

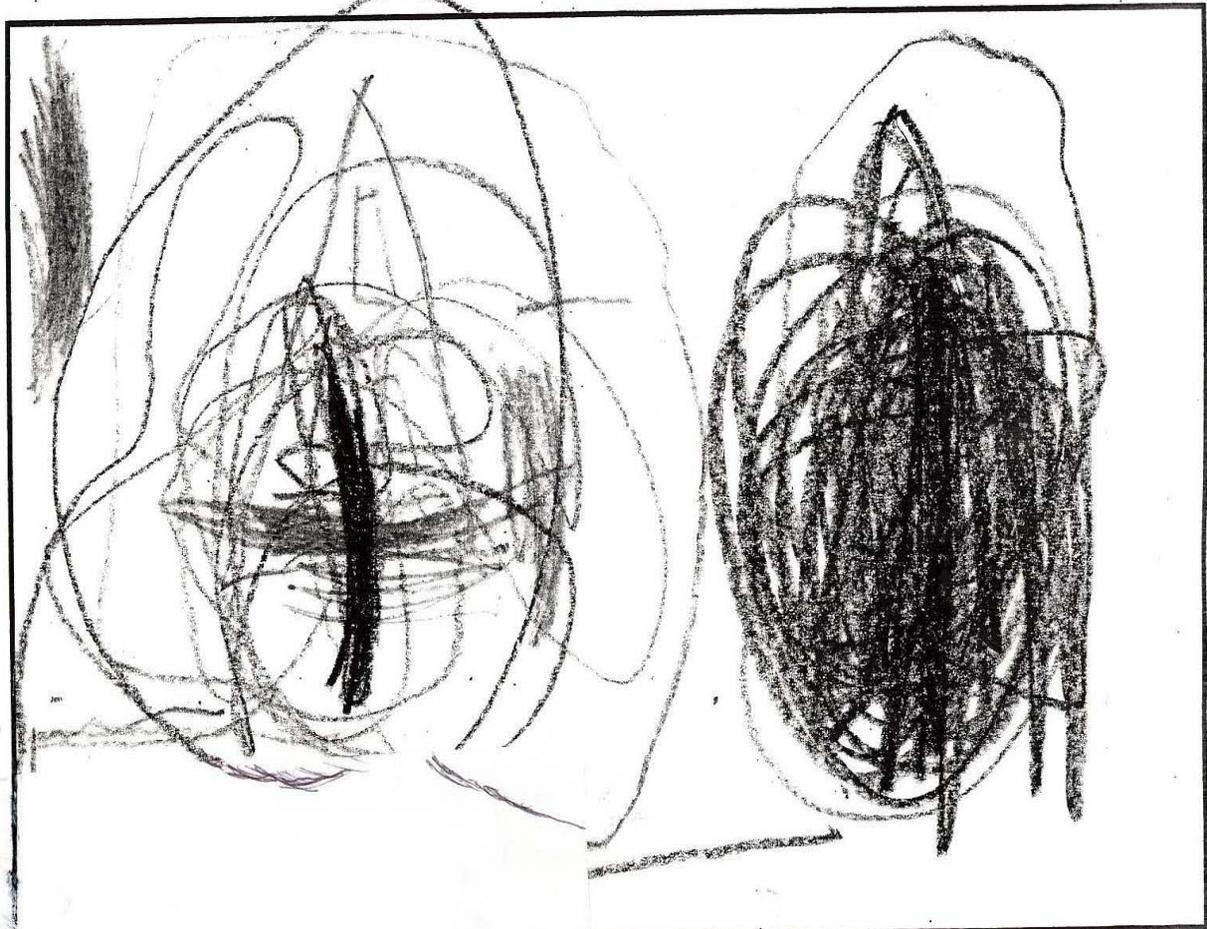
## K-8 Continuum for Assessing Narrative Writing

