the walls of the lobby. Most important, Walker's hotel had an indoor swimming pool, the first one in the entire state. It also had the city's first elevators. Construction began in 1884, and the hotel was finished in 1885.

3 Because it was so big and beautiful, the Walker Hotel quickly became very popular. Its restaurant was the best in Springfield. Wealthy people from Springfield loved to eat in the restaurant. Many weddings were held in its ballroom. When famous or important people came to Springfield, they always went to the Walker Hotel. Over the years many movie stars and even two presidents have stayed in the Walker Hotel.

4 The Walker Hotel was very successful for more than sixty years. In the 1950s, however, two bigger and fancier hotels were built in Springfield. As a result, business at the Walker slowed down. Fewer and fewer people stayed there. In 1965 the Walker Hotel was sold to the city of Springfield. The city needed a new government building. The Walker Hotel therefore became the Walker Building. It is still used by the government today.

"Springfield's Historic Walker Building" © WestEd.

GO ON

Government Announces Plan for New Office Building

1 *Springfield (November 16).* The city government announced its plan for a new government building today. This new building will replace the old Walker Building. The Walker Building will be torn down next month, and the new building will be finished by the end of next year.

2 The city government has offered many reasons for the need for a new building. This building is just too old, according to Springfield Mayor Dan Thompson. "The government has grown a lot in the last ten years. The Walker Building is simply too small." He points to the fact that much of the space is taken up by bathrooms, one per room, reflecting the hotel it once was. It also still has its original elevators, which are slow and often break down. "People in the know use the stairs if they're in a hurry," says Thompson.

3 The last reason has to do with energy use. Heating and cooling costs in the old building have risen over the last decade, and will continue to do so. "We understand that the Walker Building is an important part of our city's history," says City Planner Maria Espinoza. "We would keep it if we could, but we do not have the money to restore and improve the Walker Building and also build the new offices that we badly need. The needs of city government must come first."

4 The city says that the new office building will be an improvement in many ways. It will have twice as many offices for the government's large number of workers. It will have modern electrical wiring, so putting in computer systems will be very easy. The building will have a modern heating and cooling system as well. This will save the city a lot of money in energy costs. The building will also have a modern design that will closely match the new buildings around it. "A modern city requires a modern center. The new government building is part of a larger plan to draw businesses and tourists to downtown Springfield," states Espinoza.

5 There are some people in Springfield who do not like the city's plan. "The Walker Building is a major part of our history," says Robert Parker, President of the Springfield History Society. "The city and the people of Springfield must do everything they can to protect it." Parker's group is also collecting money to buy and restore the Walker Building. They hope to have enough money to do so by the beginning of next year. They want the city to delay its plan to tear the building down. Parker also says, "Our idea is to turn the Walker Building into a history museum, which is something that our city has needed for many years."

6 The city council will hold a special public meeting to discuss the future of the Walker Building at 8:30 PM in the city courthouse. Anyone who has an opinion about the Walker Building's future is invited to this meeting or to submit a written comment at the city's website.

"Government Announces Plan for New Office Building" © WestEd.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task A

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an opinion essay about a historic building that may be torn down. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about the historic Walker building, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about a historic building that may be torn down. Take notes as you read. You will later write a speech based on what you have read.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about the historic Walker building. Take notes to use later while writing your speech. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"Springfield's Historic Walker Building"*
> - *"Government Announces Plan for New Office Building"*
>
> *As you read, find details to convince people to save the building.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Pretend that you are John Walker and you are going to give a speech to the city council. Write a speech to convince them to save the building that is named after you.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about the historic Walker building, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an opinion essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may* ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task B

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about a historic building that may be torn down. Take notes as you read. You will later write an opinion letter about the building.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about the historic Walker building. Take notes to use later while writing your opinion letter. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "Springfield's Historic Walker Building"
- "Government Announces Plan for New Office Building"

As you read, decide what you think should be done with the Walker Building.

STEP 2

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

What should happen to the Walker Building? Should it be torn down? Turned into a museum? Is there something else that would make both sides happy? Write a letter to the city council giving your opinion about what should happen to the Walker building.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus
- Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

Springfield's Historic Walker Building

1 The Walker Building is one of the oldest buildings in downtown Springfield. In 1883 a wealthy merchant named John Walker moved to Springfield. He soon decided to build a large, first-class hotel. He wanted his hotel to be in the center of downtown. Springfield was growing rapidly in those years. The city didn't have enough hotels or boarding houses. More important, the city only had cheap hotels. Businessmen and rich people wanted to stay in nice hotels. Walker wanted to build the best hotel in town. He knew that a quality hotel would make him a lot of money.

2 Walker hired a young man named Thomas Farina to design the new hotel. Farina also designed Springfield's courthouse and post office. The First National Bank is another Farina building. Because of these famous buildings, Thomas Farina is one of the most important people in Springfield's history. For Walker, Farina made plans for a four-story hotel. His hotel had thirty large rooms. These rooms all had a bed, a table and chairs, and gas lights. Each room also had its own bathroom. The hotel had a large restaurant and a big ballroom as well. Walker even hired a famous artist to paint the walls of the lobby. Most important, Walker's hotel had an indoor swimming pool, the first one in the entire state. It also had the city's first elevators. Construction began in 1884, and the hotel was finished in 1885.

3 Because it was so big and beautiful, the Walker Hotel quickly became very popular. Its restaurant was the best in Springfield. Wealthy people from Springfield loved to eat in the restaurant. Many weddings were held in its ballroom. When famous or important people came to Springfield, they always went to the Walker Hotel. Over the years many movie stars and even two presidents have stayed in the Walker Hotel.

4 The Walker Hotel was very successful for more than sixty years. In the 1950s, however, two bigger and fancier hotels were built in Springfield. As a result, business at the Walker slowed down. Fewer and fewer people stayed there. In 1965 the Walker Hotel was sold to the city of Springfield. The city needed a new government building. The Walker Hotel therefore became the Walker Building. It is still used by the government today.

"Springfield's Historic Walker Building" © WestEd.

GO ON

Government Announces Plan for New Office Building

1 *Springfield (November 16).* The city government announced its plan for a new government building today. This new building will replace the old Walker Building. The Walker Building will be torn down next month, and the new building will be finished by the end of next year.

2 The city government has offered many reasons for the need for a new building. This building is just too old, according to Springfield Mayor Dan Thompson. "The government has grown a lot in the last ten years. The Walker Building is simply too small." He points to the fact that much of the space is taken up by bathrooms, one per room, reflecting the hotel it once was. It also still has its original elevators, which are slow and often break down. "People in the know use the stairs if they're in a hurry," says Thompson.

3 The last reason has to do with energy use. Heating and cooling costs in the old building have risen over the last decade, and will continue to do so. "We understand that the Walker Building is an important part of our city's history," says City Planner Maria Espinoza. "We would keep it if we could, but we do not have the money to restore and improve the Walker Building and also build the new offices that we badly need. The needs of city government must come first."

4 The city says that the new office building will be an improvement in many ways. It will have twice as many offices for the government's large number of workers. It will have modern electrical wiring, so putting in computer systems will be very easy. The building will have a modern heating and cooling system as well. This will save the city a lot of money in energy costs. The building will also have a modern design that will closely match the new buildings around it. "A modern city requires a modern center. The new government building is part of a larger plan to draw businesses and tourists to downtown Springfield," states Espinoza.

5 There are some people in Springfield who do not like the city's plan. "The Walker Building is a major part of our history," says Robert Parker, President of the Springfield History Society. "The city and the people of Springfield must do everything they can to protect it." Parker's group is also collecting money to buy and restore the Walker Building. They hope to have enough money to do so by the beginning of next year. They want the city to delay its plan to tear the building down. Parker also says, "Our idea is to turn the Walker Building into a history museum, which is something that our city has needed for many years."

6 The city council will hold a special public meeting to discuss the future of the Walker Building at 8:30 PM in the city courthouse. Anyone who has an opinion about the Walker Building's future is invited to this meeting or to submit a written comment at the city's website.

"Government Announces Plan for New Office Building" © WestEd.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task B

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an opinion essay about what to do with a historic building. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about the historic Walker building, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about a historic building that may be torn down. Take notes as you read. You will later write an opinion letter about the building.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about the historic Walker building. Take notes to use later while writing your opinion letter. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"Springfield's Historic Walker Building"*
> - *"Government Announces Plan for New Office Building"*
>
> *As you read, decide what you think should be done with the Walker Building.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

What should happen to the Walker Building? Should it be torn down? Turned into a museum? Is there something else that would make both sides happy? Write a letter to the city council giving your opinion about what should happen to the Walker building.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about the historic Walker building, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an opinion essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may* ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task C

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about a mysterious gold mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write an opinion essay based on what you have read.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about the Lost Dutchman Mine. Take notes to use later while writing your opinion. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"
- "Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"

As you read, decide whether or not a friend should search for the Lost Dutchman Mine.

