

# Nova Scotia Homeschooling Program

A PARENT RESOURCE

## Reading and Writing Achievement Standards

*A Component of  
Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum  
(Primary - Grade 9)*



**End of Grade 8  
September 2008 - For Public Use**



# Acknowledgements

The Departments of Education of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Department and School District/Board personnel, as well as many teachers to the development of the achievement standards documents.

## **Achievement Standards Steering Committee**

### **New Brunswick**

Dorene Alexander  
Barry Lydon  
Darlene Whitehouse-Sheehan

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Eldrid Barnes  
Bob Gardner

### **Nova Scotia**

Ann Blackwood  
Ann Powers  
Vince Warner

### **Prince Edward Island**

Clayton Coe  
Cindy Wood

### **CAMET**

Sylvie Martin

### **New Brunswick Writing Team**

Dorene Alexander  
Elaine Batt  
Kimberly Bauer  
Cynthia Hatt  
Darlene Whitehouse-Sheehan

## **Regional Department of Education Literacy Committees (current and past members):**

### **New Brunswick**

Dorene Alexander  
Tiffany Bastin  
Kimberly Bauer  
Sandra Mazerall  
Darlene Whitehouse-Sheehan

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Denise Coady  
Beverley Fitzpatrick  
Krista Vokey

### **Nova Scotia**

Beth Charlton  
Mary Fedorchuk  
Tom Henderson  
Susan Martin-O'Brien  
Janet Porter  
Jim Rice  
Barry Wilson

### **Province of Prince Edward Island**

Tracey Anderson  
Jackie Hicken  
Linda MacDonald  
Jarmo Puiras



# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
BACKGROUND.....	1
PURPOSE .....	1
OVERVIEW: READING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS .....	2
OVERVIEW: WRITING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS .....	2
GUIDELINES FOR COPYING FROM THE STANDARDS .....	3
APPLICATION OF STANDARDS .....	3
CONCLUSION .....	4
<b>READING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
READING STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIOURS.....	7
COMPREHENSION RESPONSES – APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT .....	8
COMPREHENSION RESPONSES – STRONG ACHIEVEMENT.....	9
TEXT COMPLEXITY .....	10
<i>ROBINS AND RAVENS – TEXT</i> .....	11
<i>ROBINS AND RAVENS – STUDENT EXEMPLARS</i> .....	12
<i>SAVE THE AMAZON RAINFOREST - TEXT</i> .....	15
<i>SAVE THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST – STUDENT EXEMPLARS</i> .....	17
<i>MRS. BUELL - TEXT</i> .....	23
<i>MRS. BUELL – STUDENT EXEMPLARS</i> .....	26
<b>WRITING ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>29</b>
WRITING STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIOURS .....	31
TRAITS OF WRITING – APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT.....	32
TRAITS OF WRITING – STRONG ACHIEVEMENT AND CONFERENCE PROMPTS.....	33
TEXT FORMS.....	34
<b>STUDENT WRITING EXEMPLARS WITH RATIONALES .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<i>IT’S OVER - EXEMPLAR FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	36
<i>IT’S OVER - RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	37
<i>TO MY MOST TREASURED FRIENDS - EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	39
<i>TO MY MOST TREASURED FRIENDS - RATIONALE FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	41
<i>KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SUN - EXEMPLAR FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	43
<i>KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SUN - RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	45
<i>KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SUN AND YOU WON’T SEE THE SHADOWS’...DIFFERENT WAYS. - EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	47
<i>KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE SUN AND YOU WON’T SEE THE SHADOWS’...DIFFERENT WAYS. - RATIONALE FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	49
<i>DRINKING AND DRIVING - EXEMPLAR FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	51
<i>DRINKING AND DRIVING - RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	53
<i>BACK IN GRADE THREE, GUESTS.... - EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	55
<i>BACK IN GRADE THREE, GUESTS.... - RATIONALE FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	57
<i>HOCKEY IS A VERY CHALLENGING AND FAST-PACED GAME. - EXEMPLAR FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> ...	59
<i>HOCKEY IS A VERY CHALLENGING AND FAST-PACED GAME. - RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> ...	61
<i>I RECYCLE EVERY DAY. - EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	63
<i>I RECYCLE EVERY DAY. - RATIONALE FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	65
<i>THE DAY MY BROTHERS AND I RECEIVED OUR DOG WAS.... - EXEMPLAR FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> ...	67
<i>THE DAY MY BROTHERS AND I RECEIVED OUR DOG WAS.... - RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> ....	69
<i>IT WAS THE FIRST DAY OF THIRD GRADE... - EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	71
<i>IT WAS THE FIRST DAY OF THIRD GRADE... -RATIONALE FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	73
<i>MY NAME IS LEO...-EXEMPLAR FOR STRONG ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	75
<i>MY NAME IS LEO...-RATIONALE FOR APPROPRIATE ACHIEVEMENT</i> .....	76
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>81</b>
READING CURRICULUM OUTCOMES AND STANDARDS ALIGNMENT .....	83
WRITING CURRICULUM OUTCOMES AND STANDARDS ALIGNMENT.....	90



# Introduction

## Background

The reading and writing achievement standards documents were developed by the Atlantic Provinces under the auspices of the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET). The New Brunswick Department of Education had lead responsibility for the project, with input provided by the other provinces at defined points. The first draft of the achievement standards was developed in consultation with teachers and personnel from school districts/boards. Working groups of educators from various school districts/boards, provincial assessments, and the work of educational researchers documented in professional resources were consulted in ongoing revisions. Final draft versions of the documents were made available for field tests/reviews throughout the Atlantic Provinces. The resulting feedback informed the published versions of the achievement standards.

### Timeline of Reading and Writing Achievement Standards Development

- CAMET initiative formulated for grade-level standards documents.
- New Brunswick assumes project lead.
- Draft development following consultation with educators.
- Field tests/reviews conducted of final drafts.
- Achievement standards documents published.

## Purpose

The achievement standards are intended to establish common expectations in reading and writing among Atlantic Canadian educators for students at the end of designated grade levels (entry through grade nine). The standards address the question, “**How well should students be able to read and write independently by the end of each grade level?**”, and are based on both the reading and viewing outcomes and the writing and representing outcomes within the *1998 Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curricula*, Entry through Grade Nine. (See Appendix for outcomes alignment.) The project directive focuses only on defining reading and writing achievement standards. However, not to be diminished is classroom instruction in the other language arts outcomes (i.e. those outcomes not addressed from the reading and viewing, the writing and representing, and the speaking and listening strands).

**The standards provide reasonable end-of-grade expectations for reading and writing through descriptions of two levels of student achievement:**

The standard for **appropriate achievement** describes what a student who meets intended grade-level expectations of the learning outcomes must know and be able to do.

The standard for **strong achievement** describes what a student who demonstrates a high level of performance in intended grade-level expectations of the learning outcomes must know and be

## Overview: Reading Achievement Standards

The reading achievement standards include **three components** to be considered when **assessing students' independent interactions** with text. The three components are identified as:

**Text Complexity** – characteristics of fiction/nonfiction (information) texts

**Reading Strategies and Behaviours** – learning behaviours students should exhibit when reading texts independently

**Comprehension Responses** – literal, inferential/interpretive, and personal/critical/evaluative responses to texts

Exemplars (samples) of comprehension questions and student responses are provided as a guide for teachers to use when formulating questions and promoting discussions with any classroom student texts.

Student responses were collected through fall provincial assessments (October and November) and by classroom teachers at the end of the school year. Students were provided with grade-appropriate reading passages and related open-response questions to complete **independent** writing tasks. No teacher assistance could be provided with the reading or interpretation of the passages or questions.

## Overview: Writing Achievement Standards

The writing achievement standards include **three components**:

**Text Forms** – characteristics of narrative, poetry and information texts

**Reading Strategies and Behaviours** – learning behaviours students should exhibit when writing texts independently

**Writing Traits** – describe what students should be able to demonstrate independently with respect to the six common traits when completing a piece of writing. The six traits are:

**Content/Ideas** – overall topic, degree of focus, and related details.

**Organization** – structure and form, dependent on purpose and audience

**Word Choice** – vocabulary, language, and phrasing

**Voice** – evidence of author's style, personality, and experience

**Sentence Structure** – variety and complexity of sentences

**Conventions** – spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar)

The writing achievement standards for each grade level are clarified through student exemplars. The student exemplars, with supporting rationale, represent various forms of both narrative and expository writing. The majority of writing samples were drawn from provincial writing assessments; information is displayed within writing assessment booklets indicating student writing samples at this level may later be used in provincial publications.

Writing tasks included both a topic of student choice and assigned prompts. Students used space provided to plan and draft, revise and edit, before writing their final copy. All assignments were completed **independently** within a sixty-minute time frame. Students were reminded to use their writing tools (e.g., dictionary and thesaurus).



## Guidelines for Copying from the Standards

Educators should note that the **published fiction/nonfiction texts within the reading standards have been reprinted by permission of the publisher/owner**; a citation appears at the bottom of each page to provide source information. The materials have been secured with an agreement that they will be viewed only within the document and/or in a read-only electronic version; therefore the reading passages **may not be reproduced** in any form. The student exemplars however, in both the reading and writing sections, can be reproduced but only for use within classrooms.

## Application of Standards

When using the achievement standards for either formative or summative purposes, it is important to consider all elements of the standards and to give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their abilities. For example, when assessing a student's ability to read, the teacher must consider text complexity, reading strategies the student employs, and various types of responses to text. Similarly, when assessing a student's ability to write, it is important to consider all traits that contribute to quality writing.

## Application of the Reading Standard

Student reading comprehension exemplars reflect responses to grade-appropriate reading texts (i.e., text complexity defined as **appropriate** for the end of a given grade level). Student responses determined to be at an appropriate level reflect the criteria described for appropriate achievement; and student responses identified as strong achievement reflect the criteria described for the strong level. Comprehension responses are defined as:

**Literal** – students recall explicitly stated facts and/or ideas. Often the level of achievement is dependent upon the number of questions answered correctly; that is, for appropriate achievement a student responds accurately to **most** literal questions; for strong achievement a student responds accurately to **virtually all** literal questions. As the text complexity advances, strong responses may be distinguished by precision and the depth of response.

**Inferential/Interpretive** – students connect ideas within the text, demonstrating an ability to identify and understand messages that are implied, but not explicitly stated.

**Personal/Critical/Evaluative** – students make judgments about textual content.

It is expected that students who demonstrate a strong level of achievement will be capable of reading slightly more challenging texts than included within the grade-level documents. With more challenging texts, the student may not consistently demonstrate the criteria for responses defined under strong achievement.

## Application of the Writing Standard

**To obtain appropriate achievement in writing, student writing must consistently demonstrate the level of development described for each trait within the category of the standard.** However, a student whose achievement in writing is identified at an appropriate level may be strong in one or more traits. Equally, to be identified at a strong level of achievement, the student must consistently demonstrate the level of development described within the standard for each trait in the strong category. **When assessing a student's writing achievement for formative purposes, a teacher could focus on the student's ability with respect to each trait. The information gained could inform instruction** to ensure a student achieves the overall level of development identified within

the end of grade level achievement standards. The goal is to develop students' proficiency in all the traits of writing as each is important and contributes to quality writing.

### **Planning for Individual Instruction with the Standards**

**The reading and writing achievement standards and accompanying exemplars may facilitate the design and implementation of individual learning plans for reading and writing outcomes.** The descriptors in the standards are designed on a continuum; therefore, any grade level, indicative of a student's instructional level, may be used to guide planning. This can be achieved by matching the behavior descriptions of appropriate and strong achievement at a grade level reflective of the student's reading and writing ability. Once this level is determined, goals and specific outcomes may be written to reflect the reading and writing standards. The reading and writing standards provide a tool to focus literacy goals for the instructional level of any student.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this CAMET initiative, standards for reading and writing - Entry through Grade 9, is to provide teachers with a tool for assessing student achievement that is consistent with other jurisdictions. The *Reading and Writing Achievement Standards* define **how well a student should be able to read and write** at the end of each grade and are intended as supplementary documents to the *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*.

# **Reading Achievement Standards**

## **End of Grade 8**

### **Reading Achievement Standards Appropriate and Strong**

#### **Reading Texts**

#### **Student Reading Comprehension Exemplars**



## Reading Strategies and Behaviours



### Reading Strategies and Behaviours Appropriate Achievement

#### Students

- check closely for understanding; adjust and use a wide variety of strategies (e.g., generate questions, make connections, organize significant information in notes or with graphic organizers)
- quickly solve unfamiliar words using a variety of cues (e.g. dividing words into syllables, using root words/origins to gain meaning; using background knowledge and context cues) use references to find the meanings of unknown/technical words
- automatically read and understand most words in range of contexts (e.g., subject-specific terminology, vocabulary from oral language)
- read appropriate-level texts with expression and confidence; adjust rates to match form and purpose; use appropriate phrasing, pausing and intonation
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experience, and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading; inquire/conduct research when content exceeds knowledge/experience
- use text features (e.g. table of contents, glossary, captions, headings/subheadings, index, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, font) to preview, interpret, and locate information
- reflect on reading processes and strategies to ensure deeper understanding of content

### Reading Strategies and Behaviours Strong Achievement

- Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly efficient and deliberate manner, **and**
- show insight with their questions and predictions, based on interpretations of subtle textual details
  - recognize subtle biases
  - make sophisticated text-to-text and text-to-world connections based on extensive knowledge gained through broader reading experiences

## Comprehension Responses Appropriate Achievement

Students demonstrating appropriate achievement respond to a variety of comprehension tasks in the manner described below.

<b>Reading “the lines”</b>	<p><b><u>Literal Response</u></b></p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond accurately to most literal questions; skim large amount of text in search of information, locate literal information from a variety of texts</li> <li>• identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text; explain how events are related to the theme; graphic organizers (e.g. timelines, story maps) may be used</li> <li>• distinguish between main ideas and supporting details; concisely summarize key information; graphic organizers (e.g., timelines, charts, webs) may be used</li> </ul>
<b>Reading “between the lines”</b>	<p><b><u>Inferential/Interpretive Response</u></b></p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make logical inferences about multiple complex characters (i.e., motivations, traits, feelings, personality) and story events, referring to relevant textual details; describe relationships among characters and effect on plot or overall theme</li> <li>• interpret relationships among ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., plot, sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution) or make comparisons; support responses with relevant details</li> <li>• use context clues, prior knowledge, and reference tools (e.g., dictionary, glossary) to explain the meaning of new vocabulary/technical terms; interpret subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language; interpret symbols (objects, events, motifs) used by author to convey meaning</li> <li>• interpret/use text features to understand the text (headings and subheadings, cut aways, legends, diagrams, maps, graphs, glossaries, captions, charts, feature boxes, sidebars); make general inferences using this information</li> </ul>
<b>Reading “beyond the lines”</b>	<p><b><u>Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response</u></b></p> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make personal connections: compare/contrast with personal experiences/relevant prior knowledge; make logical text-to-text, text-to-world comparisons; connect characters within and across texts/genres by circumstances, traits, or actions</li> <li>• make connections between the social/moral issues of the present and those presented in realistic/historical fiction, biographies, and other genres</li> <li>• express and support personal reactions, preferences for, and opinions about, particular texts, authors, illustrators, and genres using specific details/examples</li> <li>• explain how the different elements of author’s style/technique (e.g., dialect, descriptions, figurative language, flashbacks, foreshadowing, symbolism) creates meaning and reaction; evaluate author’s effectiveness by providing relevant examples</li> <li>• respond critically to texts: recognize language used to manipulate, persuade, or control; detect prejudice, stereotyping and bias; propose alternative perspectives</li> <li>• evaluate purpose, structure, and characteristics of a variety of text forms (e.g. short story, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy); explain how they contribute to understanding the text</li> </ul>

**Comprehension Responses  
Strong Achievement**

**Sample Questions/Tasks**

The following types of questions/tasks may be used to assess students' comprehension.