*Note: When assessing levels 1, 2 and 3 texts, the child needs to be present.*

<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p><i>I Was Home Dad, Joe and Me/</i></p>	<p><b>Several pictures may be representational, with oral commentary and perhaps approximated letters</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of subject/focus</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When given a small booklet and asked to write a story, the writer makes a collection of pictures that may be nonrepresentational on many of the pages and, when asked to read his or her story, provides accompanying oral comments that are not yet organized into a chronological account.</li> <li>○ The pictures do not appear to be connected to each other, and it may be that none of them depict an event.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer probably does not yet depict scenes in the drawing, and certainly does not in the text.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If encouraged to do so, the writer may return to his or her initial drawing and revise it by adding more to the drawing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/ words/thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Especially because the writer may make non representational marks, there may be no sense of characters, let alone of characters doing events.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer's illustration often includes marks which seem to float in the air, each separate from the next. At this stage, the child is not yet apt to ground his or her marks onto a specific setting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Concept of Writing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child seems to believe that pictures carry meaning because when asked to do so, the child 'reads' the text, telling about the items in the pictures.</li> <li>• Even when asked to 'write the words,' the child may not yet produce approximated letter strings or different attempts at written words.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meaning/ Significance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child may not yet write to communicate a meaning, a specific content. That is, instead of deciding upon a meaning and then working to capture that on the page, the child may make marks on the page for the sheer pleasure of making marks or to produce a drawing that he or she knows how to make (e.g. of a flower) deciding on a meaning for the text only when asked to 'read' the text. The meaning may, in fact, change every time the child 'reads' the text.</li> </ul>

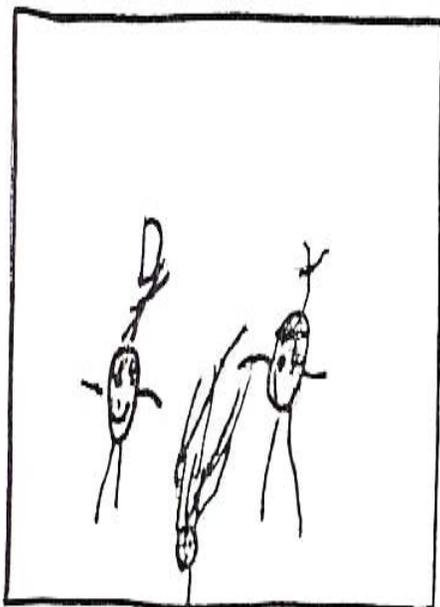
Level 1 Writing Sample

Name DEV

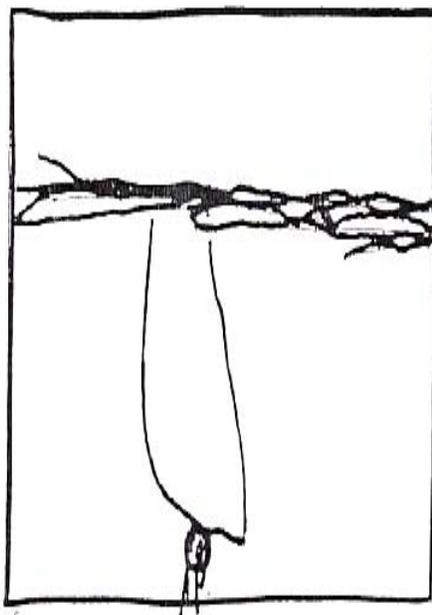


I was home.

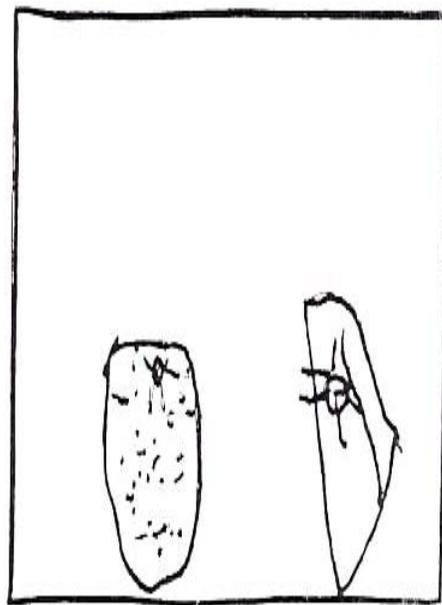
Level 1 Writing Sample:



SLS



SLG



SBJ

"Dad, Joe and me."