STEP 2

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Your best friend wants to search for the Lost Dutchman Mine. Write an essay in which you state your opinion whether or not you think it is a good idea for him/her to go in search of the mine. Support your opinion with well-chosen details from what you have read.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus
- Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Somewhere in the Superstition Mountains of Arizona may be one of the richest gold mines in the world, known today as the Lost Dutchman Mine. No one knows for sure where it is, or even if it ever existed. Over many years, many people have risked their lives looking for it. As often happens when a story is told over and over again, facts get mixed up with fiction, so that now it is hard to tell which is which.

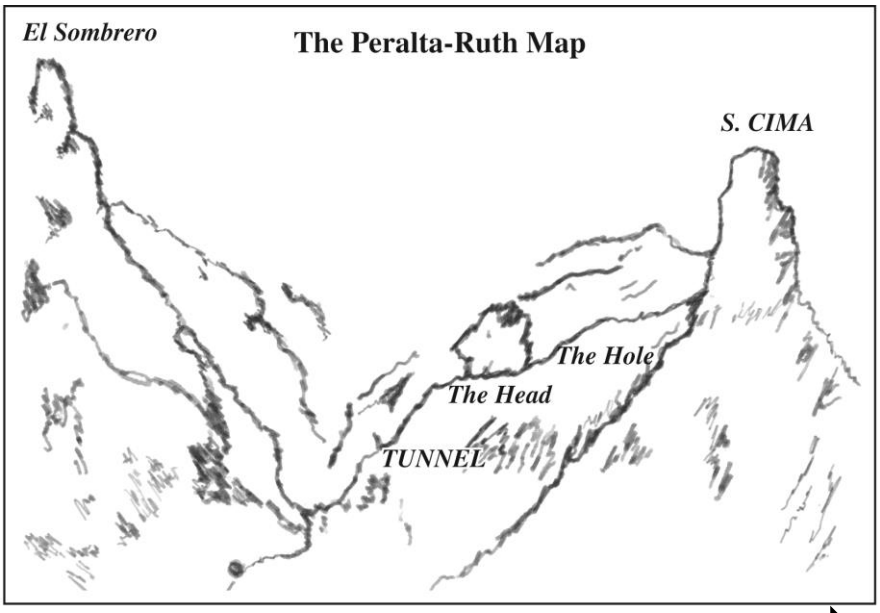
2 One version of the story starts with the Apache Indians, who lived in the region. They found that the mountains contained gold. They believed that the mountains and the gold in them were guarded by the god of thunder, who punished people who came on his land. Another version of the story tells about Spanish explorers who traveled north from Mexico in search of gold. The Spanish believed that men who went into the mountains would never return, which led them to name the mountain range "**Superstition**."

> A *superstition* is a belief that is not based on fact, such as believing that walking under a ladder is bad luck.

3 It is believed that in around 1845, a Mexican rancher named Don Miguel Peralta discovered a vein of gold in the mountains. He noticed a rock formation nearby, which he called Sombrero, the Spanish word for a tall hat. The same rock was later called Weaver's Needle. To this day, the rock is a helpful guide for those searching for the mine.

4 Peralta began shipping gold from the mine. The Apache were angered by this and drove Peralta's men out. Because Peralta had planned to return someday, he hid the entrance to the mine and erased all signs that he and his men had been there.

5 Then, in the 1860s, a German immigrant named Jacob Waltz (the "Dutchman" after whom the mine is named) moved to Arizona and began to explore the area, looking for gold. When Waltz was seen spending gold nuggets in town, people thought he must have discovered the Peralta mine. Some people said he had been given a map showing where the mine was by someone in Peralta's family, in return for saving that person's life.



6 For the rest of his life, Waltz would often show up in town with bags full of gold and then vanish again. If he found the mine, he never told anyone where it was. In 1891, Waltz became ill and was cared for at the home of a woman named

GO ON

Julia Thomas. After he died, a sack of gold ore was found beneath his bed.

7 Many people started looking for the mine after Waltz's death. Julia Thomas even started selling maps to the mine, based on a map she claimed Waltz drew for her before he died.

8 One treasure hunter, Adolph Ruth, set out to find the Lost Dutchman Mine in 1931. He never returned. About six months later, his skull was found. Ruth's checkbook was also found, along with a note from Ruth claiming that he had discovered the mine. The note ended with the words "Veni, vidi, vici," which means, in Latin, "I came, I saw, I **conquered**."

If you *conquer* something, you defeat it.

9 In the years since 1931, many other explorers have disappeared or died looking for the mine. If any of them ever found the mine, they did not return to tell about it. Today the area is part of the Lost Dutchman State Park.

10 Any citizen of the United States has the right to go in search of the mine. If you go, do not go in the summer, when temperatures in the Lost Dutchman State Park are higher than 100 degrees. Take plenty of water, and do not go alone.

"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Angie and Wyatt thought it was going to be just another family vacation, but it turned out to be a bit more exciting than most. This time they were going camping in the Superstition Mountains, a high desert area with rocky soil, cactuses, and rattlesnakes.

"Why is this place called Lost Dutchman?" asked Wyatt as they drove from Phoenix. "Did somebody lose a Dutchman there?"

"No, it's not the Dutchman that's lost, it's the mine, a famous gold mine that people have been trying to find for more than a hundred years," said Dad. "It was supposed to hold the richest gold ore anybody had ever seen. But nobody has been able to find it since it was mined back in the 1800s."

"Wow! A real gold mine? If we found it, could we keep the gold?" asked Angie.

5 "Probably not," said Mom. "And anyway, we're not going to go looking for it. Too many people have died or disappeared or gotten hurt trying to find it. But I did bring along a book about the mine. It tells interesting stories and even has pictures of some maps that supposedly show where the mine is. I'll show it to you when we get there."

Wyatt and Angie glanced at each other. They were thinking the same thing.

After setting up camp, Angie and Wyatt sat at the picnic table and looked at the book. There were so many stories and maps with strange clues about where to find the mine. The children tried to remember all the landmarks: a mountain shaped like a sombrero, a huge needle-like rock, a stone with the shape of a heart, and a stone that looked like a face.

The next morning they got up early, before Mom and Dad got dressed; and started out to see if they could find any of the clues. They brought a map of the park trails. They found their way out of the campground and took the Siphon Draw Trail north, heading for Prospector's View Trail and Treasure Loop Trail. The names sounded like they might lead to gold.

The trail was easy at first but got steeper as they went along, and more difficult, full of loose rocks and spiny cactuses. They were hungry, and they remembered that they had left without breakfast. Luckily they had brought a canteen of water. The sun was getting high in the sky, and it bore down on the pair, making the hike even more tiring. And they hadn't seen even one of the landmark clues.

10 "This isn't as much fun as I thought it would be," said Wyatt, when they stopped to rest in the shade. "I bet Mom and Dad are wondering where we are."

"I know. I left them a note, but by now they might be worried," said Angie. "Maybe we should

GO ON

head back and try again tomorrow. We'll bring some food next time."

Wyatt agreed, and the pair consulted their map. "We must be here, just before Siphon Draw Trail meets Prospector's View Trail," said Angie.

"No, no," insisted Wyatt. "We took a left turn a ways back, so we must be going west now." The children turned the map this way and that, trying to figure out where they were. They could not agree. Which way should they go to get back to camp? "If only somebody would come by, we could ask them," Angie said. But no one did. So they sat, waiting for a good idea or for somebody to find them.

Finally, they saw something coming from far in the distance, churning up a cloud of dust. "I bet that's Mom and Dad!" said Wyatt excitedly. "I hope they brought us sandwiches."

15 "I hope they're not too mad," said Angie. "But it couldn't be them; they wouldn't be allowed to drive the car on the trail." As the car approached, the children could see that it was the park police.

"Are you Wyatt and Angie Peralta?" asked one officer.

"Yes, sir," answered Angie. "And we'd like to go home to our parents."

"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Opinion Writing Task C

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an opinion essay about whether or not a friend should search for the Lost Dutchman Mine. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about a mysterious gold mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write an opinion essay based on what you have read.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about the Lost Dutchman Mine. Take notes to use later while writing your opinion. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
> - *"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
>
> *As you read, decide whether or not a friend should search for the Lost Dutchman Mine.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your opinion.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Your best friend wants to search for the Lost Dutchman Mine. Write an essay in which you state your opinion whether or not you think it is a good idea for him/her to go in search of the mine. Support your opinion with well-chosen details from what you have read.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Opinion Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Opinion Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an opinion essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may* ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your opinion.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state your opinions on the topic and maintain your focus*
- *Organization – how well your ideas logically flow from the introduction to conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your opinions and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task A

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about characters going on journeys. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about the journeys.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about characters going on a journey. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*"
- "An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*"

As you read, find details about the problems that cause the characters to take a journey.