**Literal Response**

- *What new information did you learn from reading and viewing this selection?*
- *Summarize what you have found so far. What key words did you note to help you remember?*
- *Where would you begin to construct a timeline to plot the events in this autobiography?*
- *Why is \_\_\_ (event/action of character) important to the story?*
- *What were the key ideas in the information you read/viewed? Why did you identify them as important?*
- *Provide the "gist" of this article in twenty words or less.*

**Inferential/Interpretive Response**

- *Describe \_\_\_ (character) at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. What caused this change?*
- *In what ways did the weaknesses/strengths of the character affect the chain of events in the story? How would the story be different if the character had acted differently?*
- *What is the theme or message of this selection? What do you think the author/poet wants you to think about and remember?*
- *What does this word mean? What helped you figure that out?*
- *Explain and give an example of how the author/poet used metaphor/simile/irony/personification/onomatopoeia.*
- *Show me how you used this key to understand the map.*
- *Look at this photograph and caption. What information do you learn that adds to the words of the text?*
- *How do the text features (e.g. headings, charts, questions...) help you understand what you have read?*

**Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response**

- *Which character is most like you? How?*
- *How would you have solved the problem?*
- *Tell me about your favourite genre. What is it about the genre that engages you?*
- *Does the author keep you interested in this selection? How?*
- *What does the author do to help you picture this character?*
- *The problem is described by \_\_\_. What do you think \_\_\_ would say about it?*
- *Whose viewpoint is presented? What, if any, opposing viewpoints are presented? Whose viewpoint is missing? Describe the biases and assumptions presented in this selection. Whose interests are served?*
- *What are some examples of how the author used persuasive language in this piece?*
- *What are some similarities and differences between one form/genre and another? (e.g. myths and legends)*

Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They **also**

- read large amounts of text and distinguish between important and unimportant details
- organize and present information gathered from a wide variety of texts
- demonstrate a solid understanding of how story events are interrelated
- provide thoughtful inferences supported by specific and relevant examples and by personal knowledge and experience

- synthesize knowledge/experience gained through reading extensively to make insightful and sometimes sophisticated connections

## Text Complexity

Students select and read independently a variety of literary and information texts. Texts include

- a wide range of genres; some texts (hybrids) combine genres; longer texts, beyond personal experiences, often requiring cultural, historical or social perspectives
- multidimensional mature/challenging themes/ideas (e.g. human problems: abuse, war, hardship, poverty, racism) that cultivate social awareness and provide insight into the struggles of humanity; age appropriate characters/ information requiring the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts and subject areas; sometimes themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- many complex sentence structures (including sentences greater than 30 words); large amounts of description containing information vital to the understanding of the text; more complicated use of dialogue; wide range of declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences; embedded phrases/ clauses
- challenging language (need context, glossary/dictionary); wide range of literary devices (e.g. figurative language, symbolism, flashbacks, flash forward, time lapses, stories within stories); dialects (regional/historical), some words from other languages, archaic words
- many long multisyllable words (require knowledge of root words/affixes), complex plurals/spelling patterns, many nouns/technical words that are difficult to decode
- variety of challenging illustrations/photographs/complex graphics that match/add meaning/extend text; much literary text with no or few illustrations
- many lines of print on a page; variation in layout/print styles/font within the same text (some examples of dense print); wide range of punctuation; may feature readers' tools (e.g. glossary, pronunciation guide)

Note: Text complexity is not defined as appropriate or strong. The wide range of unfamiliar content at this level ensures sufficient challenges for all readers

**Literary** (Realistic/Historical Fiction, Fantasy, Myths, Legends, Poetry, Science Fiction, Mysteries, Satire, Hybrids)

Texts characterized by

- varied structures (e.g., short stories, plays) with multiple narrators, some longer books requiring sustained reading and recall of information; some collections with interrelated themes
- plots with detailed episodes/subplots/multiple story lines; occasional unexpected twists
- main characters display complexity and unpredictability, i.e. “hero” with shades of good and bad; factors that relate to character development that require inferences; multiple characters revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts and/or perceptions of others
- some unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred; many lines of descriptive language vital to understanding setting, characters, theme, imagery, symbolism, figurative language

**Information** (Content Subject Textbooks, Reports, Directions, Biography, Memoir Autobiography, Ads, Hybrids)

Texts characterized by

- heavy content load requiring readers to synthesize information
- topics/explicit ideas/information linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g. description, sequence, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect- at times combined in same text)
- variety of formats (paragraphs, columns, boxes, legends, question/answer)
- wide variety of graphics—some dense and challenging—support text; some complicated layouts
- information conveyed through text features (e.g. table of contents, index, glossary, subheadings, captions, sidebars, cutaways, charts, diagrams, maps, keys/legends, bold type)



Read the poem. Answer all the questions in your own words. Refer to the poem when necessary, to reveal that you have a clear understanding of the ideas.

### ROBINS AND RAVENS

Yesterday morn, two robins perched  
On a branch of a tall birch tree,  
And the liquid notes from their swelling throats  
Filled the day with melody.

- 5 They gladdened the air with their merry song,  
The world seemed happy and bright,  
And the memory of beauty remained with us  
From morn' 'till the fall of night.

Alas! Today a lone raven perched  
10 On a branch of that same birch tree,  
And its angry cries pierced the morning skies  
With its woe and misery.

- The day, though bright, had a gloomy cast,  
Our hearts less cheerful and bright,  
15 And the memory of harshness remained with us  
From dawn 'till the failing light.

We mortals are much like those morning birds,  
As we face life's surging sea,  
And our habits diverse, for better or worse,  
20 Leave their mark on humanity.

Will we face the world with a gladsome heart,  
Or with manner sad and craven –  
The choice is ours, which will we be  
A robin, or a raven?

— Jessie H. Moffitt

**Literal Response – Reading “the lines”****1. When did the robins come to the birch tree?**

(This question generates one level of response.)

**Criteria for Response**

Students respond accurately to the literal question, stating the time that the robins perched on the tree.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The robins came yesterday morn.
- Yesterday morn, two robins perched on the branch of a tall birch tree.
- The robins arrived in the birch tree yesterday morning.

**Inferential/Interpretive Response – Reading “between the lines”****2. Tell why the day was gloomy, as stated in line 13.**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students interpret the relationship between the gloomy day and the raven.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The day was gloomy because the raven was in misery.
- The day was gloomy because the raven pierced the skies with loud noises.
- The raven’s angry cries made a dark and gloomy day.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students interpret the relationship between the gloomy day and the raven and demonstrate an understanding of the poetic symbolism.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The day was gloomy because of the raven was in misery. It’s talking about if you choose to be a robin then you will be a happy person and if you choose to be a raven you will be a sad mean person. It means you can choose your own path if you want to. The ravens angry cries with its woe and misery, shows no one really likes it, it is dull. You can choose to be dull and no one would like you.

**Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response – Reading “beyond the lines”****3. Explain why the poet chose robins and a raven as her examples in the poem.**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students make connections with prior knowledge/experience (i.e. a robin as a cheerful bird and a raven as the disturber) in order to explain the poet’s choice of birds as her examples.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- Everyone knows about those birds and what they are like.
- The poet chose robins because everybody likes robins, and people think ravens are mean.
- She wanted to show that “angry cries” like the cries a raven makes can ruin a good day, but happy people like “cheerful” robins make a “happy and bright” world.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students draw on extensive experience with other texts/prior knowledge to provide more sophisticated reasons underlying the poet’s choice (i.e. the comparison to Robin Redbreast or the cheerfulness of a robin in spring).

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The reason the poet chose the birds is because robins are thought of as cheerful birds like little Robin Redbreast. They welcome spring with their “merry song” while the raven is black and dark to represent gloom and sadness with its “woe and misery”.
- The raven shows how bad habits affect people and can ruin a good day, but if we “face the world with a gladsome heart” like cheerful robins, we leave our mark on the world for good.
- The poet wanted to remind us that we can have a good effect on people or a bad effect so she used the birds as examples. We have to choose how to act but we should make a good choice as we face the world because we leave a mark whatever way we choose.

**4. Explain what you think the poet means in line 17 when she writes, “We mortals are much like those morning birds.”**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students explain what they think the poet means by making a simple personal connection.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students' words and spelling)*

- The poet means we are like the birds because we choose how we act.
- The poet means we make choices about how we act, much like the birds.
- The poet means some people are merry and some people are gloomy.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students make sophisticated text-to-self/ text-to-world connections by identifying key ideas to explain what the poet means. Responses at the strong level include textual references/evidence of mature understanding.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students' words and spelling)*

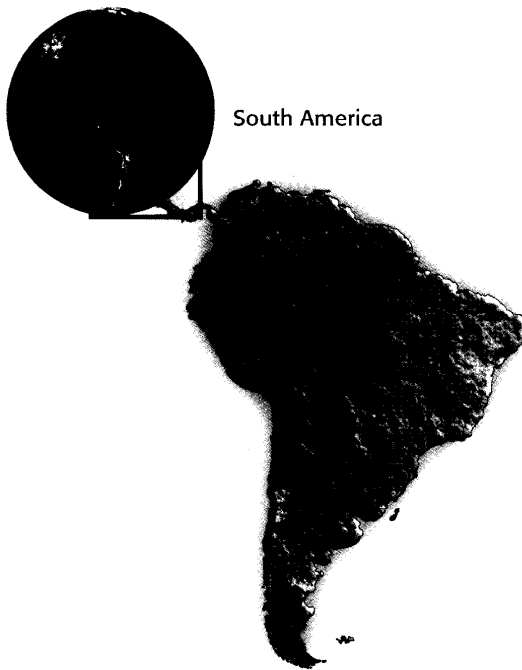
- I think that the poet means that humanity can make the world a better place, but it all depends on our attitudes. We all have an influence on the lives of others just like the morning birds.
- I think the poet is saying that people are like two different birds. A cheerful person is a robin and a grumpy person is a raven. She says, "The choice is ours, which will we be?" I would rather be a robin so "the world will be happy and bright."
- We all have an influence on the lives of others just like the morning birds. A grumpy person will leave a bad impression while we all can create a happier place if we are always cheerful. You see this influence in "The memory of beauty remained with us." (Line 7).

# Save the Amazon Rainforest!

The Amazon rainforest is one of the world's most fascinating ecosystems. It is so thickly wooded that there are as many as 200 different species of trees in each square kilometre. The Amazon River flows through the rainforest. It is the second longest river in the world and contains more than 3000 species of fish. Plant and animal life in the Amazon rainforest is also extremely rich and diverse. Researchers continue to discover new species, in addition to the millions that have already been identified.

## Why Should We Care?

Since the Amazon rainforest is so far from Canada, you might wonder why we should care about it. Does it really make any difference to us? Well, you decide.



With an area of about six million square kilometres, the Amazon rainforest is the world's largest rainforest. Because of its size, it has a major effect on the world's climate. How? The rainforest absorbs carbon dioxide—one of the harmful gases that produces the “greenhouse effect.” It also gives off a by-product necessary for all life: oxygen. In addition, the Amazon rainforest's dark forest cover absorbs heat from the sun. Without this rainforest, Earth's temperature would rise. Even as far away as Canada, winters would be considerably warmer and summers much hotter and drier.

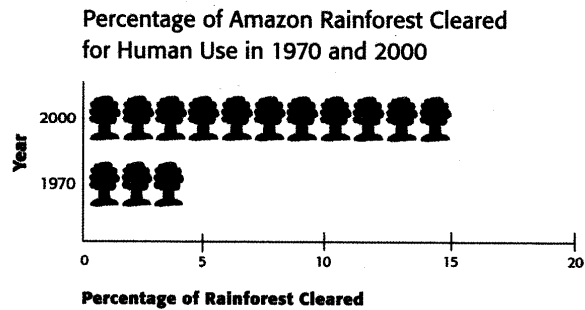
You may have heard that this valuable resource is in grave danger. Over the past 50 years, we have lost about half of the world's tropical rainforests to both natural and human causes, such as fires and chainsaws. Enormous chunks of the Amazon rainforest are being clear-cut for farms, cattle ranches, lumber, development, and gold mines.

## Negative Effects

Clearing the rainforest has many damaging effects, including soil erosion. Without trees and their root structure to hold the soil in place, it is easily washed away. The land gradually turns into a desert where nothing will grow. The disappearance of the rainforest also threatens many species with extinction. The jaguar, for instance, needs large areas of forest for its hunting grounds. Because the rainforest is shrinking, the jaguar is now on the endangered species list. Furthermore, about 25 percent of cancer medications used today come from organisms found only in the rainforest.

Reprinted with permission by © Pearson Education Canada

Photograph:  
Tropical bird



**What You Can Do**

Help save the Amazon rainforest! There are several things you can do.

1. Join a conservation group, such as Greenpeace or the World Wildlife Fund, to learn more about the Amazon rainforest ecosystem.
2. Raise money to “adopt” a piece of the rainforest.
3. Do a Web search under *Amazon* and *rainforest* (or *rain forest*) to see what other students are doing to stop the destruction of this wonderful ecosystem. If young people like you work toward the conservation of tropical rainforests, the benefits to our world will continue for many generations.

Photograph:  
A jaguar in a jungle

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest has reduced habitats for many species, including the jaguar.

**Reprinted with permission by © Pearson Education Canada**

**Literal Response – Reading “the lines”****1. What is the main idea of the opening paragraph?**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students locate and identify the main idea of the text.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The main idea is that the Amazon rainforest is one of the world’s most fascinating ecosystems.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students identify the main idea of a text. Responses at the strong level demonstrate precise understanding of the intention of the text.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The main idea is that the Amazon Rainforest is a great ecosystem for thousands of plants and animals to inhabit.
- The main idea of the rainforest is that the rainforest has numerous forms of life within it and that it is plentiful in resources.

**2. List four relevant details that support this main idea.**

(This question generates one level of response.)

**Criteria for Response**

Students distinguish between main ideas and supporting details and concisely summarize key information.

*Student Exemplars (In students’ words and spelling)*

- It is very thickly wooded, with as many as 200 different tree species in each square kilometre of the rainforest. The second-largest river in the world, the Amazon River, flows through the rainforest. The Amazon River is also home to more than 3,000 species of fish. The plant and animal life in the rainforest is very diverse.
- There are as many as 200 species of trees in each square kilometre. The Amazon river is the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest river in the world. The Amazon river is home to “more than 3000” species of fish. Researchers continue to discover new species in addition to the millions that have already been identified.

**Inferential/Interpretive Response – Reading “between the lines”****3. How does the information found in the map and in the graph help you to understand the situation in the rainforest?**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students interpret text features (i.e., the map and graph) and explain how they support the reader’s understanding of the selection.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The map shows the size of the Amazon rainforest. It is large. The graph is good to have to show how much humans have already affected it.
- The map shows that the Amazon Rainforest is a huge rainforest, and if we cut it down, it will have an enormous impact on wildlife and the environment. The graph helps me to understand how desperate humans are to get land for themselves.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students interpret, with overall accuracy and precision, text features (i.e., the map and graph) and explain, citing specific examples, how they support the reader’s understanding of the selection.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The map helps us understand where the Amazon rainforest is in the world and how far away from Canada it is. The graph helps understand how much rainforest has been cleared in 1970 and 2000 and how much more we cut down in 2000 as opposed to 1970. There was almost a 10% increase in rainforest cleared over a time span of 30 years.
- The graph shows us the increasing percentage of the cleared rainforest. In 1970, that percentage was about 4%, but over the next 30 years, it jumped to 14%! This shows how quickly the devastation is growing. The map shows where the rainforest is found. That region is quickly being cleared for people which is destroying the rainforest.



4. The author tells us that the loss of the rainforest will have serious consequences. Why should Canadians be concerned about this? Give at least 3 reasons.