"I am swimming"

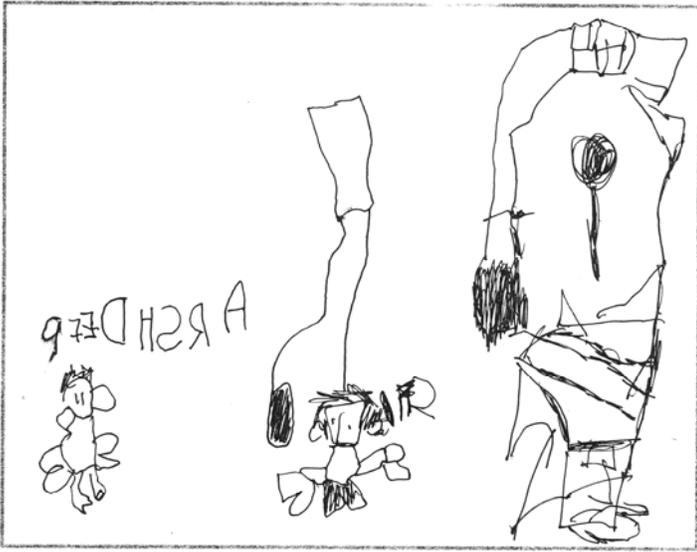
"I am sleeping. My sister is sleeping."

<p><b>Level 2</b> <i>Zoo/ Sabrina</i></p>	<p><b>A collection of representational pictures related to a single topic or event with accompanying gestures toward writing.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of subject/focus</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When given a small booklet and asked to write a story, the writer makes representational pictures accompanied by attempts at writing.</li> <li>○ When asked to read his or her story, the child produces an oral commentary that encompasses the collection of pictures and pages of text.</li> <li>○ The pictures and pages are all related to a single topic or event. That is, the pictures and writing attempts are centered on a topic of choice, though probably not yet conveyed as a sequential narrative.</li> <li>○ The text is more apt to tell all-about a topic or an event rather than to convey a step-by-step progression through an event.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer often represents a character or two in his or her drawings. These people (or animals) tend to be standing motionless, depicted through frontal views.</li> <li>○ The writer may be gesturing towards visually recreating events. His or her drawings may, for example, show two characters and an object or two around which they relate – a TV, a car, a house, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Often the child ‘reads’ the first page as if it contains one sentence, then ‘reads’ the next page as if it contains the next sentence, etc.</li> <li>○ If the writer elaborates by including details, he or she is apt to do this by adding to the pictures or the oral text (and less apt to involve more writing). This process of adding detail often continues as a child ‘reads’ the text—each new time the child reads the text, he or she may add more details.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters’ traits/words/ thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The drawing generally involves a character or two (a person or an animal). Sometimes there is also an object (a car, a house, a tree).</li> <li>○ Often the pictures of characters’ faces show emotions.</li> <li>○ The oral ‘story’ that accompanies the pictures is probably a summary. Therefore, the writer probably does not yet convey dialogue or tell what a character is thinking.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

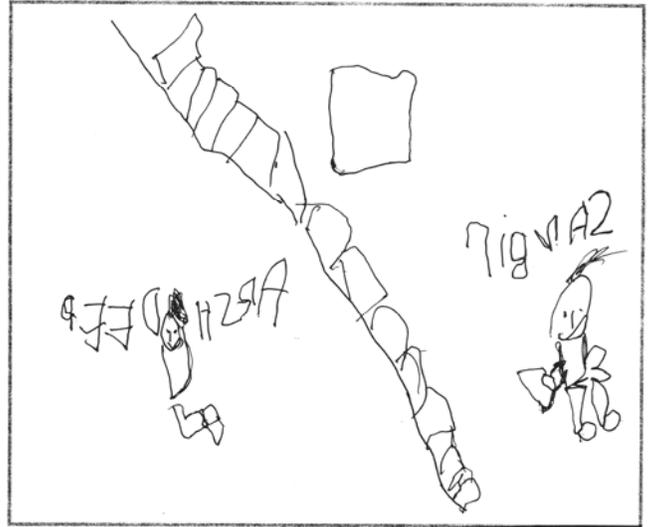
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell Cont'd</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer's drawings may situate items and people in a specific setting, with a line of grass or ground providing a unifying sense of place to what might otherwise be a collection of floating items.</li> <li>○ In the written and story-told text, a setting may be inferred through the chronicle of a character's actions ("I went to the park"), but the writer's intention is probably to tell what he/she (or the character) did rather than to tell about the place. The setting is thus brought out usually only because it was attached to that action.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Concept of Writing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The text will include at least approximated written words. These will probably include labels on the drawings and may also include letter strings at the bottoms of pages.</li> <li>• The child's approximated writing suggests he or she recognizes that writing is different than drawing—the approximated writing shows the child grasps the reoccurring, linear, letter-like nature of writing.</li> <li>• The child may or may not yet grasp the directionality of written English (left-to-right, top-to-bottom).</li> <li>• The child seems to believe that his or her approximated letters carry meaning because at least when nudged to do so, the child 'reads the writing,' and does not simply talk about the pictures.</li> <li>• If asked, 'What might you do with this story now that you are done writing it?' the child shows an awareness of the purposes for written language, suggesting it be shared, read aloud, used or otherwise published.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meaning/ Significance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child understands that written texts convey meaning. He or she seems to have decided upon a topic or content, then drawn and written to capture that on the page.</li> </ul>