STEP 2

Plan and write your informative/explanatory essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain what causes both characters to go on their journeys.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea
- Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*

In this excerpt from a collection of fairy tales, Snowflower's grandmother, Dame Frostyface, has left to visit her sister. Before she leaves, she tells Snowflower that her chair can tell her wonderful tales that will keep her company. This excerpt begins with Snowflower's first evening alone.

1 Snowflower gathered firewood and looked after the hens and cat as usual. She baked herself a cake or two of the barley-meal; but when the evening fell the cottage looked lonely. Then Snowflower remembered her grandmother's words, and, laying her head gently down, she said, "Chair of my grandmother, tell me a story."

2 Scarce were the words spoken, when a clear voice from under the velvet cushion began to tell a new and most wonderful tale, which surprised Snowflower so much that she forgot to be frightened. After that the good girl was lonely no more. Every morning she baked a barley cake, and every evening the chair told her a new story; but she could never find out who owned the voice, though Snowflower showed her gratitude by polishing up the oaken back, and dusting the velvet cushion, till the chair looked as good as new. The swallows came and built in the eaves, the daisies grew thicker than ever at the door; but great misfortunes fell upon Snowflower. Notwithstanding all her care, she forgot to clip the hens' wings, and they flew away one morning to visit their friends, the pheasants, who lived far in the forest; the cat followed them to see its relations; the barley-meal was eaten up, except a couple of handfuls; and Snowflower had often strained her eyes in hopes of seeing the gray hood and mantle, but there was no appearance of Dame Frostyface.

3 "My grandmother stays long," said Snowflower to herself; "and by-and-by there will be nothing to eat. If I could get to her, perhaps she would advise me what to do; and this is a good occasion for traveling."

4 Next day, at sunrise, Snowflower oiled the chair's wheels, baked a cake out of the last of the meal, took it in her lap by way of provision for the journey, seated herself, and said, "Chair of my grandmother, take me the way she went."

5 Presently the chair gave a creak, and began to move out of the cottage and into the forest the very way Dame Frostyface had taken, where it rolled along at the rate of a coach and six. Snowflower was amazed at this style of traveling, but the chair never stopped nor stayed the whole summer day, till as the sun was setting they came upon an open space, where a hundred men were hewing down the tall trees with their axes, a hundred more were cleaving them for firewood, and twenty wagoners, with horses and wagons, were carrying the wood away. "Oh! chair of my grandmother, stop!" said Snowflower, for she was tired, and also wished to know what this might mean. The chair immediately stood still, and Snowflower, seeing an old woodcutter who looked civil, stepped up to him and said, "Good father, tell me why you cut all this wood!"

6 "What ignorant country girl are you," replied the man, "not to have heard of the great feast which our sovereign, King Winwealth, means to give on the birthday of his only daughter,

GO ON

the Princess Greedalind? It will last seven days. Everybody will be feasted, and this wood is to roast the oxen and the sheep, the geese and the turkeys, amongst whom there is a great lamentation throughout the land."

7 When Sunflower heard that, she could not help wishing to see, and perhaps share in, such a noble feast, after living so long on barley cakes; so, seating herself, she said, "Chair of my grandmother, take me quickly to the palace of King Winwealth."

8 The words were hardly spoken, when off the chair started through the trees and out of the forest, to the great amazement of the woodcutters, who, never having seen such a sight before, threw down their axes, left their wagons, and followed Snowflower to the gates of a great and splendid city, fortified with strong walls and high towers, and standing in the midst of a wide plain covered with cornfields, orchards, and villages.

"An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*" in the public domain.

An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*

In this excerpt, the narrator is a young boy. He is telling a tale about his father when he was a young boy. The father has met a cat who inspires him to take a journey by telling him about a place called Wild Island. The mean animals on the island cannot easily cross a big river. When a baby dragon falls onto the island, they think they have the answer to their problem.

1 [The cat] went on with the story. "One day about four months before I arrived on Wild Island a baby dragon fell from a low-flying cloud onto the bank of the river. He was too young to fly very well, and besides, he had bruised one wing quite badly, so he couldn't get back to his cloud. The animals found him soon afterwards and everybody said, 'Why, this is just exactly what we've needed all these years!' They tied a big rope around his neck and waited for the wing to get well. This was going to end all their crossing-the-river troubles."

2 "I've never seen a dragon," said my father. "Did you see him? How big is he?"

3 "Oh, yes, indeed I saw the dragon. In fact, we became great friends," said the cat. "I used to hide in the bushes and talk to him when nobody was around. He's not a very big dragon, about the size of a large black bear, although I imagine he's grown quite a bit since I left. He's got a long tail and yellow and blue stripes. His horn and eyes and the bottoms of his feet are bright red, and he has gold-colored wings."

4 "Oh, how wonderful!" said my father. "What did the animals do with him when his wing got well?"

5 "They started training him to carry passengers, and even though he is just a baby dragon, they work him all day and all night too sometimes. They make him carry loads that are much too heavy, and if he complains, they twist his wings. . . . He's always tied to a stake on a rope just long enough to

go across the river. His only friends are the crocodiles, who say 'Hello' to him once a week if they don't forget. Really, he's the most miserable animal I've ever come across. When I left I promised I'd try to help him someday, although I couldn't see how. The rope around his neck is about the biggest, toughest rope you can imagine, with so many knots it would take days to untie them all. . . .

6 "Now, I'm quite sure that if you were able to rescue the dragon, which wouldn't be the least bit easy, he'd let you ride him most anywhere, provided you were nice to him, of course. How about trying it?"

7 "Oh, I'd love to," said my father, and he was so angry at his mother for being rude to the cat that he didn't feel the least bit sad about running away from home for a while.

8 That very afternoon my father and the cat went down to the docks to see about ships going to the Island of Tangerina. They found out that a ship would be sailing the next week, so right away they started planning for the rescue of the dragon. The cat was a great help in suggesting things for my father to take with him, and she told him everything she knew about Wild Island. Of course, she was too old to go along.

9 Everything had to be kept very secret, so when they found or bought anything to take on the trip they hid it behind a rock in the park. The night before my father sailed he borrowed his father's knapsack and he and the cat packed everything very carefully. He took chewing gum, two dozen pink lollipops, a package of rubber bands, black rubber boots, a compass, a tooth brush and a tube of tooth paste, six magnifying glasses, a very sharp jackknife, a comb and a hairbrush, seven hair ribbons of different colors, an empty grain bag with a label saying "Cranberry," some clean clothes, and enough food to last my father while he was on the ship. He couldn't live on mice, so he took twenty-five peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and six apples, because that's all the apples he could find in the pantry.

10 When everything was packed my father and the cat went down to the docks to the ship. A night watchman was on duty, so while the cat made loud queer noises to distract his attention, my father ran over the gangplank onto the ship. He went down into the hold and hid among some bags of wheat. The ship sailed early the next morning.

"An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*" in the public domain. Illustration in the public domain.

END

Directions for Administering the
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task A

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an informative/explanatory essay about what causes two characters to go on their journeys. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read two passages about characters going on journeys, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

*You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about characters going on journeys. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about the journeys.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about characters going on a journey. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"An Excerpt from Granny's Wonderful Chair"*
> - *"An Excerpt from My Father's Dragon"*
>
> *As you read, find details about the problems that cause the characters to take a journey.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your informative/explanatory essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain what causes both characters to go on their journeys.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*
- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about two characters going on journeys, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an informative/explanatory essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*

- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task B

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read a passage and a poem about owls. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about owls.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about owls. Take notes to use while writing your essay. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.

- "The Man Who Could Call Down Owls"
- "The Owl"

As you read, find details that explain why owls are special to some people.

STEP 2

Plan and write your informative/explanatory essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain why owls are special to some people.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea
- Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

The Man Who Could Call Down Owls

by Eve Bunting

There was once a man who could call down owls. He wore a cloak of softest white and a wide hat with a feather in it, and he carried a willow wand.

Every night, when the dark came, the owl man walked into the woods and stopped at the first clearing. Every night, a scattering of people from the village followed to watch. The boy Con, who lived in the village too, always came.

The owl man stared into the trees. He had shadows on his face but not in his eyes and he made no sound.

The watchers, too, stayed quiet and at a distance.

The owl man stretched his willow wand to the night sky.

And the owls came.

They came swooping on noiseless wings.

To perch on his shoulders.

To perch on his wand.

To gather on branches closest to where he stood.

Always, the owls came.

By day the man worked in his owl barn. There were wings to be mended and legs to be splinted.

“How do you find the owls that need your help?” the boy asked.

The man smiled. “They find me.” He held a screech owl. “When an owl is sick and frightened you must hold it firmly. Then it can’t hurt itself or you. Always remember that.”