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students interpret relationships among ideas to draw conclusions and provide support with at least three relevant details.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- Canadians should be concerned about loss of the rainforest because the Amazon absorbs a lot of carbon dioxide, which produces the “greenhouse effect”, the rainforest absorbs heat that the sun gives off, which, if it was cut down, would make it hotter all over the world, and 25% of medicines that treat cancer come from organisms in the rainforest.
- Canadians should be concerned because this rainforest has an impact on a lot of places. Without this forest, earth’s temperature would rise. Winters would be considerably warmer and summers much hotter and drier. This rainforest absorbs a lot of carbon dioxide \_ a harmful gas\_ and it produces lots of oxygen for us.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students interpret relationships among ideas to draw conclusions providing thoughtful/well-supported responses using at least three specific examples.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- Canadians should be concerned because all the trees in the rainforest provide oxygen, which is very important, and they also absorb carbon dioxide that creates the “greenhouse effect” which isn’t good for the environment. 25% of our cancer medications come from organisms that can only be found in the rainforest. Also, many species, including the jaguar, are now on the endangered species list and could become extinct.
- Canadians should be greatly concerned for several reasons. One of the benefits of the rainforest is that it absorbs carbon dioxide and produces oxygen so that the people of the world can live and breathe. The darkness of its foliage absorbs the Sun’s heat, keeping summers and winters within their correct temperature ranges. The article also states that out of the cancer medications for the world, about 25% of them are from species that rely on the resources of the Amazon rainforest.

**5. What do you think it means to “adopt” a piece of the rainforest?**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students use context clues and prior knowledge to provide obvious interpretations of the word “adopt”.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- When you adopt a part of a rainforest, you buy some land within the rainforest, and the land will be protected and not be cleared or destroyed in any way. It becomes a small reserve.
- I think that when you “adopt” a piece of the rainforest that you are responsible for keeping it clean and unpolluted. Perhaps if you “adopt” a piece of rainforest, it means people cannot go onto that piece and clear cut it or hunt endangered animals on it.
- It means to raise enough money to protect a piece of the Amazon. Companies would not be allowed to clear cut over that piece of land. I bet if enough people “adopted” a section of the Amazon, it would eventually be saved.

**Criteria for Response: Strong**

Students use context and prior knowledge to provide thoughtful interpretations of the word “adopt” with specific and relevant examples.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- I think it means to try and save some of the rainforest with the power you have to save it, such as donating money to a company or group that are working on saving the Amazon rainforest.
- I think to “adopt” a piece of the rainforest means that you raise money and it goes towards a conservation group and helps them try to save the Amazon rainforest.

**6. The writer tells us about a problem and makes some suggestions to solve the problem.****(a) What is the problem?**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students interpret relationships to summarize the ideas and articulate the problem.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The problem is that the Amazon Rainforest could be in danger due to human activities, and if humans are not careful, the rainforest could be gone forever.
- The problem that the writer has posed is that the Amazon rainforest is quickly disappearing and must be protected in order to save this precious ecosystem from extinction.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students interpret relationships to summarize the ideas and provide thoughtful inferences supported by specific and relevant examples to articulate the problem.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The problem is that clearing the rainforest has many damaging effects. Some of the effects are soil erosion, animal extinction, and there wouldn't be much cancer medication because 25 percent is found only in the rainforest.
- The problem that is being discussed is that the Amazon rainforest is being cut down to make way for other things like ranches and gold mines. These huge chunks of land are being cut down and being taken away from the wildlife which are now becoming extinct, or endangered.

**Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response – Reading “beyond the lines”**

**(b) Do you think that young people can make a difference and help solve this problem? Explain your answer.**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students make personal connections with social issues and provide reasonable suggestions in the response.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- I think that young people can make a difference in solving this problem, because if everyone does even a little bit to help, it will add up to a lot to help. There are many conservation groups who aim to help the rainforest, so joining one of them, or even donating to their cause, can be helpful. Even something as simple as recycling can make the world a better place.
- Yes, adolescents can help with this problem. As the article suggests, teens could adopt part of the rainforest, join a conservation group or learn what other people are doing. Closer to home, anybody could recycle old items and make a compost heap for a garden. Instead of buying items covered in plastic and wrappings, only buy things without much wrapping. Students could take a lunch bag instead of taking a paper bag to school every day. There are several ways to protect the rainforest. Every effort helps.

**Criteria for Response: Strong**

Students make personal connections with social issues and provide insightful suggestions in the response.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students' words and spelling)*

- To save the rainforest we could join a conservation group to learn more about it. We could “adopt” a piece of the rainforest. We could search for things we can do to help on the internet. I think that young people can certainly make a difference. Young people are usually keen to save the environment, and we can be very tech-savvy, making it easier to research the Amazon rainforest. If we, as young people, make a difference today, the benefits will continue for our children and grandchildren and for many generations to come.
- Yes I think that young people can help save the rainforest because every little bit helps. If young people started spreading the word and saving a little bit of time and money to send to people who are saving the rainforests the results would be astonishing. Things would really add up fast and the movement might inspire more people to do the same. That is why I believe that young people can help save the rainforest.

Read the story. Answer all the questions in your own words. Refer to the story when necessary, to reveal that you have a clear understanding of the ideas.

### Mrs. Buell

For years and years, for what seems like forever, I've gone to BUELLS when I had a dime to spare. It's a run-down, not very clean, corner store. Kids go there mostly, for licorice and bubble gum and jawbreakers and Popsicles and comic books and cones. She only has three flavours and the cones taste stale. Still, she'll sell you  
5 one scoop for fifteen cents. It's not a full scoop but it's cheaper than anywhere else. It's the only place I know where a kid can spend one penny.

Mrs. Buell is run-down too, and a grouch. She never smiles or asks how you are. Little kids are scared to go in there alone. We laugh at them but really, we understand. We felt it too, when we were smaller and had to face her towering behind the counter.

10 She was always the same except that once. I tripped going in, and fell and scraped my knee. It hurt so much that I couldn't move for a second. I was winded too, and I had to gasp for breath. I managed not to cry out but I couldn't keep back the tears.

15 Mrs. Buell is big but she moved like lightning. She hauled a battered wooden chair out from behind the curtain that hung across the back. Then, without a word, she picked me up and sat me down on it. We were alone in the store but I wasn't afraid. Her hands, scooping me up, had been work-roughened; hard but kind.

20 She still didn't speak. Instead, she took a bit of rag out of her sweater pocket, bent down and wiped the smear of blood off my knee. The rag looked grayish but her hands were gentle. I think she liked doing it. Then she fetched a Band-Aid and stuck it on.

"Does it still sting?" she asked, speaking at last, in a voice I'd never heard her use before.

25 I shook my head. And she smiled. At least I think she did. It only lasted a fraction of a second. And I wasn't looking straight at her.

At that moment Johnny Tresano came in with one nickel clutched in his fist. He was so intent on the candies he hardly noticed me. He stood and stood, trying to decide.

"Make up your mind or take yourself off," she growled.

**Text from *Hey World, Here I am!* by Jean Little is used by permission of Kids Can Press Ltd., Toronto. Text © 1986 Jean Little.**

30 She had gone back behind the counter. I waited for her to look at me again so that I could thank her. But when he left she turned her back and began moving things around on the shelves. I had meant to buy some jujubes but I lost my nerve. After all, everybody knew she hated kids. She was probably sorry now that she'd fixed my knee. I slunk out without once opening my mouth.

35 Yet, whenever I looked down and saw the Band-Aid, I felt guilty. As soon as one corner came loose, I pulled it off and threw it away. I didn't go near the store for weeks.

40 She was terribly fat. She got so hot in summer that her hair hung down in wet strings and her clothes looked limp. In winter she wore the same sweater every day, a man's gray one, too big, with the sleeves pushed up. They kept slipping down and she'd shove them back a million times a day. Yet she never rolled up the cuffs to make them shorter.

45 She never took days off. She was always there. We didn't like her or hate her. We sort of knew that selling stuff to kids for a trickle of small change wasn't a job anybody would choose - especially in that pokey little place with flies in summer and the door being opened all winter, letting in blasts of cold air. Even after that day when she fixed my knee, I didn't once wonder about her life.

50 Then I stopped at BUELLS one afternoon and she wasn't there. Instead, a man and woman I'd never laid eyes on were behind the counter sorting through stacks of stuff. They were getting some boxes down off a high shelf right then so they didn't hear me come in. I was so amazed I just stood there gawking.

"How Ma stood this cruddy hole I'll never know!" the woman said, backing away from a cloud of dust. "Didn't she ever clean?"

"Give the subject a rest, Glo," he answered. "She's dead. She won't bother you any longer."

55 "I tried, Harry. You know I tried. Over and over, I told her she could move in with us. God knows I could have used a bit of cash and her help looking after those kids."

I think I must have made a sound then. Anyway, she whirled around and saw me.

60 "This place is closed," she snapped. "Harry, I thought I told you to lock the door. What did you want?"

**Text from *Hey World, Here I am!* by Jean Little is used by permission of Kids Can Press Ltd., Toronto. Text © 1986 Jean Little.**

I didn't want anything from her. But I still could not believe Mrs. Buell wasn't there. I stared around.

"I said we're shut. If you don't want anything, beat it," she told me.

65 The minute I got home I phoned Emily. She said her mother had just read it in the paper.

"She had a daughter!" Emily said, her voice echoing my own sense of shock. "She died of a heart attack. Kate, her whole name was Katharine Ann Buell."

70 "Katharine," I said slowly. My name is really Katharine although only Dad calls me by it. "I can't believe it somehow."

"No," Emily said. "She was always just Mrs. Buell."

75 I told her about Glo and Harry. After we hung up though, I tried to imagine Mrs. Buell as a child. Instead, I saw her bending down putting that Band-Aid on my knee. Her hair had been thin on top, I remembered, and she'd had dandruff. She had tried not to hurt me. Glo's voice, talking about her, had been so cold. Had she had anyone who loved her? It seemed unlikely. Why hadn't I smiled back?

80 But, to be honest, something else bothered me even more. Her going had left a hole in my life. Because of it I knew, for the first time, that nothing was safe - not even the everyday, taken-for-granted, background of my being. Like Mrs. Buell, pushing up her sweater sleeves and giving me my change.

*Jean Little*

**Text from *Hey World, Here I am!* by Jean Little is used by permission of Kids Can Press Ltd., Toronto. Text © 1986 Jean Little.**

**Literal Response – Reading “the lines”****1. What is the price for one scoop of ice cream at BUELLS?**

(This question generates one level of response.)

**Criteria for Response**

Students respond accurately to the literal question, giving the price of a scoop of ice cream, as specifically stated in the story.

*Student Exemplars (In students' words and spelling)*

- It was 15¢ a scoop of ice cream.
- The price of one scoop is 15 ¢ (line 5).

**2. Line 7 says that Mrs. Buell is “run-down” and “never smiles”. What other clue leads you to believe that Mrs. Buell is “run-down”?**

(This question generates one level of response.)

**Criteria for Response**

Students identify key information about the character.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students' words and spelling)*

- Another clue is “her hair hung down in wet strings and her clothes looked limp” (lines 34-35) so I think she looked kind of run-down.
- Mrs. Buell “wore the same sweater every day” and it was too big so she must have been too run-down to care what she wore.
- Mrs. Buell would have to be run-down because it says “she never took days off and she was always there.”

**Inferential/Interpretive Response – Reading “between the lines”****3. Why is the narrator feeling guilty in line 32?**

(This question generates one level of response.)

**Criteria for Response**

Students make logical inferences about the characters feelings referring to relevant textual details.



*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- The narrator is guilty because she never said thank you to Mrs. Buell (lines 27-31).
- The narrator feels bad because Mrs. Buell was really kind to her when she hurt her knee but she didn’t smile back at Mrs. Buell (lines 69-72).
- The narrator realizes maybe Mrs. Buell helped her because they had the same name. Now she feels guilty because she wasn’t nice back to her.

#### 4. Explain how Mrs. Buell and her daughter are different.

(This question generates two levels of response.)

##### **Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students interpret relationships among ideas, recognizing an inferred difference between Mrs. Buell and her daughter.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- Mr Buell was caring but Glo wasn’t.
- Mrs. Buell didn’t clean her store but the daughter would have kept it cleaner.
- Mrs. Buell had no one to love her but her daughter had Harry.

##### **Criteria for Strong Response**

Students interpret relationships among ideas, recognizing an inferred difference between Mrs. Buell and her daughter, and supporting the response with a specific textual reference.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- Mrs. Buell was caring but she didn’t show it (lines 26-31). Glo was not caring and she showed it (lines 56-60).
- As her daughter says “How ma stood this cruddy hole I’ll never know!” showing the reader her daughter would’ve kept the store much neater than her mother did, if she’d keep it at all.
- Mrs. Buell was alone (lines 71-72) but her daughter wasn’t. (“Over and over, I told her she could move in with us.”)

**5. Explain the expression “nothing was safe” as found in the last paragraph.**

(This question generates two levels of response.)

**Criteria for Appropriate Response**

Students use context clues/prior knowledge to interpret subtle shades of meaning and provide a picture of Kate’s future following the death of Mrs. Buell.

*Student Exemplars (Appropriate – In students’ words and spelling)*

- It means Kate’s world would change now without Mrs. Buell around.
- Kate is worried that everything will change now without BUELLS on the corner.
- Kate thinks nothing will be the same now without Mrs. Buell and her store so the author said “nothing was safe”.

**Criteria for Strong Response**

Students provide thoughtful inferences supported by specific and relevant examples as they explain both the significance of Mrs. Buell’s absence, after being such a routine part of Kate’s life, and its impact on Kate’s future.

*Student Exemplars (Strong – In students’ words and spelling)*

- I think the author is saying that “nothing was safe” because now Mrs. Buell is not there anymore, and it felt not real, as if it was all a dream. Kate couldn’t believe she was really gone and all that was left was short, simple memories so there was a big hole in her life.
- The author says “nothing was safe” because Kate knows now that she will miss Mrs. Buell and her store. Even her feelings weren’t safe because now she realizes that she liked Mrs. Buell and Mrs. Buell must have liked kids to sell candy in her store cheaper than anywhere else.

**Writing Achievement Standards**

**End of Grade Eight**

**Writing Achievement Standards  
Appropriate and Strong**

**Student Writing Exemplars with Rationales**



## Writing Achievement Standards



### Writing Strategies and Behaviours End of Grade 8

Students:

- select and develop a topic; demonstrate awareness of audience and competence crafting a variety of text forms (including hybrids)
- write with purpose and understand the influence of the writer
- gather ideas from a variety of sources and use a framework (e.g. web, graphic organizer) to sort and classify the information/ideas, recognize different perspectives, and make new connections; apply knowledge of copyright/plagiarism
- draft a piece of writing making critical choices about ideas/content based on the purpose and intended audience
- independently re-read to add to, delete from, or reorganize the text to clarify and strengthen content
- request, obtain, and make decisions about, constructive criticism
- refine writing to enhance impact
- select linguistic (e.g., analogy, colloquialism, figurative language, flattery) and print devices (e.g., print size, font, page design) designed to influence audience
- reread writing aloud for fluency; make changes to sentence structures and word choices to provide variety
- use appropriate tools (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, grammar checker, and text models) to edit conventions, and strengthen word choice
- use a variety of publishing formats (e.g., books, pamphlets, posters, web sites) with appropriate text and text features
- use specific devices to achieve purpose (instruct, persuade, entertain)
- explain form choice as it pertains to purpose and intended audience

Students demonstrating **strong achievement** consistently apply the strategies and behaviours listed above. They take more risks and attempt techniques observed during independent reading.