Level 2 Writing Sample:

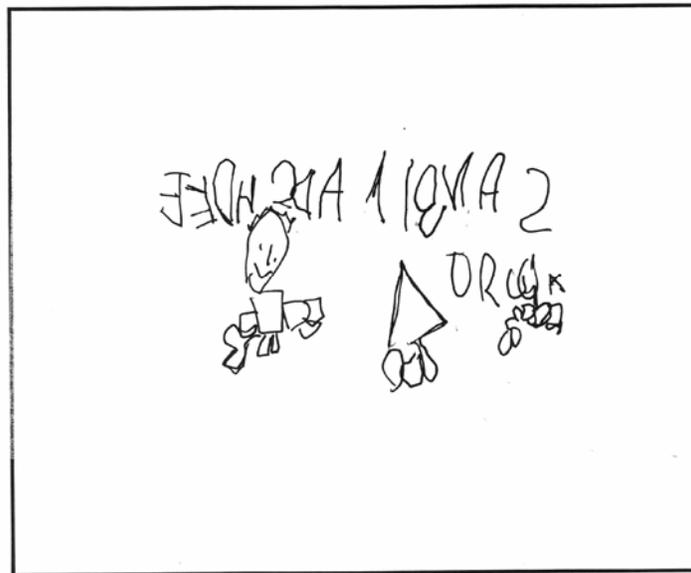
Name SANBIR



"I played video games with my brother"



"I watched TV with my brother"

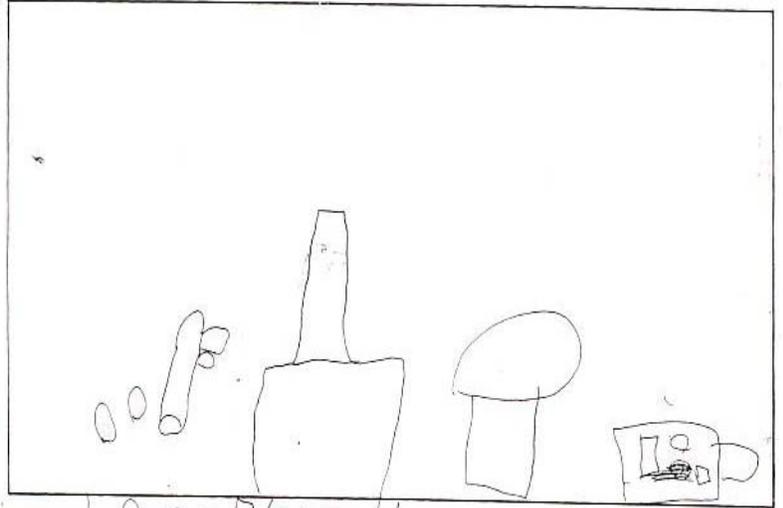
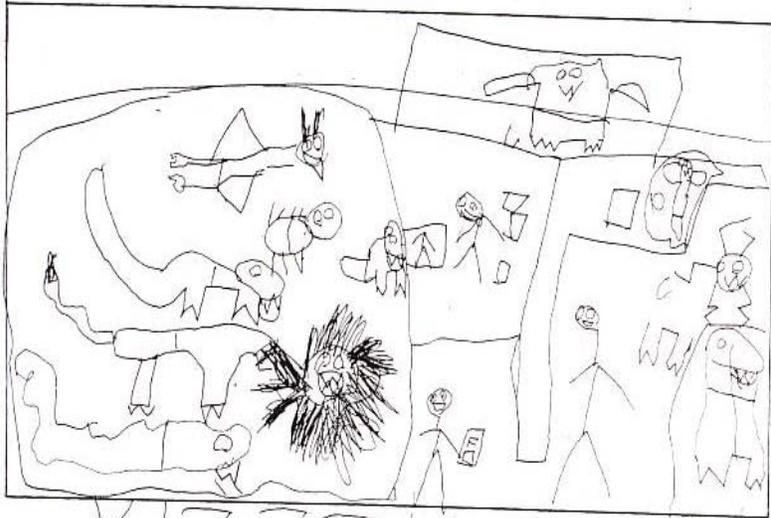