“I will remember,” Con said. “But I wish I knew the owls as you do.”

“You will learn.”

And now, in the night clearing, the boy moved to the man’s side, quietly as an owl in flight.

“What kind is that?” he whispered.

GO ON

"Barn owl." The man's voice was high and for a minute Con thought the sound of it was the sound of wind in the trees.

20 The barn owl swiveled its white, flower face, raised its wings, then closed itself again.

An owl no bigger than a sparrow came to nestle in the shadow of the wide hat.

"Elf owl." The man smoothed the pale chest feathers till the owl eyes closed.

Deep in the dark of the trees was a hoot, hoot, hooting and a great horned cut the air to land on a stunted branch, so close that the boy could see the ring of white feathers that lay mysteriously at its throat.

Owls everywhere. And the man in the middle, his cloak drifting about him like marsh mist, and Con, always Con, and the man with the owls around him.

"The Man Who Could Call Down Owls" by Eve Bunting. Copyright © 1984 by Eve Bunting. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.

The Owl

by Jill Morris

There is an owl up on the limb.
Does he know, I envy him?
His watchful eyes see everything.
He looks in charge, as if a king.
His shiny feathers, white or brown,
Help him hide on snow or ground.
He seems to say "Who?" when he calls.
But we know he's a know-it-all.
His pointed beak and ears just right
Help him hunt all through the night.
I hate to wait for dusk to see
That **majestic** owl out in my tree.
I wish, by day, he'd stay awake,
And his acquaintance I could make.

majestic: with great dignity

"The Owl" by Jill Morris. From *Hopscotch*, October/November 1998 issue. Copyright © 1998 by Fun for Kidz Magazines. Reprinted by permission of Fun for Kidz Magazines. Illustration © WestEd

END

Directions for Administering the
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task B

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an informative/explanatory essay about why owls are special to some people. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about owls, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read a passage and a poem about owls. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about owls.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about owls. Take notes to use while writing your essay. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"The Man Who Could Call Down Owls"*
> - *"The Owl"*
>
> *As you read, find details that explain why owls are special to some people.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your informative/explanatory essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain why owls are special to some people.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*
- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about owls, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an informative/explanatory essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*
- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*

- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task C

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about characters going on journeys. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about the journeys.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about characters going on a journey. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*"
- "An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*"

As you read, find details about how the journeys are the same and how they are different.

STEP 2

Plan and write your essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain how the two journeys are the same and how they are different.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea
- Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*

In this excerpt from a collection of fairy tales, Snowflower's grandmother, Dame Frostyface, has left to visit her sister. Before she leaves, she tells Snowflower that her chair can tell her wonderful tales that will keep her company. This excerpt begins with Snowflower's first evening alone.

1 Snowflower gathered firewood and looked after the hens and cat as usual. She baked herself a cake or two of the barley-meal; but when the evening fell the cottage looked lonely. Then Snowflower remembered her grandmother's words, and, laying her head gently down, she said, "Chair of my grandmother, tell me a story."

2 Scarce were the words spoken, when a clear voice from under the velvet cushion began to tell a new and most wonderful tale, which surprised Snowflower so much that she forgot to be frightened. After that the good girl was lonely no more. Every morning she baked a barley cake, and every evening the chair told her a new story; but she could never find out who owned the voice, though Snowflower showed her gratitude by polishing up the oaken back, and dusting the velvet cushion, till the chair looked as good as new. The swallows came and built in the eaves, the daisies grew thicker than ever at the door; but great misfortunes fell upon Snowflower. Notwithstanding all her care, she forgot to clip the hens' wings, and they flew away one morning to visit their friends, the pheasants, who lived far in the forest; the cat followed them to see its relations; the barley-meal was eaten up, except a couple of handfuls; and Snowflower had often strained her eyes in hopes of seeing the gray hood and mantle, but there was no appearance of Dame Frostyface.

3 "My grandmother stays long," said Snowflower to herself; "and by-and-by there will be nothing to eat. If I could get to her, perhaps she would advise me what to do; and this is a good occasion for traveling."

4 Next day, at sunrise, Snowflower oiled the chair's wheels, baked a cake out of the last of the meal, took it in her lap by way of provision for the journey, seated herself, and said, "Chair of my grandmother, take me the way she went."

5 Presently the chair gave a creak, and began to move out of the cottage and into the forest the very way Dame Frostyface had taken, where it rolled along at the rate of a coach and six. Snowflower was amazed at this style of traveling, but the chair never stopped nor stayed the whole summer day, till as the sun was setting they came upon an open space, where a hundred men were hewing down the tall trees with their axes, a hundred more were cleaving them for firewood, and twenty wagoners, with horses and wagons, were carrying the wood away. "Oh! chair of my grandmother, stop!" said Snowflower, for she was tired, and also wished to know what this might mean. The chair immediately stood still, and Snowflower, seeing an old woodcutter who looked civil, stepped up to him and said, "Good father, tell me why you cut all this wood!"

6 "What ignorant country girl are you," replied the man, "not to have heard of the great feast which our sovereign, King Winwealth, means to give on the birthday of his only daughter,

GO ON

the Princess Greedalind? It will last seven days. Everybody will be feasted, and this wood is to roast the oxen and the sheep, the geese and the turkeys, amongst whom there is a great lamentation throughout the land."

7 When Sunflower heard that, she could not help wishing to see, and perhaps share in, such a noble feast, after living so long on barley cakes; so, seating herself, she said, "Chair of my grandmother, take me quickly to the palace of King Winwealth."

8 The words were hardly spoken, when off the chair started through the trees and out of the forest, to the great amazement of the woodcutters, who, never having seen such a sight before, threw down their axes, left their wagons, and followed Snowflower to the gates of a great and splendid city, fortified with strong walls and high towers, and standing in the midst of a wide plain covered with cornfields, orchards, and villages.

"An Excerpt from *Granny's Wonderful Chair*" in the public domain.

An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*

In this excerpt, the narrator is a young boy. He is telling a tale about his father when he was a young boy. The father has met a cat who inspires him to take a journey by telling him about a place called Wild Island. The mean animals on the island cannot easily cross a big river. When a baby dragon falls onto the island, they think they have the answer to their problem.

1 [The cat] went on with the story. "One day about four months before I arrived on Wild Island a baby dragon fell from a low-flying cloud onto the bank of the river. He was too young to fly very well, and besides, he had bruised one wing quite badly, so he couldn't get back to his cloud. The animals found him soon afterwards and everybody said, 'Why, this is just exactly what we've needed all these years!' They tied a big rope around his neck and waited for the wing to get well. This was going to end all their crossing-the-river troubles."

2 "I've never seen a dragon," said my father. "Did you see him? How big is he?"

3 "Oh, yes, indeed I saw the dragon. In fact, we became great friends," said the cat. "I used to hide in the bushes and talk to him when nobody was around. He's not a very big dragon, about the size of a large black bear, although I imagine he's grown quite a bit since I left. He's got a long tail and yellow and blue stripes. His horn and eyes and the bottoms of his feet are bright red, and he has gold-colored wings."

4 "Oh, how wonderful!" said my father. "What did the animals do with him when his wing got well?"

5 "They started training him to carry passengers, and even though he is just a baby dragon, they work him all day and all night too sometimes. They make him carry loads that are much too heavy, and if he complains, they twist his wings. . . . He's always tied to a stake on a rope just long enough to

go across the river. His only friends are the crocodiles, who say 'Hello' to him once a week if they don't forget. Really, he's the most miserable animal I've ever come across. When I left I promised I'd try to help him someday, although I couldn't see how. The rope around his neck is about the biggest, toughest rope you can imagine, with so many knots it would take days to untie them all. . . .

6 "Now, I'm quite sure that if you were able to rescue the dragon, which wouldn't be the least bit easy, he'd let you ride him most anywhere, provided you were nice to him, of course. How about trying it?"

7 "Oh, I'd love to," said my father, and he was so angry at his mother for being rude to the cat that he didn't feel the least bit sad about running away from home for a while.

8 That very afternoon my father and the cat went down to the docks to see about ships going to the Island of Tangerina. They found out that a ship would be sailing the next week, so right away they started planning for the rescue of the dragon. The cat was a great help in suggesting things for my father to take with him, and she told him everything she knew about Wild Island. Of course, she was too old to go along.

9 Everything had to be kept very secret, so when they found or bought anything to take on the trip they hid it behind a rock in the park. The night before my father sailed he borrowed his father's knapsack and he and the cat packed everything very carefully. He took chewing gum, two dozen pink lollipops, a package of rubber bands, black rubber boots, a compass, a tooth brush and a tube of tooth paste, six magnifying glasses, a very sharp jackknife, a comb and a hairbrush, seven hair ribbons of different colors, an empty grain bag with a label saying "Cranberry," some clean clothes, and enough food to last my father while he was on the ship. He couldn't live on mice, so he took twenty-five peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and six apples, because that's all the apples he could find in the pantry.