## Traits of Writing

### Appropriate Achievement

<b>Content</b> overall topic, degree of focus, and related details	<b>Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• select a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience</li><li>• include thoughtful ideas/events relevant to the topic</li><li>• include relevant/well-researched details to enhance the ideas</li></ul>
<b>Organization</b> structure and form, dependent on purpose and audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• select an appropriate form and clearly establish the purpose in the introduction</li><li>• use an underlying structure to present information (e.g., temporal sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast)</li><li>• use transitions between and within paragraphs to show sequencing and connections</li><li>• provide an adequate conclusion</li></ul> <p>See <b>Text Forms</b> for elements of narrative and information texts.</p>
<b>Word Choice</b> vocabulary, language, and phrasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• include interesting words and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning (strong nouns and verbs, colourful adjectives and adverbs)</li><li>• use figurative language (e.g., metaphor, analogy, symbolism)</li></ul>
<b>Voice</b> evidence of author's style, personality, and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• skilfully connect the audience to the topic</li><li>• show care and commitment to the topic</li><li>• generate strong feeling, energy, and individuality</li></ul>
<b>Sentence Structure</b> variety and complexity of sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• include different kinds of sentences, with a variety of complex structures</li><li>• include a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity</li></ul>
<b>Conventions</b> spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• include internal punctuation (e.g., commas, semi-colons, colons, dash, hyphen, parentheses, apostrophes) and paragraphing of dialogue</li><li>• correctly spell almost all words; use spelling support (e.g., dictionary, spell checker); correctly use homophones</li><li>• use standard grammatical structures (subject/verb agreement, verb tense, all parts of speech, numbers, contractions, plurals)</li><li>• use a range of print characteristics and layout to enhance the meaning (e.g., headings, visuals, white space, italics, bold, font size, and style)</li></ul>

## Traits of Writing

### Strong Achievement

### Conference Prompts

Students

- introduce a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purpose and engages the audience
- include original and thoughtful ideas
- support the strong main idea with relevant details and examples

*What specific details do you think would enhance this part for your audience?*

*Do you need to do more research/ further explore?*

*What can be accomplished through this piece of writing?*

- begin with an engaging lead that establishes the purpose and form
- vary the organizational structures to enhance interest (e.g., hybrids, flashback, story within a story)
- use a variety of ways to focus the topic (e.g., time structures, theme)
- provide an effective/creative conclusion

*What did you do to help you organize your writing before you began?*

*How did you get your reader's attention?*

*Does your ending pull your ideas together?*

*Here's where I got confused \_\_\_\_\_*

*How can you show that this part connects to the part you wrote here?*

See **Text Forms** for elements of narrative and information texts.

*What text features or illustrations could be used to make this part clearer to the reader?*

- effectively include vivid descriptive vocabulary/ precise technical words (strong nouns and verbs, colourful modifiers)
- use figurative language effectively

*Find a place in your writing where you wrote so the reader could visualize.*

*What did you do to make that part work so well?*

*Show me the thesaurus words that you used to replace some of your ordinary words?*

*What are some words we've been learning in (subject area) that would help you tell about this topic?*

- skilfully connect with the audience by sharing thoughts, feelings, inner conflict, and convictions
- demonstrate a strong commitment to the topic
- develop ideas in a unique or unusual way, revealing the writer's perspective

*Where did you really try to make the reader agree with you? What devices did you use?*

*Will your reader be able to tell that you know a lot about \_\_\_\_\_?*

*This part made me feel \_\_\_\_\_.*

- use a striking variety of complex sentence structures and types
- connect ideas with smooth transitions to add flair

*What is the strongest sentence in your piece and what makes it strong?*

*How can we make this sentence \_\_\_\_\_ (longer, shorter, etc.)*

*Reread this part and see if it is easy to read aloud.*

- Use conventions skilfully to enhance meaning and voice
- make informed decisions about text layout and print characteristics to enhance meaning (e.g. headings, visuals, white space, italics, bold, font size, and style)

*Let's look at the spell and grammar checker suggestions.*

*Did you use a mentor text to help you with text layout?*

### General Conference Prompts

*What did you decide to revise after you shared your draft with a peer?*

*On what would you like to work to improve in your next piece?*

*What is the best way to publish this writing?*

*What form of writing would you like to work on next? What are you reading right now that could be a mentor text for your writing?*

## Text Forms

The following describe the specific elements of common text forms explored in grade six, seven, and eight. Refer to the Organization Trait to distinguish between appropriate and strong achievement.

### Form: Persuasive

**Purpose:** to discuss and/or debate ideas developing an argument to convince the reader to agree with the writer's premise

**Opening Statement:** provides an overview of the topic and states the writer's position (e.g. *Racial slurs are damaging and should not be permitted.*)

**Arguments and Reasons:** provides three or more arguments or assertions that have supporting statements (*I believe...because...*) drawn from facts or personal experience; begins to identify other points of view and counter-arguments

**Conclusion:** includes a statement to reinforce or summarize position

#### Special Features

- persuasive devices (quotes from experts, examples, anecdotes, flattery, authorial intrusion, irony, wit, humour)
- linking words/phrases (*because, however, also*)
- present tense
- first person singular or plural (*I, we*)
- persuasive adjectives/adverbs (*most, must, strongly*)
- technical terms which are often verbs changed into nouns (e.g. *new comers* becomes *immigrants*)

### Form : Explanatory Report

**Purpose:** to tell how/why something came to be or to explain how something works

**Statement or definition:** identifies topic with a statement, question or definition

**Explanation or how or why:** to analyze a process (movements in the earth's crust) showing the relationship among the parts including cause and effect connections

**Summary:** can state unusual features of the phenomenon and/or reiterate the main points

#### Special Features

- may include a title, illustrations or diagrams
- connecting words to signal cause-effect (if, because, then) and/or sequence (next, then, when)
- present tense with some passive verbs (e.g. *are folding/faulting*)
- technical, subject-specific vocabulary

### Form: Memoire

**Purpose:** to capture a defining personal memory

**Orientation:** begins with a purposeful lead, identifies the personal event and may give the reason for selecting the topic

**Key Events:** has key events in logical order (e.g. single day, flashback) with sufficient relevant details including the subjects feelings revealed through describing actions or using quotes

**Conclusion:** communicate the larger meaning or reason for the writing

#### Special Features

- literary language (powerful nouns and verbs, figurative language)
- linking words and phrases (*later that afternoon, as I walked out*)
- past tense

### Form: Biography and Autobiography

**Purpose:** to give a true or fictionalized account of a person's life

**Orientation:** identifies the subject, the important events in the subject's life, and the reason for the selections

**Events:** important events are described in a logical order (e.g., chronological, categories); provides reasons for omitting significant parts of the subject's life (e.g., only focusing on the childhood or adult years)

**Conclusion:** includes a personal response, evaluative statement, or a comment on the significance of the subject

#### Special Features

- subjects feelings may be revealed in quotes
- supplemental texts (e.g., interviews, awards, newspaper clippings, foreword, afterword)
- dialogue

### Form: Hybrid Texts (multigenre texts)

As writers become familiar with certain writing forms and as they read mentor texts that mix two or more genres, they begin to produce hybrid texts to communicate information in different ways (e.g. procedures and explanation, narrative and letters). The different forms to be combined are chosen with a clear purpose and integrated into one harmonious text that communicates a message.

### Form: Descriptive Report

**Purpose:** to describe a topic

**Introduction:** introduces a manageable topic with a definition or a classification (*Three types of soil are*)

**Description of Topic:** includes factual details, from a variety of sources (books, photographs, websites), to support sub-topics (e.g., attributes, weather systems) sequenced in a specific way

**Conclusion:** summarizes, or restates, key ideas; may include an impersonal evaluative comment

#### Special Features

- includes a title, headings, illustrations, maps, or photographs with labels or captions
- connecting words and phrases (*also, many other, has a variety of*)
- present tense
- language to show comparisons/contrasts (*as hard as*), definitions (*are called*), classification (*belong to*)

### Form: Instructions/Procedures

**Purpose:** to tell how to do something

**Goal or aim:** identifies topic by title or opening statement(s)

**Materials/ingredients:** lists materials

**Method/process** – includes key steps in correct order with adequate details focusing on how/when

**Conclusion or Evaluation:** includes a closing statement or an evaluation which may be a photograph or drawing of the completed item

#### Special Features

- may include headings, illustrations, diagrams or labels
- numbered-steps or words showing sequence (*first, next, then*)
- point form or full sentences starting with sequence words or verbs
- present tense often written as commands
- technical language- verbs, adverbs and adjectives (e.g., *whip the cooled creme vigorously*)

### Form: Narrative (short story)

**Purpose:** to entertain with an imaginative experience

**Orientation (time, place and characters):** attempts to establish an emotional response through the development of character, setting, and plot and setting the mood or tone (e.g. humor, personalization, sarcasm)

**Events:** involve the main character development, including insights into their actions and feelings, and building the tension that leads to the climax

**Resolution:** the complication is generally resolved and the loose ends are tied up

#### Special Features

use of literary devices to create imagery (metaphor, personification, idiom, hyperbole)

- connecting words related to time (later on, after that, )
- action verbs and verbs related to character's thoughts and feelings
- include dialogue (with change in tense from past to present)
- pronouns refer to specific characters

### Form: Poetry

**Purpose:** to entertain, communicate deep meaning or create a new perspective on a subject

**Organization:** a variety of forms with specific structures (e.g. ballad, Haiku, Cinquain, sonnet, diamantes) as well as free verse which has no set structure or conventions

#### Special Features

- title communicates the meaning of the poem
- lines of text usually short and concise
- words evoke strong images, moods, and/or emotions
- poetic devices (e.g., repetition, refrain, rhyme, rhythm, sensory images)
- literary devices are used (e.g. alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, symbolism, personification, rhetorical question)
- the line breaks and white space on the page can have meaning

**Important Note: In all forms of writing, where appropriate, all research references are cited.**



## **Student Writing Exemplars with Rationales**

### **Grade 8**

**Writing exemplars are listed by title or by the first line of the writing piece. The pieces written to a prompt are indicated above the title.**

END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE I

poem titled "*It's Over*"

1	"It's Over"
2	"Take a breath." he said
3	She pulled herself together
4	There is a suitcase packed at the foot of the bed
5	"We'll find a way to make this right."
6	She doesn't want to go,
7	But she can't take another fight
8	"You always say that," she told him,
9	With tears rolling down her face,
10	She goes to grab the suitcase,
11	He tries to hold her back,
12	She closes her eyes and thinks to herself,
13	When will this be over?
14	She lets go and heads for the door,
15	He can't take it anymore
16	"This is heading in the wrong direction!"
17	"At least the hurt is some connection."
18	He never saw her again after that day,
19	He only wishes she would have stayed.
20	But now its too late to make it right
21	If only they wouldn't of had that fight.

**The writing sample poem titled “*It’s Over*”**

**Content/Ideas**

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience *being to explore feelings of a relationship ending*  
line(s) 18 “He never saw her again after that day,”  
line(s) 11 “She lets go and heads for the door,”
- includes straightforward and predictable ideas  
line(s) 13 “When will this be over?”  
line(s) 15 “He can’t take it anymore.”
- supports the ideas with relevant details  
line(s) 9 “With tears rolling down her face,”  
line(s) 4 “There is a suitcase packed at the foot of the bed”

**Organization**

- gives an introduction to establish the purpose and selects an appropriate form  
*title “It’s Over”*
- uses transitions within the stanza to show sequencing and connections  
line(s) 20 “But now its too late...”  
line(s) 6-7 “She doesn’t want to go, But she can’t take another fight”
- provides an adequate conclusion  
line(s) 20-21 reflecting on the event

**Word Choice**

- includes interesting words to enhance meaning  
line(s) 16-17 “wrong direction- some connection”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 3 “She pulled herself together”  
line(s) 14 ...”heads for the door”

**The writing sample poem titled “It’s Over”**

**Voice**

- includes glimpses of personal feeling, energy and individuality  
line(s) 13 “...I realized that things positively had to change”

**Sentence Structure**

- includes different kinds of sentences, with a variety of complex structures effectively begins as free verse with last eight lines as couplets
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity introducing the rhyming at the climax of the tension-when the girl decides to leave.

**Conventions**

*The student demonstrates skill in the conventions of good writing, with occasional errors.*

- includes internal punctuation (commas/quotation marks/apostrophes) and paragraphing of dialogue  
line(s) 2, 5, 8, 16, 17 line separations for dialogue
- spells almost all words correctly  
line(s) 20 “its” incorrect contraction
- uses standard grammatical structures  
line(s) 21 incorrect but colloquial use of “of” instead of “have”

END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE II

Strong Achievement

Page 1 of 2

Prompt provided.

*“To my most treasured friends,”*

1 To my most treasured friends,  
2 On December 4<sup>th</sup>, as you know, I will turn 15.  
3 In honour of this important day, I have been  
4 planning a spectacular party. You, my best friends,  
5 are all invited.  
6 The party will have an outer-space theme. It  
7 will feature a clown that juggles plastic  
8 UFO's, a cake shaped like a space shuttle,  
9 a demonstration from a man pretending  
10 to be a Jedi Master, and a game of  
11 musical craters. It's going to be a blast!  
12 On the 4<sup>th</sup> of December, all six  
13 of you will meet by the football field.  
14 As a group you will advance to my  
15 house.  
16 To get to my house you must first  
17 descend Main Street for 5 blocks, then  
18 turn right on Melba Street. Continue down  
19 Melba street past the ESSO station until you  
20 reach the University. Turn left down  
21 University Avenue and you will see my  
22 house on the corner of University and

Prompt provided.

*“To my most treasured friends,”*

23 Alexandra Street. It is a large, black house  
24 with white shutters.

25 Upon your arrival at my house you will  
26 be greeted by my mother. She will help  
27 you fabricate your party hats. Once you have  
28 finished your hats, I will descend the stairs. I  
29 will be dressed as an astronaut. We will play  
30 musical craters and I will open my presents.  
31 At that point the juggler and the jedi will  
32 arrive. When they have performed their tricks  
33 we will all devour the cake together.

34 I simply cannot wait until the 4<sup>th</sup>! It will  
35 be such fun! I hope all of you can make  
36 it. Please RSVP to this number: 561 - 2113. I'll  
37 see you all then!

38 P.S. If you want you can dress up like  
39 your favourite Star Wars character!

This writing sample begins with *“To my most treasured friends,”*.

### Content/Ideas

- introduces a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purpose and engages the audience  
line(s) 2 “On December 4th, as you know, I will turn 15.”  
line(s) 3-4 “In honour of this important day, I have been planning a spectacular party.”
- includes original and thoughtful ideas  
line(s) 8 “a cake shaped like a space shuttle”  
line(s) 11 “It’s going to be a blast!”
- includes a strong main idea that is well supported with details and examples  
line(s) 2-4 “On December 4th,...15. In honour of this important day, I have been planning a spectacular party.”  
line(s) 6 “The party will have an outer-space theme.”

### Organization

- begins with a purposeful lead that engages the audience  
line(s) 4-5 “You, my best friends, are all invited.”
- controls the sequence of ideas  
line(s) 25-26 “Upon your arrival at my house you will be greeted by my mother.”  
line(s) 31-32 “At that point the juggler and the jedi will arrive.”
- varies the organizational structure to enhance interest  
line(s) 12-13 “On the 4th of December, all six of you will meet by the football field.”  
line(s) 16-18 “To get to my house you must...Melba Street.”  
This text is a hybrid combining invitation, description, and instructions.
- provides an effective/creative ending  
line(s) 38-39 “P.S. If you want you can dress up like your favourite Star Wars character!”

### Word Choice

- effectively provides vivid descriptive vocabulary/precise/technical words  
line(s) 26-27 “She will help you fabricate your party hats.”  
line(s) 29-30 “We will play musical craters and I will open my presents.”  
line(s) 28 “I will descend the stairs.”

This writing sample begins with *“To my most treasured friends,”*.