"I played trucks with my brother"

Level 2 Writing Sample:

Name JOSEPH

Name Joseph



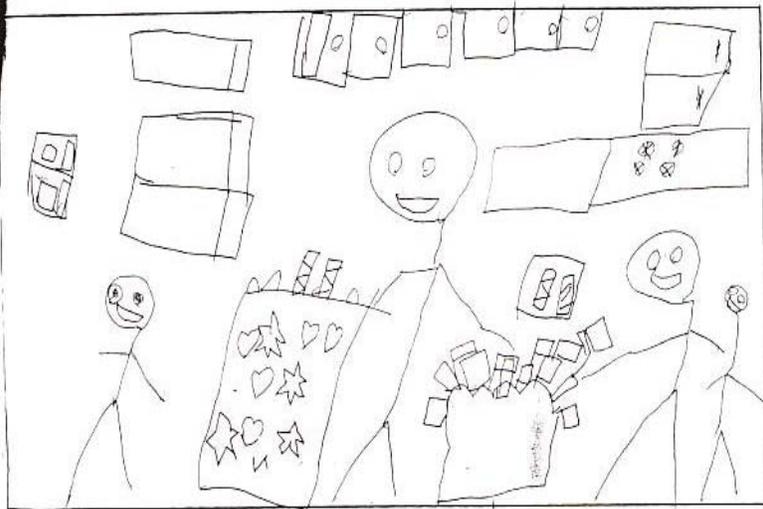
Y I Z Z Z I I L P

J O S E P H N Z H M M I L I

"I am at the zoo."

"The buildings."