10 When everything was packed my father and the cat went down to the docks to the ship. A night watchman was on duty, so while the cat made loud queer noises to distract his attention, my father ran over the gangplank onto the ship. He went down into the hold and hid among some bags of wheat. The ship sailed early the next morning.

"An Excerpt from *My Father's Dragon*" in the public domain. Illustration in the public domain.

END

Directions for Administering the
Grade 4 Informative/Explanatory Writing Task C

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write an informative essay about the journeys of two different characters. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read two passages about characters going on journeys, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about characters going on journeys. Take notes as you read. You will later write an essay about the journeys.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about characters going on a journey. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"An Excerpt from* Granny's Wonderful Chair*"*
> - *"An Excerpt from* My Father's Dragon*"*
>
> *As you read, find details about how the journeys are the same and how they are different.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your essay.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Explain how the two journeys are the same and how they are different.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*
- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Informative/Explanatory Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Informative/Explanatory Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read two passages about two characters going on journeys, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting an informative/explanatory essay. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your essay.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Statement of Purpose/Focus – how well you clearly state and maintain your controlling idea or main idea*

- *Organization – how well the ideas progress from the introduction to the conclusion using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Evidence – how well you provide evidence from sources about your topic and elaborate with specific information*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express ideas using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task A

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about a mysterious mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write a narrative based on what you have read.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about the mine. Take notes to use later while writing your narrative. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.

- "The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"
- "Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"

As you read, think about the setting of the passages and about what makes a story about a treasure hunt fun to read.

STEP 2

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Write a narrative about a treasure hunt that has the same setting as the passages that you read.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters
- Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Somewhere in the Superstition Mountains of Arizona may be one of the richest gold mines in the world, known today as the Lost Dutchman Mine. No one knows for sure where it is, or even if it ever existed. Over many years, many people have risked their lives looking for it. As often happens when a story is told over and over again, facts get mixed up with fiction, so that now it is hard to tell which is which.

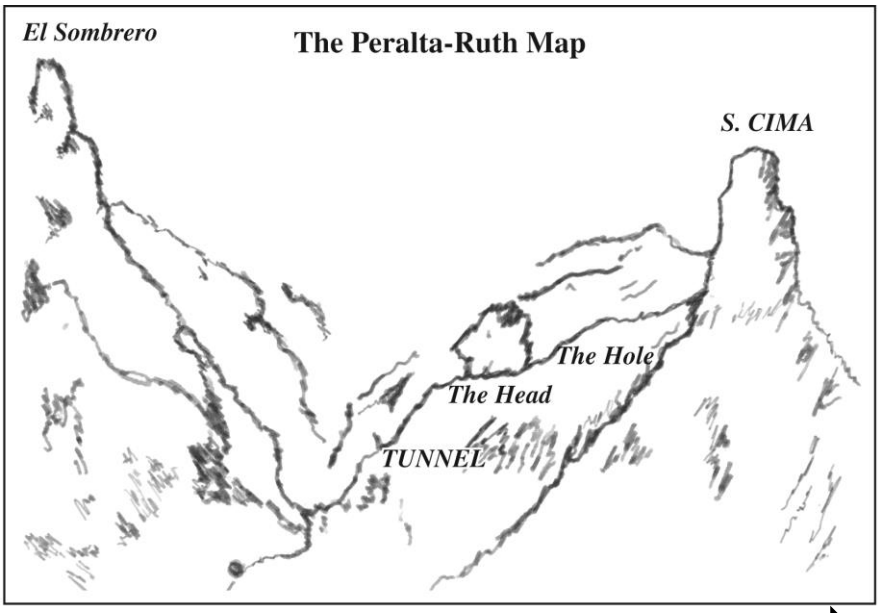
2 One version of the story starts with the Apache Indians, who lived in the region. They found that the mountains contained gold. They believed that the mountains and the gold in them were guarded by the god of thunder, who punished people who came on his land. Another version of the story tells about Spanish explorers who traveled north from Mexico in search of gold. The Spanish believed that men who went into the mountains would never return, which led them to name the mountain range "**Superstition**."

> A *superstition* is a belief that is not based on fact, such as believing that walking under a ladder is bad luck.

3 It is believed that in around 1845, a Mexican rancher named Don Miguel Peralta discovered a vein of gold in the mountains. He noticed a rock formation nearby, which he called Sombrero, the Spanish word for a tall hat. The same rock was later called Weaver's Needle. To this day, the rock is a helpful guide for those searching for the mine.

4 Peralta began shipping gold from the mine. The Apache were angered by this and drove Peralta's men out. Because Peralta had planned to return someday, he hid the entrance to the mine and erased all signs that he and his men had been there.

5 Then, in the 1860s, a German immigrant named Jacob Waltz (the "Dutchman" after whom the mine is named) moved to Arizona and began to explore the area, looking for gold. When Waltz was seen spending gold nuggets in town, people thought he must have discovered the Peralta mine. Some people said he had been given a map showing where the mine was by someone in Peralta's family, in return for saving that person's life.



6 For the rest of his life, Waltz would often show up in town with bags full of gold and then vanish again. If he found the mine, he never told anyone where it was. In 1891, Waltz became ill and was cared for at the home of a woman named

GO ON

Julia Thomas. After he died, a sack of gold ore was found beneath his bed.

7 Many people started looking for the mine after Waltz's death. Julia Thomas even started selling maps to the mine, based on a map she claimed Waltz drew for her before he died.

8 One treasure hunter, Adolph Ruth, set out to find the Lost Dutchman Mine in 1931. He never returned. About six months later, his skull was found. Ruth's checkbook was also found, along with a note from Ruth claiming that he had discovered the mine. The note ended with the words "Veni, vidi, vici," which means, in Latin, "I came, I saw, I **conquered**."

If you *conquer* something, you defeat it.

9 In the years since 1931, many other explorers have disappeared or died looking for the mine. If any of them ever found the mine, they did not return to tell about it. Today the area is part of the Lost Dutchman State Park.

10 Any citizen of the United States has the right to go in search of the mine. If you go, do not go in the summer, when temperatures in the Lost Dutchman State Park are higher than 100 degrees. Take plenty of water, and do not go alone.

"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Angie and Wyatt thought it was going to be just another family vacation, but it turned out to be a bit more exciting than most. This time they were going camping in the Superstition Mountains, a high desert area with rocky soil, cactuses, and rattlesnakes.

"Why is this place called Lost Dutchman?" asked Wyatt as they drove from Phoenix. "Did somebody lose a Dutchman there?"

"No, it's not the Dutchman that's lost, it's the mine, a famous gold mine that people have been trying to find for more than a hundred years," said Dad. "It was supposed to hold the richest gold ore anybody had ever seen. But nobody has been able to find it since it was mined back in the 1800s."

"Wow! A real gold mine? If we found it, could we keep the gold?" asked Angie.

5 "Probably not," said Mom. "And anyway, we're not going to go looking for it. Too many people have died or disappeared or gotten hurt trying to find it. But I did bring along a book about the mine. It tells interesting stories and even has pictures of some maps that supposedly show where the mine is. I'll show it to you when we get there."

Wyatt and Angie glanced at each other. They were thinking the same thing.

After setting up camp, Angie and Wyatt sat at the picnic table and looked at the book. There were so many stories and maps with strange clues about where to find the mine. The children tried to remember all the landmarks: a mountain shaped like a sombrero, a huge needle-like rock, a stone with the shape of a heart, and a stone that looked like a face.

The next morning they got up early, before Mom and Dad got dressed; and started out to see if they could find any of the clues. They brought a map of the park trails. They found their way out of the campground and took the Siphon Draw Trail north, heading for Prospector's View Trail and Treasure Loop Trail. The names sounded like they might lead to gold.

The trail was easy at first but got steeper as they went along, and more difficult, full of loose rocks and spiny cactuses. They were hungry, and they remembered that they had left without breakfast. Luckily they had brought a canteen of water. The sun was getting high in the sky, and it bore down on the pair, making the hike even more tiring. And they hadn't seen even one of the landmark clues.

10 "This isn't as much fun as I thought it would be," said Wyatt, when they stopped to rest in the shade. "I bet Mom and Dad are wondering where we are."

"I know. I left them a note, but by now they might be worried," said Angie. "Maybe we should

GO ON

head back and try again tomorrow. We'll bring some food next time."

Wyatt agreed, and the pair consulted their map. "We must be here, just before Siphon Draw Trail meets Prospector's View Trail," said Angie.