### Voice

- skillfully connects with the audience  
line(s) 1 “To my most treasured friends,”  
line(s) 34-35 “It will be such fun!”
- demonstrates strong commitment to the topic  
line(s) 3-4 “In honour of this important day, I have been planning a spectacular party.”  
line(s) 6 “The party will have an outer-space theme.”  
line(s) 11 “It’s going to be a blast!”

### Sentence Structure

- uses a striking variety of sentence structures, logically connecting ideas with smooth transitions to add flair  
line(s) 6-11 “It will feature a clown that juggles plastic UFO’s, a cake shaped like a space shuttle, a demonstration...musical craters.”
- is a smooth and natural easy-to-read piece of writing  
line(s) 23-24 “It is a large, black house with white shutters.”  
line(s) 28-29 “I will be dressed as an astronaut.”

### Conventions

- uses effective sentences that maintain precise punctuation  
line(s) 1, 3-4, 11, 18-20, 36-37
- uses correct internal punctuation (dash, ellipsis, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, etc.)  
line(s) 2, 6, 27-28, 36, 38-39
- enhances message and creates interest with dialogue  
The writer uses third-person to speak to the audience.  
line(s) 18-20, 38-39
- uses correct grammatical structures (parentheses, parallelism, interjections)  
line(s) 1, 4-5, 12-13, 13-14, 29-30, 34-35
- includes informed decisions about text layout when publishing  
line(s) 38 “P.S.....”



Prompt provided.

*"A great person once said..."*

1     Keep Your Eyes on the Sun.

2     A great person once said, "Keep your eyes on  
3     the sun and you won't see the shadows." To do  
4     this you must set goals for the future, focus on  
5     the good in life, and never give up.

6     Set goals for yourself in life. After you set  
7     your goals strive to achieve them, make a plan for  
8     your life. Setting goals for your life will help you in  
9     the future, like after you graduate and are looking  
10    for a college or university. You accomplish more  
11    in life when you have goals in which you have  
12    set.

13    Focus on the good things in life. Do not let  
14    the bad or negative things interfere with what you are  
15    doing. Remember, bad things happen to both good and bad  
16    people. So when bad things happen do not dwell on  
17    them, look for the positive in the situation. Be a  
18    positive thinker!

19    Another great person once said, "If at first  
20    you don't succeed, try, try again." So in other words,  
21    never give up. Life isn't always going to be  
22    easy. So when bad things happen, "focus on

*"A great person once said..."*

23 the sun" or look at the good things, or your  
24 plans and try again.  
25 A great person once said, "Keep your  
26 eyes on the sun and you won't see the  
27 shadows." In life you should set goals, focus  
28 on the good and never give up. If you  
29 apply these things to your life you will  
30 make it further in life.

The writing sample titled *“Keep Your Eyes on the Sun.”* begins with *“A great person once said, ‘Keep your...sun...won’t see...shadows.’ ”*

### Content/Ideas

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience *using the metaphor provided*  
line(s) 3-5 “To do this you must set goals for the future, focus on...never give up.”
- includes ideas relevant to the topic  
line(s) 2-3 “A great person once said, ‘Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the shadows.’ ”
- includes relevant/well-researched details to enhance the ideas  
line(s) 6 “Set goals for yourself in life.”  
line(s) 13 “Focus on the good things in life.”  
line(s) 20-21 “So in other words, never give up.”

### Organization

- gives a thoughtful introduction, establishing purpose  
line(s) 3-5 “To do this you must...and never give up.”
- uses transitions between and within paragraphs to show sequencing and connections  
line(s) 15 “Remember, bad things”  
line(s) 22 “So when bad things happen”
- has clearly developed paragraphs  
line(s) 2-5 Paragraph # 1 – Introduction  
line(s) 6-12 Paragraph # 2 – Set goals  
line(s) 13-18 Paragraph # 3 – Focus on good  
line(s) 19-24 Paragraph # 4 – Try again  
line(s) 25-30 Paragraph # 5 – Conclusion
- provides an adequate conclusion  
line(s) 28-30 “If you apply these things to your life you will make it further in life.”

### Word Choice

- uses interesting words and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning  
line(s) 7 “strive to achieve them”  
line(s) 14 “negative things interfere”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 16 “things happen...do not dwell on them,”

The writing sample titled *“Keep Your Eyes on the Sun.”* begins with *“A great person once said, ‘Keep your...sun...won’t see...shadows.’ ”*

### Voice

- skillfully connects the audience to the subject  
line(s) 15-16 “Remember, bad things happen to both good and bad people.”  
line(s) 21-22 “Life isn’t always going to be easy.”
- generates strong feeling, energy, and individuality  
line(s) 6-8 “After you set your goals...plan for your life.”  
line(s) 17-18 “Be a positive thinker!”

### Sentence Structure

- includes different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures  
line(s) 6 “Set goals for yourself in life.”  
line(s) 7 “After you set your goals strive to...”
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity  
line(s) 10-12 “You accomplish more...set.”

### Conventions

*The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.*

- makes use of internal punctuation (apostrophe, dash, comma, etc.) to create fluency in the writing  
line(s) 3-5, 15-16, 22-24
- spells almost all words correctly  
line(s) 19 “r” missing in “Anothe”
- uses correct grammatical structures (numbers, contractions, plurals, all parts of speech, verb tense, subject/verb agreement,)  
line(s) 13, 19-20, 21-22, 26

Prompt provided.

**“Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the shadows’...different ways.”**

1 The quote, “Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the  
2 shadows” can be interpreted in many different ways. It could mean to  
3 focus on your goals in life, or it could mean to ignore minor setbacks and  
4 to concentrate on the big picture. However, in my personal opinion, I believe it  
5 means to be optimistic.

6 Although this interpretation is rather obvious, I believe it has a  
7 strong message. Many people say to stay positive, but when the going gets  
8 tough it’s incredibly hard to do so. At times of depression and peril, we  
9 tend to wallow in our own self-pity, forgetting that a new day will come and that  
10 we have to continue living our lives. To be optimistic is to look past all the sadness  
11 and to be strong and carry on with our lives. However, this is just one of many  
12 different interpretations.

13 The quote could also depict how, in a bad situation, there is always  
14 something good that comes out of it. Whether you made a mistake, or you’re just  
15 having a lot of bad luck, if you have a positive attitude, you can almost always  
16 see the silver lining on the cloud. In almost any situation, there is something good  
17 that comes with it; it just takes an optimistic outlook on life to see it. As  
18 my father says, “What doesn’t kill you, makes you stronger.”

19 In fact, this interpretation reminds me of my own outlook on life.  
20 I believe that everything happens for a reason, whether it be good or bad.  
21 We make millions of decisions everyday, and every, single one has an effect on  
22 our lives. One bad decision may cause a lot of heartache, but it also enables

***“Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the shadows’...different ways.”***

23 us to learn and grow from our mistakes. For example, this year I hurt my knee  
24 just before our last, and most important, soccer game. I couldn't play the game,  
25 which hurt a lot more than my knee, but the experience wasn't all bad. I learned  
26 that sports aren't everything, and as a "jock" I had a hard time understanding  
27 that. In the end though, I learned a valuable lesson.

28 "Keep your eyes on the sun and you won't see the shadows" is a  
29 strong and inspirational quote. It may mean many different things for  
30 many different people, however, for me it means to be optimistic. It means  
31 that some good can always come from some bad luck, and that you need  
32 to find the strength within yourself to see it.

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE IV

This writing sample begins with *“The quote, ‘Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the shadows’...different ways.”*

### Content/Ideas

- introduces a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purpose and engages the audience *in determining the meaning of the quote*  
line(s) 4-5 “...in my personal opinion, I believe it means to be optimistic.”
- includes original and thoughtful ideas  
line(s) 7-8 “Stay positive”  
line(s) 16 “see the silver lining”
- supports the strong main idea with relevant details and examples  
line(s) 3 “focus on your goals in life,...ignore minor set backs”  
line(s) 4 “to concentrate on the big picture.”  
line(s) 5 “means to be optimistic.”

### Organization

- begins with an engaging lead that indicates purpose  
line(s) 1-2 “The quote, ‘Keep your eyes...shadows’ can be interpreted in many different ways.”  
line(s) 30-32 “It means that some good...to see it.”
- connects sentences and ideas through smooth transitions  
line(s) 6 “Although this interpretation”  
line(s) 13 “This quote could also depict”  
line(s) 19 “In fact, this interpretation reminds me of”
- develops sentences and ideas into cohesive paragraphs  
line(s) 7 “strong message”  
line(s) 17 “optimistic outlook on life to see it.”
- provides an effective/creative conclusion  
line(s) 27 “In the end though, I learned a valuable lesson.”  
line(s) 30-32 “It means that some good can always come...find the strength...to see it.”

### Word Choice

- effectively provides vivid vocabulary/precise technical words  
line(s) 8 “depression and peril”  
line(s) 29 “strong and inspirational quote”  
line(3) 30 “means to be optimistic”

This writing sample begins with *“The quote, ‘Keep your eyes on the sun and you won’t see the shadows’...different ways.”*

**Voice**

- skillfully connects with the audience by sharing feelings, inner conflict, and convictions through inner dialogue  
line(s) 4 “my personal opinion”  
line(s) 6 “I believe”  
line(s) 27 “I learned a valuable lesson.”
- demonstrates strong commitment to the topic  
line(s) 8 “it’s incredibly hard to do”  
line(s) 11 “to be strong and carry on”

**Sentence Structure**

- uses a striking variety of complex sentence structures and types  
line(s) 6-7 “Although this interpretation is rather obvious, I believe it has a strong message.”  
line(s) 14-16 “Whether you made a mistake,...see the silver lining on the cloud.”
- connects ideas with smooth transitions to add flair  
Throughout this piece of writing, the writer presents a fluid and compelling message.  
line(s) 13-14 “The quote could also depict how, in a bad situation, there is always something good that comes out of it.”  
line(s) 19 “In fact, this interpretation reminds me of my own outlook on life.”  
line(s) 29-30 “It may mean many different things for many different people, however, for me it means to be optimistic.”

**Conventions**

- uses effective sentences that maintain precise punctuation  
line(s) 6-7, 11-12, 14-16, 28-29
- uses correct internal punctuation (dash, ellipsis, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, etc.)  
line(s) 1-2, 2-4, 6-7, 8-10, 17-18, 20, 23-24, 30-32
- uses correct grammatical structures (parentheses, parallelism, interjections)  
line(s) 6-7, 19, 20-23
- makes informed decisions about text layout when publishing  
line(s) 16, 18, 26, including other quotes that are similar to the prompt



Prompt provided.

*"We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving."*

## Drinking and Driving

1 We all have lost someone very close to us from  
2 drinking and driving. It's a very stupid mistake  
3 to go behind the wheel while your intoxicated, and  
4 it only takes that one time to make the biggest  
5 mistake of your life.

6 When someone dies from drinking and driving it  
7 hurts the family and friends. It hurts the whole  
8 community. I never got to see my grandparents  
9 because they were killed by a drunk driver.

10 There was a boy on our reserve that made  
11 the biggest mistake one night. If only he was in  
12 the right state of mind he could of still been  
13 here with us today. He got into a vehicle of a  
14 drunk driver and before they knew it they  
15 were mangled to a telephone post. The girl  
16 is still alive today but suffers from brain damage  
17 which causes her not to be the same as she  
18 was before the accident. But the boy died  
19 instantly. He was only 16 years old. He left be-  
20 hind a big family, 4 brothers and one sister, also  
21 alot of hurting friends. I still remember that  
22 day, everyone looked depressed. It hurted the

*"We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving."*

23 whole community.  
24 Yet people still dare to hold danger into  
25 there own hands. When will they learn that it  
26 is NOT OK to drink under the influence. I have  
27 a cousin that drinks all the time which means  
28 he does alot of drinking and driving. I kept  
29 telling him not to drive while he is drunk. I  
30 also told him, "When are you going to stop, when  
31 you kill someone?" but he didn't listen to me.  
32 And just a few weeks ago he was with a friend  
33 and they were both intoxicated. He lost con-  
34 troll of the wheel and hit a telephone post.  
35 The driver walked away with only cuts and  
36 bruises but the passenger is now deaf for the  
37 rest of his life.  
38 So think about it.... is it worth it?  
39

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE V

The writing sample titled “*Drinking and Driving*” begins with “*We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving.*”

### Content/Ideas

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that shows awareness of purpose and audience  
*on the consequences of driving while intoxicated*  
line(s) 1-2 “We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving.”
- includes thoughtful ideas/events  
line(s) 2-5 “It’s a very stupid mistake to go behind the wheel while your intoxicated,…”  
line(s) 6-7 “When someone dies from drinking and driving…friends.”  
line(s) 10-11 “There was a boy on our reserve that made the biggest mistake one night.”
- Includes relevant/well-researched details to enhance the  
line(s) 8-9 “I never got to see my grandparents because they were killed by a drunk driver.”  
line(s) 18-19 “But the boy died instantly.”

### Organization

- gives a thoughtful introduction, establishing purpose  
line(s) 1-2 “We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving.”
- uses transitions between and within paragraphs to show sequencing and connections  
line(s) 11-13 “If only he was…with us today.”  
line(s) 24-25 “Yet some people still…there own hands.”  
line(s) 32-33 “And just a few weeks ago…”
- has clearly developed paragraphs  
line(s) 1-2 “We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving.”  
line(s) 10-11 “There was a boy on our reserve that made the biggest mistake one night.”  
line(s) 24-25 “Yet people still dare to hold danger into there own hands.”
- provides an adequate conclusion  
line(s) 38 “So think about it…is it worth it?”

### Word Choice

- uses interesting and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning  
line(s) 13 “vehicle”  
line(s) 24-25 “hold danger into there own hands”  
line(s) 26 “under the influence.”  
line(s) 35-36 “The driver walked away…but the passenger…”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 38 rhetorical question

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE V

The writing sample titled “*Drinking and Driving*” begins with “*We all have lost someone very close to us from drinking and driving.*”

### Voice

- skillfully connects the audience to the subject  
line(s) 8-9 “I never got to see my grandparents...killed by a drunk driver.”  
line(s) 26-27 “I have a cousin that drinks all the time”
- provides evidence of strong feeling, energy, and individuality throughout  
line(s) 21-22 “I still remember that day”  
line(s) 28-29 “I kept telling him not to drive”

### Sentence Structure

- includes different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures  
line(s) 2-5 “It’s a very stupid mistake...of your life.”  
line(s) 29-31 “I also told him....but”
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity  
line(s) 15-18 “The girl is still alive...before the accident.” This sentence is a bit awkward.  
line(s) 26-28 “I have a cousin that drinks all the time...”  
line(s) 19 “He was only 16 years old.”

### Conventions

*The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.*

- shows well-developed sentences beginning and ending with correct punctuation  
line(s) 1-2, 2-5, 7-8 35-37
- makes use of internal punctuation (apostrophe, dash, comma, etc.) to create fluency in the writing  
line(s) 2, 26, 29-31, 38
- spells almost all words correctly  
line(s) 33-34 “control”
- standard grammatical structures (numbers, contractions, plurals, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, all parts of speech, etc.)  
line(s) 19, 20-21, 35-37  
line(s) 1, 2, 3, 16, 24, 26, 35, 36, 38

Prompt provided.

“Back in grade three, guests....”

1 Back in grade three, guests came into our classes to talk  
2 about recycling and its importance in the community. They would  
3 repeat over and over again the significance of the three  
4 R's until they were drilled into our brains. At fourteen years  
5 old, you should understand the global situation well  
6 enough to understand that this is not just for little kids.  
7 It saves trees, money, and gives a person the satisfaction of  
8 doing the right thing.

9 Recycling's main point is obvious: to conserve trees and the  
10 environment. As one of the world's main suppliers of oxygen,  
11 we should keep as many trees intact as possible. With the  
12 world's trees being felled all the time, we are beginning to  
13 see the proof that we need to save them, in the form of global  
14 warming. That alone should make people willing to recycle.

