

PLACING STUDENTS INTO THE PROGRAM

Students should begin each unit by writing a passage in response to a prompt. This writing sample can be used as the placement test as well as the pretest. You score the samples with a rubric (provided for each form of writing) that considers the following elements: organization, content, style, and mechanics.

A perfect score is 100 points. If your students score 20-95 points, they have the necessary preskills to participate in the unit.

Guidelines for placement:

- 0-19 points: The student may not function well at the level tested. If, because of class organization, the student must be placed in this level, they will require accommodation and assistance.
- 20-95 points: The student is properly placed and will benefit from instruction at the level tested.
- 96-100 points: The student may have skills exceeding those taught at the level tested. If, because of class organization, the student must be placed in this level, they can still benefit from participation in this level of the program. Additional challenges can be added by making adjustments on the rubric for what is required of this student. For example, if the rubric requires students to use adjectives to describe nouns, the higher performing students can be required to provide more than one adjective to describe some nouns.

After students have completed the placement test and you know they're appropriately placed, you are ready to begin the lessons.

GETTING READY TO START

The pretest should be used to determine if your students are working at the Beginning Level of Narrative Writing. A pretest should be administered and scored before you introduce this unit.

Each student will need lined paper and a folder to use as a writing portfolio in which to keep writing assignments.

Introducing Narrative Writing

(Explain what the class will be doing during this Narrative Writing unit.) **We're going to have fun together as you learn to be authors in many different forms of writing. Sometimes authors work with others to produce a piece of writing. This kind of writing is called a collaborative writing project. Authors who work together enjoy sharing their ideas. Sometimes we will work as a collaborative group to write a class piece of writing. I'll write our ideas and the piece of writing on chart paper or on the Smart Board. Everyone will contribute ideas to the class piece of writing.** (Note: Writing can be word processed using a computer and a Smart board.)

Sometimes authors work alone. After we work collaboratively, you'll produce a piece of writing on your own.

For the next several lessons, you'll be learning about narrative writing. A narrative is a story an author makes up or a story that tells about something that happened. When you write a narrative, you answer the question "What happened?" Personal narratives and problem-centered stories are two kinds of narrative writing we will be learning about.

A personal narrative is a story about something that happened to the author. An example would be telling about what happened on your summer vacation. What do we call a story that tells about something that happened to the author? A *personal narrative*.

A problem-centered story can be an imaginary story that tells about a problem a character or characters had and how the problem was solved. An example would be the story *The Three Little Pigs*. The characters were the three pigs. Their problem was that a wolf wanted to eat them. How did they solve the problem? Ideas: *They built houses; the first house was built of straw, and the wolf blew it down; the second house was built of sticks, and the wolf blew it down; the third house was built of bricks, and the wolf couldn't blow it down. The pigs were safe from the wolf in the brick house. What do we call an imaginary story that tells about a problem characters had and how it was solved? A problem-centered story.*

Some personal narratives can be problem-centered. In a problem-centered personal narrative, the author tells about a problem they had and what they did to solve it. Can a personal narrative be problem-centered? Yes.

OBTAINING A BEGINNING WRITING SAMPLE—PRETEST

Administering the Pretest

PREPARATION: Write or display the following prompt on the board. Think about an experience you've had where you wanted to learn to do something. What happened as you tried to learn? How did you finally succeed? Write a story to tell what happened.

(Explain to students that before they start the Narrative Writing Unit, you would like to collect a sample of their writing. Mention that you will save this sample so you and they can see how their writing develops as they learn more about writing narrative passages.

Ask a student to read aloud the prompt. Ask students to write a story on lined paper. Allow sufficient time to write. Ask students to edit, proofread, and write or word process a final copy of the story. Use the rubric (page 12) and scoring guide found below to evaluate each student's writing. Staple the rubric to each student's piece of writing. Keep the writing sample and scoring rubric for comparison at the end of the unit.)

Scoring the Pretest

(For each element:

Give a score of 0 if there is no evidence of the element.

Give a score of 1 for each element at the emerging level.

Give a score of 2-3 for each element at the basic level.

Give a score of 4 for each element at the proficient level based on the state curriculum or Common Core State Standards.

Give a score of 5 for each element at the advanced level.

Total the scores for each individual element. Place students according to the guidelines for placement found on page 10.)

Name _____ Date _____

RUBRIC

Pretest

Posttest

Scoring the Sample

- Give the student a score of 0 if there is no evidence of the element.
- Give the student a score of 1 for each element at the emerging level.
- Give the student a score of 2-3 for each element at the basic level.
- Give the student a score of 4 for each element at the proficient level.
- Give the student a score of 5 for each element at the advanced level.

Evaluating the Elements of a Piece of Narrative Writing	
The author of this problem-centered circle story...	Points Earned
Organization	
Writes a title that gets the reader’s attention and gives the reader a hint about what will happen in the story.	
Includes a beginning paragraph.	
Includes one or more middle paragraphs.	
Includes an ending paragraph.	
Ends the story with the character back where they started.	
Content	
Includes a setting that tells when and where the story takes place.	
Includes dialogue.	
States the problem.	
States a solution to the problem.	
Describes the character’s feelings.	
Style	
Maintains a consistent first person point of view.	
Tells the story consistently in the past tense.	
Uses a variety of sentence beginnings.	
Uses adjectives to describe nouns.	
Illustrates the story by drawing a picture that matches the content.	
Mechanics	
Indents paragraphs.	
Uses correct punctuation to end declarative and interrogative sentences.	
Uses quotation marks to indicate that someone is speaking.	
Capitalizes I, first and last names, and the first word of sentences.	
Uses conventional spelling at a developmentally appropriate level.	
Total Points	