"No, no," insisted Wyatt. "We took a left turn a ways back, so we must be going west now." The children turned the map this way and that, trying to figure out where they were. They could not agree. Which way should they go to get back to camp? "If only somebody would come by, we could ask them," Angie said. But no one did. So they sat, waiting for a good idea or for somebody to find them.

Finally, they saw something coming from far in the distance, churning up a cloud of dust. "I bet that's Mom and Dad!" said Wyatt excitedly. "I hope they brought us sandwiches."

"I hope they're not too mad," said Angie. "But it couldn't be them; they wouldn't be allowed to drive the car on the trail." As the car approached, the children could see that it was the park police.

"Are you Wyatt and Angie Peralta?" asked one officer.

"Yes, sir," answered Angie. "And we'd like to go home to our parents."

"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task A

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write a narrative about a treasure hunt. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about a mysterious mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write a narrative based on what you have read.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about the mine. Take notes to use later while writing your narrative. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
> - *"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
>
> *As you read, think about the setting of the passages and about what makes a story about a treasure hunt fun to read.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

Write a narrative about a treasure hunt that has the same setting as the passages that you read.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task A

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting a narrative. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task B

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read a passage about a young girl who once made important discoveries. Take notes as you read. You will later write a story based on what you have read.

STEP 1

Read the passage and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passage about the young girl, Mary. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.

- "Curiosities from the Cliff"

As you read, think about how Mary would tell a story about her life.

STEP 2

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

How would Mary tell about her life? Write a story from her point of view. Remember to include details from the passage in your story.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters
- Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

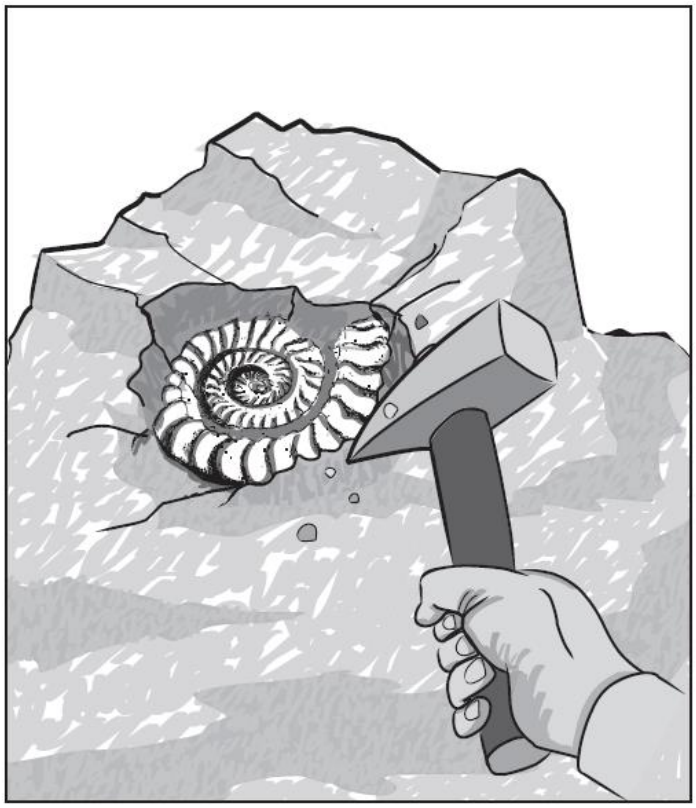
GO ON

Curiosities from the Cliff

by Stephanie Kelley

1 Throughout her childhood, Mary Anning enjoyed a different kind of **beachcombing**. Mary was born in 1799 and lived in Lyme Regis, England. Almost daily, she would walk along the shores searching for treasure. Her father had shown her that in the cliffs, special shells had been preserved. Together, father and daughter collected fossils, shells, and other curiosities on their walks. With her father, Mary learned to have a sharp eye and feel with her fingers. She would chisel carefully to remove stone sea lilies and snakestones, now called ammonites, from the cliff.

beachcombing: searching for things along the shore



Excavating an ammonite fossil

2 When she was still a child, Mary discovered that she could sell these treasures to tourists and curiosity collectors. She was able to bring some much-needed income to her family.

3 When she was 11 years old, Mary discovered a type of tooth in the cliff. That tooth led to another, that led to another, until she unearthed a type of sea creature from long ago. It took many months to dig up the entire creature, but when she was 12 years old, Mary had completed her task. What she had actually excavated was a fossil of an ichthyosaur. She was paid money for her discovery.

4 The fossil was displayed in a museum and studied by many scientists.

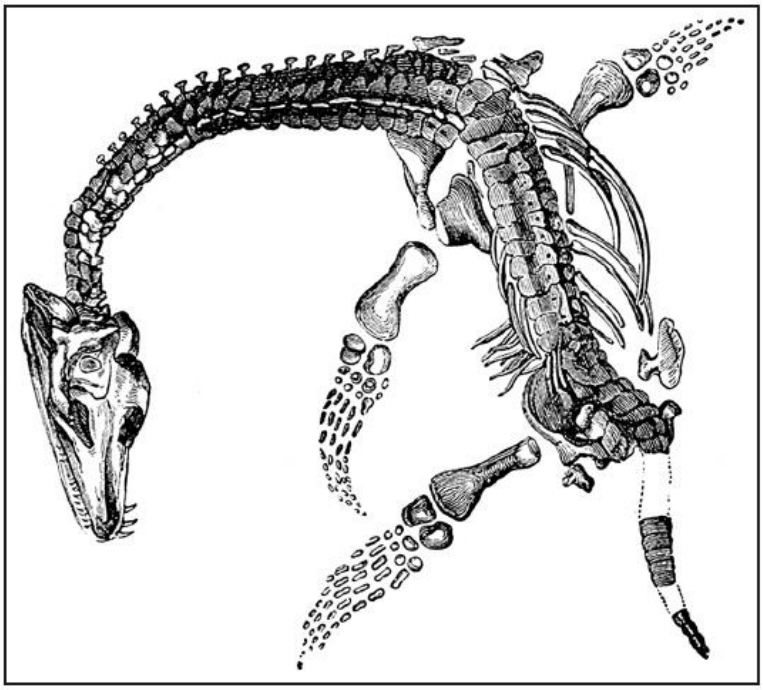
A **reptile** is a kind of animal whose body temperature depends on the air or water around it.

5 Although she was just 12 years old, Mary had already made an impact in the world of science. She continued to dig up the past and actually made a career of it. She became one of the first people to make a living excavating or digging up pieces of the past. She also studied fossils extensively in her lifetime. Mary dug up many other fossils that were part of the dinosaur family and also those of **reptiles**. In 1841, six years before her death, the word "dinosaur" came into being.

GO ON

6 Although she was just a child when she started, Mary had a knack of finding curiosities in the cliff that fascinated people near and far. Mary's hobby that she enjoyed with her father became important to her. Because of her interest and her **perseverance** with digging up the past, the world changed. Her findings jump-started the search for dinosaurs and changed the way scientists looked at the world around them.

perseverance: continuing to try something that is difficult



This shows a fossil of a plesiosaur, unearthed by Mary Anning in the early 1800s.

"Curiosities from the Cliff" by Stephanie Kelley. From *Hopscotch*, August/September 2011 issue. Copyright © 2011 by Fun for Kidz Magazines. Reprinted by permission of Fun for Kidz Magazines. Illustration © WestEd. *Plesiosaurus Macrocephalus* in the public domain.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task B

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write a narrative about* a young girl who once made important discoveries*. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about a girl named Mary Anning, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passage. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read a passage about a young girl who once made important discoveries. Take notes as you read. You will later write a story based on what you have read.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passage and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passage about the young girl, Mary. Take notes to use later while writing your essay. You may look back at the passage and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"Curiosities from the Cliff"*
>
> *As you read, think about how Mary would tell a story about her life.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

How would Mary tell about her life? Write a story from her point of view. Remember to include details from the passage in your story.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read this passage, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task B

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about a girl named Mary Anning, took notes on this source, and started planning and drafting a narrative. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passage and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may **not** use any other programs on the computer, and you may **not** use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Student Directions
Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task C

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: You will read two passages about a mysterious mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write a narrative based on what you have read.

STEP 1

Read the passages and take notes on these sources.

Read the following passages about the mine. Take notes to use later while writing your narrative. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.

- "The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"
- "Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"

As you read, imagine what might have happened to Adolph Ruth.

STEP 2

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

No one knows what really happened to Adolph Ruth on his search for the treasure. What do you think? Write a narrative about what happened to him.

STEP 3

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters
- Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
- Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience
- Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose
- Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

GO ON

The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Somewhere in the Superstition Mountains of Arizona may be one of the richest gold mines in the world, known today as the Lost Dutchman Mine. No one knows for sure where it is, or even if it ever existed. Over many years, many people have risked their lives looking for it. As often happens when a story is told over and over again, facts get mixed up with fiction, so that now it is hard to tell which is which.