15 Not only does the globe's health improve, but humans benefit  
16 directly. Recycled paper is cheaper than newer material.  
17 Many books are printed with one hundred per cent recycled  
18 paper, and gain from it. More practical people would recycle  
19 just by looking at the issue economically.

20 If none of this interests a person, they should try to  
21 recycle anyway, because it will give them a sense of  
22 satisfaction. Just doing what they should be doing can be

**“Back in grade three, guests....”**

23 rewarding on its own. By giving a bag of plastic bottles to  
24 a bottle drive fundraiser, a person will gain a certain feeling of  
25 accomplishment.

26 For environmental, economical and personal benefit, more  
27 people around the globe should recycle. At home, at school,  
28 at work, anyone can make a difference. Recycling is easy,  
29 rewarding and does not cost a penny. Everyone should  
30 make an effort.

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE VI

This writing sample begins with *“Back in grade three, guests....”*

### Content/Ideas

- introduces a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purposes and engages the audience *in the importance and benefits of recycling*  
line(s) 4-6 “At fourteen years old, you should understand the global situation...”
- includes original and thoughtful ideas  
line(s) 9-10 “conserve trees and the environment.”  
line(s) 13-14 “proof...we need to save them, in the form of global warming.”
- supports a strong main idea with relevant details and examples  
line(s) 2 “recycling and its importance in the community.”  
line(s) 3-4 “the significance of the three R’s”  
line(s) 10 “suppliers of oxygen,”

### Organization

- begins with an engaging statement that indicates purpose  
line(s) 1-2 “Back in grade three, guests came into our classes to talk about recycling and its importance in the community.”  
line(s) 28-29 “Recycling is easy, rewarding, and does not cost a penny.”
- connects sentences and ideas through smooth transitions  
line(s) 15 “Not only does”  
line(s) 20 “If none of this interests a person,”  
line(s) 26 “For environmental, economical and personal benefit,”
- develops sentences and ideas into cohesive paragraphs  
line(s) 9 “conserve trees”  
line(s) 15-16 “humans benefit directly.”  
line(s) 21-22 “it will give them a sense of satisfaction.”  
line(s) 26-27 “For environmental, economical and personal benefit,...”
- provides an effective ending  
line(s) 27-28 “At home, at school, at work, anyone can make a difference.”  
line(s) 29-30 “Everyone should make an effort.”

### Word Choice

- effectively provides vivid descriptive vocabulary/precise technical words  
line(s) 3 “significance”  
line(s) 9 “conserve”  
line(s) 11 “intact”  
line(s) 18 “practical”  
line(s) 25 “accomplishment”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 15 “globe’s health improve”

This writing sample begins with *“Back in grade three, guests...”*

**Voice**

- skillfully connects with the audience by sharing thoughts, inner conflict, and convictions through inner dialogue  
line(s) 9 “Recycling’s main point is obvious:”  
line(s) 11 “we should keep”
- demonstrates strong commitment to the topic  
line(s) 13 “we need to save them”  
line(s) 14 “That alone should make people willing to recycle.”  
line(s) 21-22 “give them a sense of satisfaction.”

**Sentence Structure**

- uses a striking variety of complex sentence structures and types  
line(s) 9-10 “Recycling’s main point is obvious: to conserve trees and the environment.”  
line(s) 23 “By giving a bag of plastic bottles to a bottle drive fundraiser, a person will gain a certain feeling of accomplishment.”
- connects ideas with smooth transitions to add flair  
line(s) 7-8 “It saves trees, money, and gives...satisfaction doing the right thing.”  
line(s) 18-19 “More practical people would recycle just by looking at the issue economically.”

**Conventions**

- uses effective sentences that maintain precise punctuation  
line(s) 1-2, 3-4, 4-6, 7-8, 22-23
- uses correct internal punctuation (dash, ellipsis, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, etc.)  
line(s) 4, 9-10, 11-14, 20-22
- uses correct grammatical structures (parentheses, parallelism, interjections)  
line(s) 4-6, 15-16, 28-29
- make informed decisions about text layout when publishing  
five paragraph exposition form followed



Prompt provided.

**“Hockey is a very challenging and fast-paced game.”**

1 Hockey is a very challenging and fast-  
2 paced game. It is played on ice with equipment,  
3 stick, and skates. The object of the game is to  
4 score on the other teams net while defending your  
5 own. There are six players on the ice for each  
6 team including the goalie.

7 There are three forwards, two defence, and  
8 a goalie on the ice. The forwards job is to put the  
9 puck in the other teams net, the defences job is to  
10 stop the other team from scoring while helping  
11 the forwards score, and the goalies job is stop  
12 the other teams attempts to score.

13 People think that the goalies have the easiest  
14 job on the ice. They think this because the net  
15 is small and you have lots of equipment on, but  
16 its harder than it looks. You have to have good  
17 hand-eye coordination because pucks can be shot  
18 up to 100 miles per hour depending on whos shooting  
19 it, and you need to watch for deflections, dekes, and  
20 passes because they usually beat the goalie.

21 There are many rules in the game of  
22 hockey, and if you don't go by them you get

**“Hockey is a very challenging and fast-paced game.”**

23 a penalty which disadvantages your team because  
24 you are short a player. In higher leagues of hockey  
25 you can check but not in lower levels. In any  
26 league of hockey you can't trip, slash, hook, spear,  
27 or fight or you will get a penalty automatically or  
28 if it's serious then you will be thrown out  
29 of the game.

30 Hockey is a very exciting game and is  
31 enjoyed by many youth and adults. Even if you  
32 don't like to play hockey watch a game on T.V  
33 and you will fall in love with the game

This writing sample begins with *“Hockey is a very challenging and fast-paced game.”*

### Content/Ideas

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that shows awareness of purpose and audience *about hockey*  
line(s) 1-2 “Hockey is a very challenging and past-paced game.”  
line(s) 3-5 “The object of the game is to score on the other teams net while defending your own.”
- includes thoughtful ideas/events relevant to the topic  
line(s) 2-3 “It is played on ice with equipment, stick, and skates.”  
line(s) 16-20 “You have to have good hand-eye coordination”
- includes relevant/well researched details to enhance the ideas maintaining focus (may have a few distractions)  
line(s) 7-8 “There are three forwards, two defence, and a goalie on the ice.”  
line(s) 21-24 “There are many rules in the game of hockey”

### Organization

- gives a thoughtful introduction, establishing purpose  
line(s) 1-2 “Hockey is a very challenging and fast-paced game.”
- uses transitions in sequencing, to make connections  
line(s) 8-9 “The forwards job..., the defences job”  
line(s) 13-14 “the goalies have the easiest job”  
line(s) 21 “There are many rules”  
line(s) 33 “You will fall in love with the game.”
- has clearly developed paragraphs  
line(s) 8-12 “The forwards job is to put the puck in the other teams net,...to score.”  
line(s) 13-14 “People think that the goalies have the easiest job on the ice.”  
line(s) 16-20 “You have to have good hand-eye coordination...beat the goalie.”
- provides an adequate conclusion  
line(s) 30-31 “Hockey is a very exciting game and is enjoyed by many youth and elders.”

### Word Choice

- includes interesting and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning  
line(s) 19-20 “watch deflections, deeks, and passes”  
line(s) 30-31 “ you can’t trip, slash, hook, spear or fight”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 28 “...thrown out of...”  
line(s) 20 “beat the goalie”

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE VII

This writing sample begins with *“Hockey is a very challenging and fast-paced game.”*

### Voice

- skillfully connects the audience to the topic  
line(s) 13-14 “People think that the goalies have the easiest job on the ice.”  
line(s) 32-33 “...watch a game on T.V. and you will fall in love with the game.”
- generates strong feeling, energy and individuality  
line(s) 16 “its harder then it looks.”  
line(s) 33 “you will fall in love with the game.”

### Sentence Structure

- includes different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures  
line(s) 21-24 “There are...short a player.”  
line(s) 8-12 “The forwards job is...and the goalies job is to stop the other teams attempts to score.”
- is generally fluid and easy to read (may have some choppy sentences)  
line(s) 25-29 “In any league...then you will be thrown out of the game.”  
line(s) 31-33 “Even if you don’t like to play hockey watch a game on T.V. and you will fall in love with the game.”

### Conventions

*The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.*

- shows well-developed sentences beginning and ending with correct punctuation  
line(s) 1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 30-31
- makes use of internal punctuation (apostrophe, dash, comma, etc.) to create fluency in the writing  
line(s) 2-3, 7-8, 16-20, 21-24  
some possessive errors line(s) 8,9, “forwards”, “teams”,
- standard grammatical structures that make the text readable (numbers, contractions, plurals, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, all parts of speech, etc.)  
line(s) 16-20, 25-29, 31-33  
some contraction errors line(s) 18 “whos”
- spells almost all words correctly and uses correct homophones  
line(s) 16 “then” should be than

Prompt provided.

*"I recycle every day."*

1 I recycle every day. It is of high importance to me. But  
2 although I strongly encourage recycling, it is an act that globally  
3 is not of high importance. This is wrong, and needs to change. In  
4 order to maintain and sustain a healthy environment, the world needs  
5 to grasp the initiative of recycling.

6 Recycling is the act of recirculating used materials. Rather  
7 than placing bottles, plastic, and paper products in the garbage, one  
8 may place these articles in a recycling container. It may appear  
9 to make such a minuscule difference that has no effect on society.  
10 However on the global scale if everyone recycled, the difference  
11 would be substantially great. Let's take a look at the effects  
12 of recycling.

13 In global economy, recycling has a very positive effect.  
14 It creates hundreds of thousands of jobs around the world, and  
15 saves people a lot of time and money producing more product.  
16 Consequently this reduces pollution and ensures the protection  
17 of our valuable natural resources. This is of high importance when  
18 ensuring a better future for further generations. We must leave  
19 behind and bestow upon our future citizens a healthy environment  
20 in which they can live. We must respect their right to live in  
21 a clean, prosperous, and resourceful environment, as past generations  
22 have done so to us.

END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE VIII

Strong Achievement

Page 2 of 2

*"I recycle every day."*

23 At the end of the day, the world is a better place due to  
24 the efforts of those who recycle. The world is clean and uniform  
25 environment is maintained, and its natural beauty shines. I strongly  
26 encourage every citizen to recycle, and to contribute to this global  
27 effort. We must all cohesively work together to maintain and sustain  
28 a healthy, beautiful environment.

This writing sample begins with *“I recycle every day.”*

### Content/Ideas

- introduces a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purpose and engages the audience *encouraging all to recycle for the benefit of our environment*  
line(s) 3-5 “In order to maintain and sustain a healthy environment, the world needs...recycling.”
- includes original and thoughtful ideas  
line(s) 10-11 “However on the global scale if everyone recycled, the difference would...great.”  
line(s) 16 “Consequently this reduces pollution”
- supports the strong main idea details and examples  
line(s) 1 “I recycle every day. It is of high importance to me.”  
line(s) 3-4 “In order to maintain and sustain a healthy environment,”

### Organization

- begins with an engaging statement that indicates purpose  
line(s) 3-5 “In order to maintain...grasp the initiative of recycling.”
- connects sentences and ideas through smooth transitions  
line(s) 10 “However,”  
line(s) 16 “Consequently”  
line(s) 23 “At the end of the day”
- develops sentences and ideas into cohesive paragraphs  
line(s) 6 “Recycling is the act of recirculating used materials.”  
line(s) 13 “On a global economy, recycling has a very positive effect.”  
line(s) 23-24 “At the end of the day, the world is a better place...”
- provides an effective ending  
line(s) 23-24 “At the end of the day, the world is a better place due to the efforts of those who recycle.”  
line(s) 27-28 “We must all cohesively work together to maintain and sustain a healthy, beautiful environment.”

### Word Choice

- effectively includes vivid descriptive vocabulary/ precise technical language  
line(s) 5 “grasp”, “initiative”  
line(s) 6 “recirculating”  
line(s) 9 “miniscule”  
line(s) 19 “bestow upon our future citizens”  
line(s) 27 “cohesively work together”

This writing sample begins with *“I recycle every day.”*

**Voice**

- skillfully connects with the audience by sharing thoughts, inner conflict and convictions through inner dialogue  
line(s) 1 “I recycle every day.”  
line(s) 3 “This is wrong.”
- demonstrates strong commitment to the topic  
line(s) 2 “I strongly encourage”

**Sentence Structure**

- uses a striking variety of complex sentence structures and types  
line(s) 1 “It is of high importance to me.”  
line(s) 6-8 “Rather than placing bottles, plastic, and paper products in the garbage, one may place these articles in a recycling container.”
- connects ideas with smooth transitions to add flair  
line(s) 1 “I recycle every day. It is of high importance to me.”  
line(s) 23-24 “At the end of the day, the world is a better place due to the efforts of those who recycle.”

**Conventions**

- uses effective sentences that maintain precise punctuation  
line(s) 3-5, 6-8, 18-20, 24-25
- is easily read because of internal punctuation (dash, ellipsis, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, etc.)  
line(s) 1-3, 3, 3-5, 11-12, 24-25)
- correctly spells virtually all words  
error line(s) 11 “sustemically”
- uses correct grammatical structures (parentheses, parallelism, interjections)  
line(s) 3-5, 6-8, 14-15, 20-22, 24-25
- makes informed decisions about text layout when publishing  
four paragraph exposition with one point of view



END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE IX

Appropriate Achievement

Page 1 of 2

Prompt provided.

**“The day my brothers and I received our dog was....”**

1 ~~The day my brothers and I received our dog was one of~~  
2 ~~the most wonderful days of our lives. I can still remember how~~  
3 ~~excited we were and the look on my younger brothers face as~~  
4 ~~my dad walked in the door with the puppy in his arms, his eyes~~  
5 ~~were sparkling with joy and excitement. We let my other brother~~  
6 ~~Jamie pick her name, he picked Daisie.~~

7  
8 ~~Her soft golden fur was so beautiful, and it felt so good to~~  
9 ~~hold her in my arms. My oldest dog Fanny was treating Daisie like~~  
10 ~~her own child and would follow her everywhere, it was adorable.~~

11  
12 ~~The first few nights we had her were terrible, she would~~  
13 ~~cry all night, and I mean cry. Her bed was in my room so I was~~  
14 ~~the one who had to get up and put her back to sleep. She was~~  
15 ~~like a real baby! It was getting very frustrating, but eventually~~  
16 ~~she became a lot better and would sleep all night.~~

17  
18 ~~As time went by my family and I were trying to train~~  
19 ~~her so she would stop using the bathroom on the floor. It was~~  
20 ~~discussing when she would pee on the floor and we would~~  
21 ~~step in it. It was very hard to get up early in the morning~~  
22 ~~to take her outside before she did anything on the floor.~~

END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE IX

Appropriate Achievement

Page 2 of 2

*“The day my brothers and I received our dog was....”*

23 *But I had no choice my parents said she was my*  
24 *responsibility to take care of her. After all thoes though*  
25 *mornings, she is finally trained and can wait until someone*  
26 *wakes up before going outside.*

27

28 *Now its been a few months since we've had her.*  
29 *she is almost perfect, she goes to the door and barks*  
30 *when she wants to go outside, she sleeps all night and*  
31 *she is very friendly with everyone. I enjoy her company*  
32 *very much. Even after all the trouble she gav... me by*  
33 *keeping me up all night and cleaning her mess, i still*  
34 *care about her very much. She will always be my little*  
35 *baby.*

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE IX

This writing sample begins with *“The day my brothers and I received our dog was....”*

### Content/Ideas

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience  
*about the addition of a puppy in our family*  
line(s) 1 “The day my brothers received our dog was...wonderful...”  
line(s) 4 “...my dad walked in the door with the puppy...”
- includes thoughtful ideas/events relevant to the topic  
line(s) 5-6 “We let my other brother Jamie pick her name,”  
line(s) 8 “Her soft golden fur was so beautiful,”
- includes relevant/well researched details to enhance ideas  
line(s) 2 “I can still remember how excited we were...”  
line(s) 4-5 “...his eyes were sparkling with joy and excitement.”

### Organization

- gives a thoughtful introduction, establishing purpose  
line(s) 1-2 “The day my brothers and I received our dog was one of the most wonderful days of our lives.”  
line(s) 31 “I enjoy her company very much.”
- uses transitions between and within paragraphs to show sequencing and connections  
line(s) 12 “The first few nights...”  
line(s) 18 “As time went by...”  
line(s) 28 “Now it’s been a few months...”
- has clearly developed paragraphs  
line(s) 1-6 Paragraph # 1 – obvious introduction with clearly stated main idea  
line(s) 8-10 Paragraph # 2 – describes the dog  
line(s) 12-16 Paragraph # 3 – dog’s arrival at home  
line(s) 18-26 Paragraph # 4 – Training Puppy  
line(s) 28-35 Paragraph # 5 – The joy of having the dog
- provides an adequate conclusion  
line(s) 34-35 “She will always be my little baby.”

### Word Choice

- includes interesting words and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning  
line(s) 5 “sparkling with joy”  
line(s) 9 “...treating her like her own child”  
line(s) 15 “...getting very frustrating”
- uses figurative language  
line(s) 5 “...like a real baby!”

This writing sample begins with *“The day my brothers and I received our dog was....”*

**Voice**

- skillfully connects the audience to the topic  
line(s) 8 “Her soft golden fur was so beautiful...”  
line(s) 14 “She was like a real baby.”
- generates strong feeling, energy and individuality  
line(s) 13 “...and I mean cry.”  
line(s) 12 “The first few nights...were terrible...”

**Sentence Structure**

- includes different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures  
line(s) 29-31 “She is almost perfect,...with everyone.”  
line(s) 32-34 “Even after all...care about her very much.”
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity  
line(s)14-15 “She was like a real baby!”

**Conventions**

*The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.*

- makes use of internal punctuation (apostrophe, dash, comma, etc.) to create fluency in the writing  
line(s) 8-9, 15-16, 28  
missing some plural apostrophes :line(s)3 “brothers”
- uses correct grammatical structures (numbers, contractions, plurals, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, all parts of speech, etc.)  
line(s) 15-16, 18-19, 28, 32-34
- spells almost all words correctly and uses the correct homophones  
line(s) 20 “discusting”  
line(s) 24 “thoes”, “though”

END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE X

Strong Achievement

Page 1 of 2

Prompt provided.

**“It was the first day of third grade...”**

1 It was the first day of third grade, and I was having a great day.  
2 I had a large classroom, a couple of friends as classmates, a friendly teacher,  
3 and best of all, I was going to take the bus home for the first time.  
4 I was waiting anxiously as the seconds ticked by on the clock, until  
5 eventually, the last bell rang. I strutted out of the classroom, walked  
6 up a set of stairs, and stood in my bus line. I was a bus student  
7 now, not a walker, and my new journey was about to begin.

8 After standing in the line for what seemed like hours, I heard  
9 the sound of something large pulling up to the school, and the  
10 squeaking of brakes. My time has come. Quickly, I ran down the  
11 stairs, out the door, and climbed into the large, yellow automobile.  
12 I stood near the bus driver, looking at the crowd of unfamiliar  
13 faces, until I seen a seat near the back that looked inviting  
14 and sat in it. I was seated on the bus. I couldn't believe it.  
15 I watched as my peers filed into the seats around me. How  
16 can they treat such an exciting experience with little to  
17 no enthusiasm?

18 At last, after a couple of minutes of sitting there, jumping  
19 up and down from the bumps the bus drove over, my  
20 exciting adventure was about to end. I stood up as the  
21 driver neared my spot, and to my surprise, he just kept  
22 going. He missed my stop! What was ~~there~~ I going to do? I

## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE X

Strong Achievement

Page 2 of 2

**“It was the first day of third grade...”**

23 Sat back down, with tears in my eyes, I was miserable. How  
24 could someone do that to a poor little eight year old?  
25 I stared out the window and watched the kids climb out of  
26 the bus, with jealousy in my eyes, as they skipped home  
27 happily to tell their parents about their first day back in  
28 school. Why couldn't I be the lucky one who was able to  
29 get off the bus? What if I was going to be on this  
30 bus forever?

31 After a couple more stops, a girl that looked a bit older  
32 than me said,

33 “Hey! There's a crying kid back her!” I was offended  
34 by her rudeness, but it was the least of my worries. The bus  
35 driver seemed quite surprised, and he asked me to come up  
36 front to talk to him. Apparently, the stop where I wanted to  
37 stop wasn't in his route. Then how come they told me to  
38 go on this bus? He did say that he could drop me off  
39 there everyday, and I thought that would be great.

40 As I was getting a bus drive home, I was glad that things were  
41 resolved. When I look back at it, it doesn't seem  
42 that bad of an experience. At least I got a tour  
43 of the bus route!

This writing sample begins with *“It was the first day of third grade...”*

### Content/Ideas

- introduces a specific topic with a main idea that clearly defines the purpose and engages the audience *in the bus drive home on the first day of the third grade*  
line(s) 3 “and best of all, I was going to take the bus home”
- includes original and thoughtful ideas  
line(s) 29 “What if I was going to be on the bus forever?”
- includes a strong main idea that is well supported with details and examples  
line(s) 3 “take the bus for the first time...”  
line(s) 4 “...waiting anxiously...”  
line(s) 8 “...in the line for what seemed like hours...”

### Organization

- begins with a purposeful lead that engages the audience  
line(s) 3 “I was going to take the bus home for the first time.”  
line(s) 4 “...waiting anxiously as the seconds ticked by...”
- uses a variety of ways to focus the topic (time structures, theme)  
line(s) 4 “until eventually”  
line(s) 8 “after standing”  
line(s) 18 “At last”  
line(s) 31 “After a couple more stops...”  
line(s) 36 “Apparently,”
- thoughtfully develop characters showing how they change and create tension  
line(s) 1 “first day of third grade”  
line(s) 3 “take the bus home for the first time”  
line(s) 41 “When I look back...”
- provides an effective ending that communicates the larger meaning of the piece  
line(s) 40 -43 “I was glad that things were resolved....bus route.”

### Word Choice

- effectively includes vivid descriptive vocabulary  
line(s) 4 “I was waiting anxiously”  
line(s) 10 “My time has come.”  
line(s) 12-13 “unfamiliar faces”  
line(s) 20 “exciting adventure”  
line(s) 23 “I was miserable”  
line(s) 26 “with jealousy in my eyes”
- uses figurative language  
five rhetorical questions

This writing sample begins with *“It was the first day of third grade...”*

**Voice**

- skillfully connects with the audience by sharing thoughts, feelings, inner conflict, convictions through inner dialogue  
line(s) 6-7 “I was a bus student now, not a walker, and my new journey was about to begin.”  
line(s) 23 “How could someone do that to a poor little eight year old?”
- demonstrates strong commitment to the topic  
line(s) 22 “He missed my stop! What was I going to do?”  
line(s) 33 “Hey! There’s a crying kid back her! I was offended by her rudeness,…”

**Sentence Structure**

- uses a striking variety of complex sentence structures and types  
line(s) 2-3 “I had a large classroom, a couple of friends as classmates, a friendly teacher”  
line(s) 16-17 “How can they....enthusiasm?”
- connects ideas with smooth transitions to add flair  
line(s) 8 “After standing in line for what seemed like hours,”  
line(s) 23-24 “How could someone do that to a poor little eight year old?”

**Conventions**

- uses effective sentences that maintain precise punctuation  
Exclamatory and interrogative sentences are used effectively to capture a heightened emotional appeal.  
line(s) 14, 15-17, 23-24, 33, 37-38
- uses correct internal punctuation (dash, ellipsis, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, etc.)  
line(s) 2-3, 8-10, 10-11, 20-22, 22, 25-28
- uses correct grammatical structures  
line(s) 6-7, 18-20, 28-29, 33
- make informed decisions about text layout when publishing  
(it would be interesting to see page break- illustration connections)



## END OF GRADE 8 – SAMPLE XI

### *“My name is Leo...”*

1	<p>My name is Leo, or my name was Leo. Nobody has names here. I am known to</p>
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	<p>the Ring as 206385R and to my friends as Red, the colour of the shirt I was</p>
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	<p>One morning, at 0500 hours, I was woken up by a huge shake. Knowing this</p>
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	<p>could be important, I leaped out of bed and was met by a ring member I had never</p>
28	
29	
30	
31	<p>seen before. He said, “Get dressed quickly.” And handed me a sword. This was no</p>
32	
33	
34	
35	<p>practice blade but a real weapon expertly ground to the sharpest of edges. I</p>
36	
37	
38	
39	<p>followed the man out of the barrack and down the main street. I was surprised</p>
40	
41	
42	
43	<p>when he turned left towards the gate instead of towards the palace. He held his</p>
44	
45	
46	
47	<p>finger to his mouth . “Shhhh,” he whispered and then we were through the gate</p>
48	
49	
50	
51	<p>and running towards a tree behind which two horses were tied. He jumped on one</p>
52	
53	
54	
55	<p>and I got on the other. He said, “Follow me.” And we galloped down the road away</p>
56	
57	
58	
59	<p>from the emperor’s city.</p>
60	
61	
62	
63	<p>By the end of the day we had reached the foothills of the Boelsbon Mountains. He</p>
64	
65	
66	
67	<p>said, “Quick follow me.” and he jumped off his horse and jogged towards the base</p>
68	
69	
70	
71	<p>of the cliff. Me, still believing him to be one of the emperor’s men, a member of the</p>
72	
73	
74	
75	<p>ring, quickly followed. He pushed hard against a small lump in the cliff face and a</p>
76	
77	
78	
79	<p>small door slid open. We lead our horses inside and the door slid shut. “Welcome</p>
80	
81	
82	
83	<p>to the base of the rebellion, Leo,” he said.</p>
84	
85	
86	
87	<p>Unknown to me, the emperor was my father and he had put me into basic training</p>
88	
89	
90	
91	<p>to hide me from his enemies. But now they had found me and I wondered what</p>
92	
93	
94	
95	<p>would happen to me. “We are not going to kill you,” said the man, “ but you will be</p>
96	
97	
98	
99	<p>staying with us for a long, long time.”</p>
100	

The writing sample begins “*My name is Leo...*”

**Content/Ideas**

- selects a specific topic with a main idea that supports the purpose and audience *to entertain with imaginative fiction*  
line(s) 1 “Nobody has names here.”
- includes ideas relevant to the topic  
line(s) 5-6 “My barrack leader, a member of the ring, says I should do well in the service of the emperor.”
- includes relevant/well-researched details to enhance the ideas  
line(s) 3-4 “I live in Barrack R, hence the suffix at the end of my number.”  
line(s) 23 “...still believing him to be one of the emperor’s men,...”  
line(s) 27-28 “...he had put me into basic training to hide me from his enemies.”

**Organization**

- gives a thoughtful introduction, establishing purpose  
line(s) 1 “My name is Leo, or my name was Leo. Nobody has names here.”
- uses transitions between and within paragraphs to show sequencing and connections  
line(s) 21 “By the end of the day....”  
line(s) 12 “Knowing this could be important...”
- has clearly developed paragraphs  
line(s) 1-10 Paragraph # 1 – Introduces the military type setting and characters  
line(s) 11-20 Paragraph # 2 – events leading to the complication *being led away from the emperor’s city*  
line(s) 21-26 Paragraph # 3 – events leading to and the complication *taken to the enemy’s base*  
line(s) 27-30 Paragraph # 4 – Conclusion *capture and uncertain future*

**Word Choice**

- interesting words and/or technical/subject-specific language to enhance meaning  
line(s) 14 “...a real weapon expertly ground to the sharpest of edges.”  
line(s) 3-4 “...Barrack R, hence the suffix at the end of my number.”
- uses figurative language  
line(s)9-10 “...keep that to yourself....”

The writing sample begins *“My name is Leo...”*

### Voice

- skilfully connects the audience to the subject  
line(s) 4 “I am 13 years old and ready for active service in the army of the emperor.”  
line(s) 8-9 “..and I know the voice because I have dreamed of it.”
- generates strong feeling, energy, and individuality  
line(s) 7 “I don’t remember much about my life before training,…”  
line(s) 28-29 “But now they had found me and I wondered what would happen to me.”

### Sentence Structure

- includes different kinds of sentences with a variety of complex structures  
line(s) 2-4 “...and to my friends as Red, the colour of the shirt I was wearing when I was brought in.”  
line(s) 27-28 “Unknown to me, the emperor was my father and he had oput me into basic training to hide me from his enemies.”
- includes a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings to create fluidity  
line(s) 6-7 “I hope so, as I have been training fot 10 years, longer than anyone else in Barrack R.”

### Conventions

*The student demonstrates skill in this area with occasional errors.*

- makes use of internal punctuation (apostrophe, dash, comma, etc.) to create fluency in the writing  
line(s) 5-6, 10, 20
- spells almost all words correctly  
line(s)11 “morening”
- uses correct grammatical structures (numbers, contractions, plurals, all parts of speech, verb tense, subject/verb agreement,)  
line(s) 1, 7, 18,

## Bibliography

- Alberta Education. (1997). *Grade 2 English language arts classroom assessment materials*. Edmonton, Alberta: Alberta Education.
- Alberta Learning. (2004). *Grade 3 narrative writing scoring guide*. Edmonton, Alberta: Alberta Learning.
- Allen, J. (2004). *Tools for teaching content literacy*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.
- Anderson, J. (2005). *Mechanically inclined*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Atwell, N. (2002). *Lessons that change writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2002). *British Columbia performance standards: Reading and writing, Grades 1-5*. Province of British Columbia.
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2006). *English Language Arts Kindergarten to Grade 7: Integrated resource package 2006*. Province of British Columbia.
- Colorado Department of Education. (1995). *Colorado model content standards*. Denver, Colorado: Colorado Department of Education.
- Colorado Department of Education. (2005). *Colorado student assessment program proficiency levels*. Denver, Colorado: Colorado Department of Education - Unit of Student Assessment.
- Culham, R. (2005). *6 + 1 Traits of writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Curriculum Corporation. (2000). *Literacy benchmarks: Years 3, 5 & 7 writing, spelling and reading*. Australia: Curriculum Corporation.
- Department of Education and Training in Western Australia. (2006). *First steps writing map of development*. Salem, MA: STEPS Professional Development and Consulting.
- Department of Education and Training in Western Australia (2004). *First steps reading map of development*. Salem, MA: STEPS Professional Development and Consulting.
- Foster, G. (2005). *What good readers do*. Markham, ON: Pembroke.
- Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Guiding readers and writers grades 3-6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G. S. (2005). *Leveled books, K-8: Matching texts to readers for effective teaching*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G. S. (2007). *The continuum of literacy learning grades K–8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Goldberg, G. L. & Roswell, B. S. (2002). *Reading, writing, and gender*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Gregory, G. H. & Kuzmich, L. (2005). *Differentiated literacy strategies*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.
- Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2000). *Strategies that work*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Indiana State Department of Education (2006). *Indiana accountability system for academic progress: Academic standards English language arts K-5*. Indiana: State Department of Education.
- Keene, E. & Zimmerman, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Kemper, D., Nathan, R., & Sebranek, P. (1998). *Writers express*. Scarborough, ON: International Thomson Publishing.
- Kiddey, P. & Chambers, R. M. (2006). *Stepping out (Canadian Edition)*. Toronto, ON: Pearson Professional Learning. Co-published by: Western Australian Minister of Education and Training.
- Miller, D. (2002). *Reading with meaning*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2006). *The Ontario curriculum grades 1-8 language*. Province of Ontario.
- Peha, S. (2002). *What is good writing?* <http://www.ttms.org/>.
- Peterson, S. (2003). *Guided writing INSTRUCTION*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.
- Peterson, S. S. (2005). *Writing across the curriculum*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.
- Reeves, D. B. (2002). *Making standards work: How to implement standards-based assessments in the classroom, School and District*. Advanced Learning Press: Denver, CO.
- Serafini, F. (2004). *Lessons in comprehension*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Spandel, V. (2002). *Write traits grades 6-8*. USA: Great Source Education Group, a division of Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Spandel, V. & Hicks, J. (2006). *Write traits advanced level I*. USA: Great Source Education Group, a division of Houghton Mifflin Company.