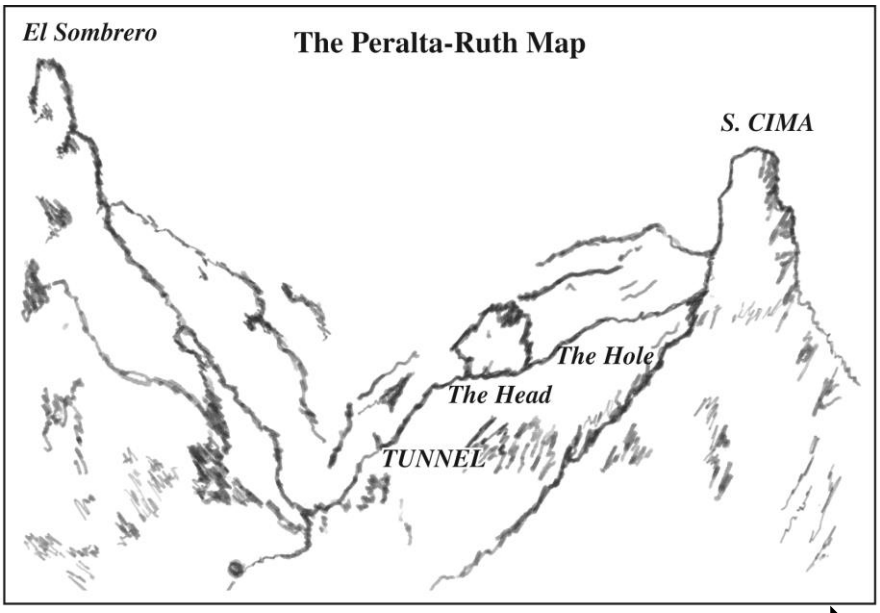
2 One version of the story starts with the Apache Indians, who lived in the region. They found that the mountains contained gold. They believed that the mountains and the gold in them were guarded by the god of thunder, who punished people who came on his land. Another version of the story tells about Spanish explorers who traveled north from Mexico in search of gold. The Spanish believed that men who went into the mountains would never return, which led them to name the mountain range "**Superstition**."

> A *superstition* is a belief that is not based on fact, such as believing that walking under a ladder is bad luck.

3 It is believed that in around 1845, a Mexican rancher named Don Miguel Peralta discovered a vein of gold in the mountains. He noticed a rock formation nearby, which he called Sombrero, the Spanish word for a tall hat. The same rock was later called Weaver's Needle. To this day, the rock is a helpful guide for those searching for the mine.

4 Peralta began shipping gold from the mine. The Apache were angered by this and drove Peralta's men out. Because Peralta had planned to return someday, he hid the entrance to the mine and erased all signs that he and his men had been there.

5 Then, in the 1860s, a German immigrant named Jacob Waltz (the "Dutchman" after whom the mine is named) moved to Arizona and began to explore the area, looking for gold. When Waltz was seen spending gold nuggets in town, people thought he must have discovered the Peralta mine. Some people said he had been given a map showing where the mine was by someone in Peralta's family, in return for saving that person's life.



6 For the rest of his life, Waltz would often show up in town with bags full of gold and then vanish again. If he found the mine, he never told anyone where it was. In 1891, Waltz became ill and was cared for at the home of a woman named

GO ON

Julia Thomas. After he died, a sack of gold ore was found beneath his bed.

7 Many people started looking for the mine after Waltz's death. Julia Thomas even started selling maps to the mine, based on a map she claimed Waltz drew for her before he died.

8 One treasure hunter, Adolph Ruth, set out to find the Lost Dutchman Mine in 1931. He never returned. About six months later, his skull was found. Ruth's checkbook was also found, along with a note from Ruth claiming that he had discovered the mine. The note ended with the words "Veni, vidi, vici," which means, in Latin, "I came, I saw, I **conquered**."

If you *conquer* something, you defeat it.

9 In the years since 1931, many other explorers have disappeared or died looking for the mine. If any of them ever found the mine, they did not return to tell about it. Today the area is part of the Lost Dutchman State Park.

10 Any citizen of the United States has the right to go in search of the mine. If you go, do not go in the summer, when temperatures in the Lost Dutchman State Park are higher than 100 degrees. Take plenty of water, and do not go alone.

"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

GO ON

Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine

1 Angie and Wyatt thought it was going to be just another family vacation, but it turned out to be a bit more exciting than most. This time they were going camping in the Superstition Mountains, a high desert area with rocky soil, cactuses, and rattlesnakes.

"Why is this place called Lost Dutchman?" asked Wyatt as they drove from Phoenix. "Did somebody lose a Dutchman there?"

"No, it's not the Dutchman that's lost, it's the mine, a famous gold mine that people have been trying to find for more than a hundred years," said Dad. "It was supposed to hold the richest gold ore anybody had ever seen. But nobody has been able to find it since it was mined back in the 1800s."

"Wow! A real gold mine? If we found it, could we keep the gold?" asked Angie.

5 "Probably not," said Mom. "And anyway, we're not going to go looking for it. Too many people have died or disappeared or gotten hurt trying to find it. But I did bring along a book about the mine. It tells interesting stories and even has pictures of some maps that supposedly show where the mine is. I'll show it to you when we get there."

Wyatt and Angie glanced at each other. They were thinking the same thing.

After setting up camp, Angie and Wyatt sat at the picnic table and looked at the book. There were so many stories and maps with strange clues about where to find the mine. The children tried to remember all the landmarks: a mountain shaped like a sombrero, a huge needle-like rock, a stone with the shape of a heart, and a stone that looked like a face.

The next morning they got up early, before Mom and Dad got dressed; and started out to see if they could find any of the clues. They brought a map of the park trails. They found their way out of the campground and took the Siphon Draw Trail north, heading for Prospector's View Trail and Treasure Loop Trail. The names sounded like they might lead to gold.

The trail was easy at first but got steeper as they went along, and more difficult, full of loose rocks and spiny cactuses. They were hungry, and they remembered that they had left without breakfast. Luckily they had brought a canteen of water. The sun was getting high in the sky, and it bore down on the pair, making the hike even more tiring. And they hadn't seen even one of the landmark clues.

10 "This isn't as much fun as I thought it would be," said Wyatt, when they stopped to rest in the shade. "I bet Mom and Dad are wondering where we are."

"I know. I left them a note, but by now they might be worried," said Angie. "Maybe we should

GO ON

head back and try again tomorrow. We'll bring some food next time."

Wyatt agreed, and the pair consulted their map. "We must be here, just before Siphon Draw Trail meets Prospector's View Trail," said Angie.

"No, no," insisted Wyatt. "We took a left turn a ways back, so we must be going west now." The children turned the map this way and that, trying to figure out where they were. They could not agree. Which way should they go to get back to camp? "If only somebody would come by, we could ask them," Angie said. But no one did. So they sat, waiting for a good idea or for somebody to find them.

Finally, they saw something coming from far in the distance, churning up a cloud of dust. "I bet that's Mom and Dad!" said Wyatt excitedly. "I hope they brought us sandwiches."

15 "I hope they're not too mad," said Angie. "But it couldn't be them; they wouldn't be allowed to drive the car on the trail." As the car approached, the children could see that it was the park police.

"Are you Wyatt and Angie Peralta?" asked one officer.

"Yes, sir," answered Angie. "And we'd like to go home to our parents."

"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine" © WestEd.

END

Directions for Administering the Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task C

Session 1 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials

Do: Hand out the materials students will need to complete the formative writing task:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Read the Directions Aloud to the Students

Say: *Over two sessions, you will write a narrative about what happened to a missing miner. During the first session, you will have 45 minutes to read the directions, read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, read how the teachers will evaluate your essay, and begin planning and drafting your essay. During the second 45 minute session, you will finish drafting your essay and then revise and edit your final draft.*

You have a pencil and blank paper to use for taking notes and planning your essay. You may write, highlight, and underline on the student directions and passages. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Find the YOUR ASSIGNMENT section at the top of page 1 of the student directions. Read along while I read aloud. It says:

> *You will read two passages about a mysterious mine. Take notes as you read. You will later write a narrative based on what you have read.*

Next, find STEP 1. It says:

> ***Read the passages and take notes on these sources.***
>
> *Read the following passages about the mine. Take notes to use later while writing your narrative. You may look back at the passages and your notes as often as you like.*
>
> - *"The Legend of the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
> - *"Looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine"*
>
> *As you read, imagine what might have happened to Adolph Ruth.*

You will read this on your own; I will not read this to you.

Now, find STEP 2. It says:

Plan and write your narrative.

Now, review your notes and sources, then plan and draft your essay on the following topic:

No one knows what really happened to Adolph Ruth on his search for the treasure. What do you think? Write a narrative about what happened to him.