- Stead, T. (2006). *Reality checks*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Trehearne, M., Hemming Healey, L., Cantalini-Williams, M., & Moore, J. (2004a). *Kindergarten teacher's resource book*. Toronto, ON: Thomson Nelson.
- Trehearne, M., Healy, L. H., McBain, G., MacGregor, M., & Pynoo, S.G. (2004b). *Language arts grades 1-2 teacher's resource book*. Toronto, ON: Thomson Nelson.
- Trehearne, M., et al. (2006). *Comprehensive literacy resource for grades 3-6 teachers*. Toronto, ON: Thomson Nelson.
- Wilhelm, J. D. (2001). *Improving comprehension with think-aloud strategies*. USA: Scholastic.
- Wilson, R. J. (ed.). (2005). *Dilemmas in classroom assessment*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.

## Appendix





## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcome # 4</b> – Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>  <b>(from p. 24 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</b></p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>select texts that address their learning needs and range of special interests</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>            Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of genres that encompasses increasingly complex themes, ideas, topics and content</li> <li>• language that becomes progressively elaborate and complex, incorporating challenging vocabulary and varied sentence structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>            -Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.            -Plots generally follow chronological order and may include subplots.</p>
<p>read widely and experience a variety of young adult fiction and literature from different provinces and countries</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>            Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of genres that encompasses increasingly complex themes, ideas, topics and content</li> <li>• language that becomes progressively elaborate and complex, incorporating challenging vocabulary and varied sentence structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Fiction(prose and poetry)</b>            -Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.            -Conflicts may explore relationships through personal experiences.</p>
<p>explain with some regularity how authors use pictorial, typographical, and organizational devices such as tables and graphs to achieve certain purposes in their writing, and rely on those devices to construct meaning and enhance understanding</p>	<p><b>Non-fiction (report, biography, procedures, explanations, speeches, essays, news articles)</b>            -Texts may contain a table of contents, glossary, unit summary, and index            -Information or non-continuous texts may include charts, graphs, maps timelines, and diagrams.</p> <p><b>Reading Strategies</b>            Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct meaning using context clues, word/language structure, phonics, and/or references (e.g., dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, computer) to decode unknown and unfamiliar words</li> </ul>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 4</b> – Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 24 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
	<p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplify, clarify, and categorize information using graphic organizers (e.g., webs, charts, KWL and Venn diagrams, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p>read with greater fluency, confidence, and comprehension by furthering personal understanding and recognition; and use cueing systems and strategies to read and view increasingly complex texts</p>	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitor their reading and self correct when reading does not make sense, sound right, or look right</li> <li>• construct meaning using context clues, word/language structure, phonics, and/or references (e.g., dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, computer) to decode unknown and unfamiliar words</li> <li>• generate questions to verify and adjust predictions</li> <li>• make connections with text, self, and surroundings</li> </ul>
<p>regularly identify the processes and strategies readers and viewers apply when constructing meaning; develop an understanding of the personal processes and strategies applied when reading and viewing; reflect on personal growth as readers and viewers of texts and use this awareness of personal development to push reading and viewing ability even further</p>	<p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the main ideas and summarize content</li> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> <li>• understand information by connecting text to personal experiences</li> <li>• form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</li> </ul>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcome # 5</b> – Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information, using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 25 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>access appropriate print and non-print sources with increasing independence and select information to meet specific needs with increasing speed, accuracy, and confidence</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>          Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of genres that encompasses increasingly complex themes, ideas, topics and content</li> <li>• language that becomes progressively elaborate and complex, incorporating challenging vocabulary and varied sentence structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>          -Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.</p> <p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitor their reading and self-correct when reading does not make sense, sound right, or look right</li> <li>• skim/scan text for format and information</li> <li>• reread when comprehension is lost</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> </ul>
<p>experiment with and rely upon a range of print and non-print (e-mail, CD-ROMs) sources for accessing and selecting information</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>          Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of genres that encompasses increasingly complex themes, ideas, topics and content</li> <li>• language that becomes progressively elaborate and complex, incorporating challenging vocabulary and varied sentence structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>          -Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.</p> <p><b>Non-fiction (report, biography, procedures, explanations, speeches, essays, news articles)</b>          -Information or non-continuous texts may include charts, graphs, maps, timelines, and diagrams.</p>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcome # 5</b> – Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information, using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 26 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construct meaning using context clues, word/language structure, phonics, and/or references (e.g., dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, computer) to decode unknown and unfamiliar words</li> <li>• use note-taking techniques to organize significant information</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplify, clarify, and categorize information using graphic organizers (e.g., webs, charts, KWL, Venn diagrams, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p>employ various relevant research strategies such as generating questions, drafting an outline, or interviewing peers to determine what questions they would like answered by their research</p>	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generate questions to verify and adjust predictions</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> <li>• form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</li> </ul>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<b>General Curriculum Outcome # 6</b> – Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 26 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>elaborate personal reactions to what is read and viewed by providing some extended explanations, examples, and supporting arguments</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>          Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.</p> <p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generate questions to verify and adjust predictions</li> <li>• make connections with text, self, and surroundings</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> <li>• understand information by connecting text to personal experiences</li> <li>• form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</li> </ul>
<p>state personal points of view about what is read and viewed and justify views with increasing regularity</p>	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generate questions to verify and adjust predictions</li> <li>• make connections with text, self, and surroundings</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> <li>• form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</li> </ul>
<p>with increasing confidence and flexibility, find evidence in texts to support personal claims and viewpoints about issues, themes, and situations</p>	<p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>          -Multiple-event plots may have vague resolutions.          -Conflicts may explore relationships through personal experiences.</p> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to literal, vocabulary-related, and most inferential questions</li> <li>• understand information by connecting text to personal experiences</li> <li>• form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</li> </ul>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcome # 7</b> – Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 27 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>recognize that texts are to be assessed for bias and are to broaden their understanding and awareness of the ways in which print and media texts can be biased; begin to question and think critically about the relevance and reliability of information when answering questions and inquiries</p>	<p><b>Text Complexity</b>          Students select, read independently and understand a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of genres that encompasses increasingly complex themes, ideas, topics and content</li> <li>• language that becomes progressively elaborate and complex, incorporating challenging vocabulary and varied sentence structure</li> </ul> <p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>          -Figurative/Imaginative language contributes to setting, mood, atmosphere and tone.          -Poetry includes literary devices that add imagery and voice to text, creating imaginative details and encouraging critical reading.</p> <p><b>Non-fiction (report, biography, procedures, explanations, speeches, essays, news articles)</b>          -Texts may include transitional expressions (e.g., on the other hand, otherwise, thus, for instance) to connect ideas.</p> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplify, clarify, and categorize information using graphic organizers (e.g., webs, charts, KWL, Venn diagrams, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p>identify the various features and elements writers use when writing for specific readers for specific purposes; describe how texts are organized to accommodate particular readers’ needs and to contribute to meaning and effect</p>	<p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b>          -Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.          -Plots generally follow chronological order and may include subplots.          -Conflicts may explore relationships through personal experiences.</p> <p><b>Non-fiction (report, biography, procedures, explanations, speeches, essays, news articles)</b>          -Texts may contain a table of contents, glossary, unit summary, and index          -Information or non-continuous texts may include charts, graphs, maps timelines, and diagrams.</p>

## Reading Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcome # 7</b> – Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 27 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Reading Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
	<p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construct meaning using context clues, word/language structure, phonics, and/or references (e.g., dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, computer) to decode unknown and unfamiliar words</li> <li>• skim/scan text for format and information</li> <li>• use note-taking techniques to organize significant information</li> </ul>
<p>expand on earlier abilities to respond critically to a range of texts in various ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- understand how personal knowledge, ideas, values, perceptions, and points of view influence how writers create texts</li> <li>- recognize how and when personal background influences meaning construction, understanding, and textual response</li> <li>- describe how cultures and reality are portrayed in media texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fiction (prose and poetry)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Texts may be in media, web-based, and/or visual form: genres may include short stories, poems, novels (including graphic novels), diaries, journals, magazines, and plays.</li> <li>-Conflicts may explore relationships through personal experiences.</li> <li>-Characters portray complex personalities, human qualities, and emotions.</li> <li>-Figurative/Imaginative language contributes to setting, mood, atmosphere and tone.</li> <li>-Poetry includes literary devices that add imagery and voice to text, creating imaginative details and encouraging critical reading.</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-fiction (report, biography, procedures, explanations, speeches, essays, news articles)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Texts may contain a table of contents, glossary, unit summary, and index.</li> <li>-Texts may include transitional expressions (e.g., on the other hand, otherwise, thus, for instance) to connect ideas.</li> <li>-Paragraphs increase in length and detail.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Strategies</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make connections with text, self, and surroundings</li> <li>• skim/scan text for format and information</li> </ul> <p><b>Comprehension Responses</b>          Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the main ideas and summarize content</li> <li>• understand information by connecting to personal experiences</li> </ul> <p>form logical opinions/reactions and support these ideas with general textual reference(s)</p>

## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 8</b> Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings; and to use their imagination.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 28 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>demonstrate competence in the frequent use of writing and representing strategies to extend learning; to explore their own thoughts and consider others' ideas; to reflect on their feelings, values, and attitudes; and to identify problems and describe logical solutions</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather ideas from a variety of sources and use a framework (e.g. web, graphic organizer) to sort and classify the information/ideas, recognize different perspectives, and make new connections; apply knowledge of copyright/plagiarism</li> </ul>
<p>identify and reflect upon strategies that are effective in helping them to learn; describe their personal growth as language learners and language users</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• request, obtain, and make decisions about, constructive criticism</li> <li>• use appropriate tools (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, grammar checker, and text models) to edit conventions, and strengthen word choice</li> </ul>



## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 8</b> Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings; and to use their imagination.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 28 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>begin to use various forms of note making appropriate to various purposes and situations</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather ideas from a variety of sources and use a framework (e.g. web, graphic organizer) to sort and classify the information/ideas, recognize different perspectives, and make new connections; apply knowledge of copyright/plagiarism</li> </ul>
<p>demonstrate an awareness of how and when to integrate interesting effects in imaginative writing and other ways of representing; include thoughts and feelings in addition to external descriptions and activities; integrate detail that adds richness and density; identify and correct inconsistencies and avoid extraneous detail; make effective language choices relevant to style and purpose, and, when appropriate, select more elaborate and sophisticated vocabulary and phrasing</p>	<p><b>Text Forms</b></p> <p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refine writing to enhance impact</li> <li>• select linguistic (e.g., analogy, colloquialism, figurative language, flattery) and print devices (e.g., print size, font, page design) designed to influence audience</li> <li>• reread writing aloud for fluency; make changes to sentence structures and word choices to provide variety</li> </ul>

## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 9</b> Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>  <b>(from p. 29 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</b></p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>continue to develop writing forms previously introduced and expand this range to produce, for example, autobiographies, drama, surveys, graphs, literary responses, biographies, illustrations, and reviews</p>	<p><b>Text Forms</b></p>
<p>consider and choose writing forms that match both the writing purpose (to define, report, persuade, compare) and the reader for whom the text is intended (understand why language choice, organization, and voice used in an essay differ from that used in a media advertisement)</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select and develop a topic; demonstrate awareness of audience and competence crafting a variety of text forms (including hybrids)</li> <li>• write with purpose and understand the influence of the writer</li> <li>• use specific devices to achieve purpose (instruct, persuade, entertain)</li> <li>• explain form choice as it pertains to purpose and intended audience</li> </ul> <p><b>Traits of Writing</b></p> <p><b>Organization:</b> structure and form, dependent on purpose and audience</p> <p><b>Voice:</b> evidence of author's style, personality, and experience select an appropriate form and clearly establish the purpose in the introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skillfully connect the audience to the topic</li> </ul>
<p>understand that ideas can be represented in more than one way and used with other forms of representing (speeches, demonstrations, plays)</p>	<p><b>Text Forms</b></p>

## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 9</b> Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>          (from p. 29 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>keep the reader and purpose for writing in mind when choosing content, writing style, tone of voice, language choice, and text organization</p>	<p><b>Text Forms</b>  <b>Traits of Writing</b>  <b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select and develop a topic; demonstrate awareness of audience and competence crafting a variety of text forms (including hybrids)</li> </ul>
<p>know how and when to ask for reader feedback while writing and incorporate appropriate suggestions when revising subsequent drafts; assess self-generated drafts from a reader's/viewer's/listener's perspective</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independently re-read to add to, delete from, or reorganize the text to clarify and strengthen content</li> <li>• request, obtain, and make decisions about, constructive criticism</li> <li>• refine writing to enhance impact</li> <li>• select linguistic (e.g., analogy, colloquialism, figurative language, flattery) and print devices (e.g., print size, font, page design) designed to influence audience</li> <li>• reread writing aloud for fluency; make changes to sentence structures and word choices to provide variety</li> </ul>

## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 10</b> Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing, and to enhance clarity, precision, and effectiveness.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b> <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b> <b>(from p. 30 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</b></p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b> <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>build and rely upon a broad knowledge base of how words are spelled and formed; use such knowledge to spell unfamiliar words and expand vocabulary; regularly use resource texts to verify spelling; use punctuation and grammatical structures capably and accurately; use a variety of sentence patterns, vocabulary choices, and paragraphing with flexibility and creativity to engage readers</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reread writing aloud for fluency; make changes to sentence structures and word choices to provide variety</li> <li>• use appropriate tools (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, grammar checker, and text models) to edit conventions, and strengthen word choice</li> <li>• select linguistic (e.g., analogy, colloquialism, figurative language, flattery) and print devices (e.g., print size, font, page design) designed to influence audience</li> </ul> <p><b>Traits of Writing</b></p> <p><b>Word Choice</b></p> <p><b>Sentence Structure</b></p> <p><b>Conventions</b></p>
<p>choose, with increasing regularity, the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and presentation strategies to aid in producing various texts</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <p><b>Traits of Writing</b></p> <p><b>Conventions:</b> spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage (grammar)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a range of print characteristics and layout to enhance the meaning (e.g., headings, visuals, white space, italics, bold, font size, and style)</li> </ul>

## Writing Curriculum Outcomes and Standards Alignment

<p><b>General Curriculum Outcomes # 10</b> Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing, and to enhance clarity, precision, and effectiveness.</p>	
<p><b>Grade 8</b>  <b>Specific Curriculum Outcomes</b>  <b>(from p. 30 Atlantic Canada ELA curriculum: ML)</b></p>	<p><b>Writing Achievement Standard</b>  <b>End of Grade 8</b></p>
<p>attempt to use various technologies for communicating to a variety of audiences for a range of purposes</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a variety of publishing formats (e.g., books, pamphlets, posters, web sites) with appropriate text and text features</li> </ul> <p>Text Forms</p>
<p>demonstrate a commitment to crafting pieces of writing and other representations</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all</li> </ul>
<p>gather information from a variety of sources (interviews, film, CD-ROMs, texts) and integrate ideas in communication</p>	<p><b>Writing Strategies and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gather ideas from a variety of sources and use a framework (e.g. web, graphic organizer) to sort and classify the information/ideas, recognize different perspectives, and make new connections; apply knowledge of copyright/plagiarism</li> <li>• draft a piece of writing making critical choices about ideas/content based on the purpose and intended audience</li> </ul>