3. Read the Evaluation Information

Say*:* *Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says:*

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

4. Answer Any Questions

Say: *I can read the directions as often as needed, but I cannot translate, edit your work, explain, or give examples on what or how to write. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Do: Answer questions by rereading the directions.

5. Begin Planning and Drafting

Say: *Now, go back to STEP 1 of the student directions sheet. You have 45 minutes to read these passages, take notes, and start planning and drafting your essay. You should think about the information you have read, which should help you write your essay.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the first session will end.

Say: *Now, read your assignment and begin your work. Manage your time carefully so that you have time to plan and draft your essay. I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may begin.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

6. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left.*

7. End Session 1

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. Write your name on the top of your directions paper and the scratch paper. You will finish writing your essay during the next session.*

Do: If your next session will start on the next day, collect all materials. If your next session will continue on the same day, provide a 15 minute break before beginning the second session.

Session 2 (45 minutes)

1. Distribute the Materials (if necessary)

Do: Hand out the things students will need:

___ Student Directions Narrative Writing Task C

___ Grade 4 Student Guide to Narrative Writing (optional)

___ Standard English dictionaries (optional)

___ Blank scratch paper (lined or unlined)

___ Pencils

___ Highlighters, colored pencils or pens (optional)

2. Review the Directions

Say: *During the first session, you read some information about the Lost Dutchman Mine, took notes on these sources, and started planning and drafting a narrative. Now, you will have 45 minutes to review, revise, and edit your essay. You may reread the passages and use the notes you wrote on your scratch paper. You will write your essay using the word processor on the computer. You may use spell check and grammar check. However, you may* ***not*** *use any other programs on the computer, and you may* ***not*** *use the Internet.*

Let's review how your essay will be evaluated and then you can reread your essay and begin revising and editing. Find STEP 3 and read along as I tell you how your essay will be evaluated. It says: evaluated. It says:

Revise and edit your narrative.

The teachers evaluating your essay will be assigning levels for:

- *Narrative Focus – how well you maintain your focus and establish a setting, narrator and/or characters*
- *Organization – how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay*
- *Elaboration of Narrative – how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience*
- *Language and Vocabulary – how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose*
- *Conventions – how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling*

Teachers reading your essay will evaluate only your final draft.

3. Reread, Revise, and Edit

Say: *Now, continue working on your essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can reread the essay you started during the last session, finish any drafting, and revise and edit for your final draft.*

Do: Write the ending time on the board to let students know when the second session will end.

Say: *I'll announce when you have 10 minutes left. You may continue writing your essay now.*

Do: Start timing now. Monitor the class to ensure students are working productively, not using any other programs on the computer, and not using the Internet.

If students finish early, encourage them to reread their work or silently read a book.

4. Announce 10 Minutes Remaining

Say: *You have 10 minutes left. Please work quickly to finish your final draft. Remember, teachers reading your essay will only evaluate the final draft.*

5. End Session 2

Say: *Please stop writing. Save your work on the computer. I will collect your pencils and scratch paper.*

Do: Collect student writing by asking students to print their essays, or email them to you, or drop them in your virtual inbox.

Teaching Tips

Citing/Using Evidence

Students need ample practice in using evidence to support their opinions/arguments with reasons and details. It is never acceptable to simply copy verbatim from a text as their reasons or details. While students are not expected to use formal citations (i.e. APA or MLA) on the Formative Tasks, it is important that they acknowledge the source of their evidence because citing sources gives credibility to their opinion and makes for proficient writing. Appropriate phrases might include: "According to the table…" or "Scientists found…." Students may also use parenthetical citations, such as, (Pros column). Students may reference their experiences as an elaborative technique, such as, "On a trip to the beach I discovered…"

Highlighters to the Rescue!

Teach students to use highlighters, colored pencils, or colored pens to emphasize important information as they read. At first it may be tempting for them to highlight everything, since it all seems important. But be patient and model the process a few times.

1. Look briefly over the entire book, article, or assignment to get a feel for its structure and how it is organized.
2. Pay particular attention to introductory and concluding paragraphs. These often contain summaries of important points.
3. Look for certain words and phrases that can tip you off that something important is coming up, such as "In sum," "The point is," "Most importantly," and so on.
4. Consider reading the conclusion first. It's like doing a maze backwards: If you know where you're trying to end up, you can find and understand the path better.
5. Look back over the book, article, or assignment the next day/class/session, reading only the highlighted material.

Elaborating Information in Tables

Tables and charts can provide a lot of information. Unfortunately, when students are writing opinions, arguments, or informative/explanatory essays using information from tables and charts, they do not elaborate. Simply repeating something from a chart is not very interesting. Teach students elaborative techniques such as adding sensory details, adding anecdotes, providing examples, and giving reasons. Students can become better writers by employing elaborative techniques that take their writing from mundane to interesting and even exciting!

To Title or Not to Title

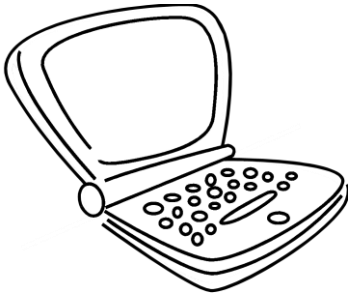
Students often ask, "Does my essay need a title?" Confront this issue while you are teaching and before you administer the formative tasks. Although the rubric does not specifically reference a title, teach students how to write effective and engaging titles.

On-Demand Writing

Remind students that authors write for different purposes. During instruction, there are definitely times when it is important for writers to take a piece through the entire writing process. However, the formative assessments are designed as "on-demand" writing, to see how well students can write to an assigned task in a finite amount of time. This is an important skill as on-demand writing will often be required of them in the college and career world. In on-demand writing, students need to be able to go from their pre-writing/brainstorming to drafting on computer, rather than a paper/pencil created draft. Be sure to incorporate opportunities for on-demand writing in regular instruction so it is not a surprise to students when they take the Formative Tasks.

Word Processing

Be sure students have ample practice and feel confident with the word processing program they will be using for the formative assessments. It is important students are familiar with how to save their documents and use the spell check and grammar check features. Ample practice drafting, re-reading, revising, and editing on-screen will also be beneficial for students so these become comfortable and expected parts of the writing process.



Word processing programs come with many bells and whistles than can enhance the publishing process. However, it is important during the Formative Tasks that students are focused on their writing and not wasting valuable time playing with features such as font and colors. While there are no specific guidelines in these areas for the assessment, it is important students understand the focus of the task is their actual writing. Teachers may want to establish their own parameters for font size/type. Only spell check and grammar check features are permitted.

Collecting the Finished Tasks

Consider setting up a shared drive where students can save their word-processed final drafts. Create folders for each of your classes on this drive. When students save their essays, have them name their file with their last name and first initial (i.e., Jamie Martinez = martinezj). The names will appear alphabetically in the file and make it easy for both you and the student to locate.

Meet with Your Colleagues

Plan to meet with colleagues after scoring all of the papers for your grade. Start a discussion about writing trends. What are some things that are working well? What are some areas that need to be addressed? Create a plan that maintains what is working well and addresses areas that need improving.

Notes

Workgroup 2

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Team Leader
Clark County School District

Sue Slocum
Team Leader
Clark County School District

Jessica Bañales
Clark County School District

Tearra Bobula
Carson City School District

Nathalie Brugman
Southern Nevada Regional
Professional Development Program

Shan Cannon
Southern Nevada Regional
Professional Development Program

Debbie Carle
Southern Nevada Regional
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Christine Chapin
Somerset Academy Charter School

Cybil Covert
Clark County School District

Kristin Crawford
Silver Sands Montessori Charter School

Kim Cuevas
Washoe County School District

Jennifer Ward DeJoseph
Carson City School District

Stacy Drum
Washoe County School District

Pamela Ertel
Douglas County School District

Kate Ferro
Washoe County School District

Katie Floyd
Nye County School District

Desiree Gray
Northwestern Regional
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Mary Greenblat
Washoe County School District

Katrina Hashimoto
Clark County School District

Mendy Henry
Southern Nevada Regional
Professional Development Program

Margaret Kiser
Clark County School District

Saralyn Lasley
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Professional Development Program

Jeremy Lewis
Carson City School District

Lauren R. Lewis
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Miyoko Loflin
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Robyn Markovic
Southern Nevada Regional
Professional Development Program

Kay Mobley
Nye County School District

Susan Moore
Douglas County School District

Tina Quintana
Clark County School District

Amy Raymer
Clark County School District

Thomasina Rose
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Kevin Sigl
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Chelli Smith
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Professional Development Program

Carolin Steele
Nye County School District

Susan Van Doren
Douglas County School District

Desiree L. Veloz
Nye County School District

Ann Warren
Washoe County School District

Jessie Westmoreland
Northern Nevada
Professional Development Program