Name Joseph

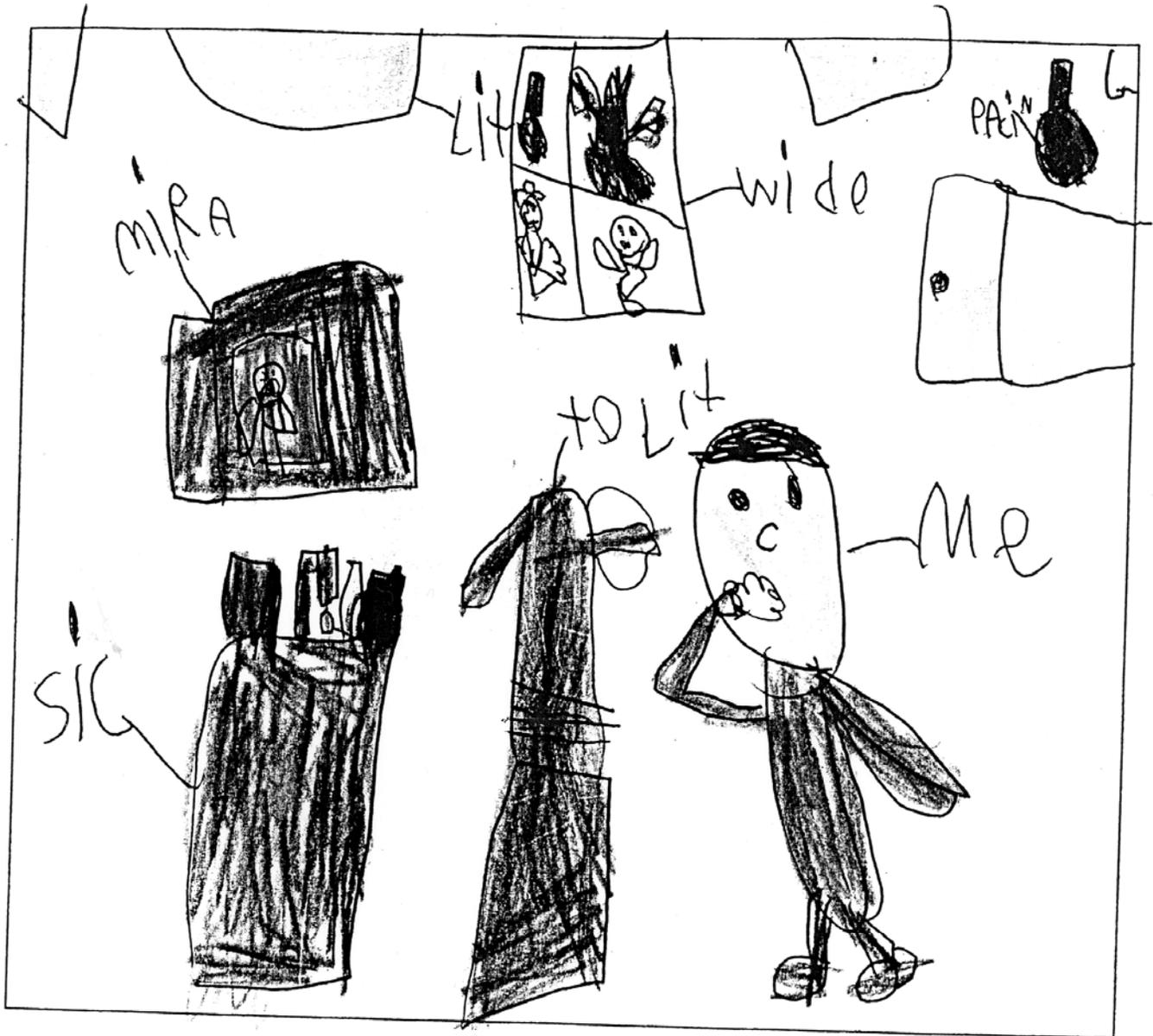


C K E L L K W L

"We went to the store. at the zoo."

<b>Level 3</b> <i>Spider</i>	<b>A sparse, sequential written account of an event</b>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of subject/focus</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When asked to write a story, the writer may draw a sequence of pictures and will in any case write a very brief chronicle telling about how the child or a character progressed through a sequence of events.</li> <li>○ Ideally (but not always) this text focuses on a single event.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/cohesiveness of story</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The text suggests that the writer understands that stories have a beginning, middle, and end. The character (or narrator) does one thing, then the next, and then perhaps the next thing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer seems to have recalled or imagined a sequence of actions, and is retelling that sequence in a step by step fashion. This allows the reader to know what happened first, next, and next (if not yet to vicariously experience those events).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Each action/step is apt to be told in just one or two sentences.</li> <li>○ As in level two, if the writer elaborates by including details, he or she is apt to do this by adding to the pictures or the oral text only. With prompting from the teacher, the writer will add these to the written text as well.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/words/thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the writer includes details about what the character or narrator says, this 'talk' is not provided in direct quotations (it is instead summarized or included in speech bubbles), and usually the talk serves to convey only what is happening, not what the character/narrator thinks or feels about what is happening. The conversation is apt to do the job of furthering the plot. (<i>I told my mom I was going to the park.</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As in level 2, if the writer conveys the setting at all, the writer seems to have been focused on telling what he or she (or the character) <i>did</i> first and next. Because those actions may have involved places, the setting may be tucked into the story but it is not apt to have been developed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Concept of writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The written portion of this text shows a grasp of directionality and probably shows also a sense of word, with more than one letter generally representing each word and with spaces between at least many of the words. The child can point to words as he or she reads, and reads with some grasp of one-to-one.</li> <li>• The writer continues to show some sense of the purposes for writing. When asked, 'If you wanted this to be the best piece you ever wrote, what might you do with next with it?' the writer shows that he or she recognizes the piece could be expanded upon or otherwise revised, as well as shared with readers.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fact that the writer has retold an event in his or her life (or an imagined one) suggests that he or she is coming to trust that there is value in simply retelling the sequence of an event. In this way, the writer is growing towards an understanding that writing can be a way to imbue experiences with meaning.</li> </ul>

Level 3 Writing Sample:

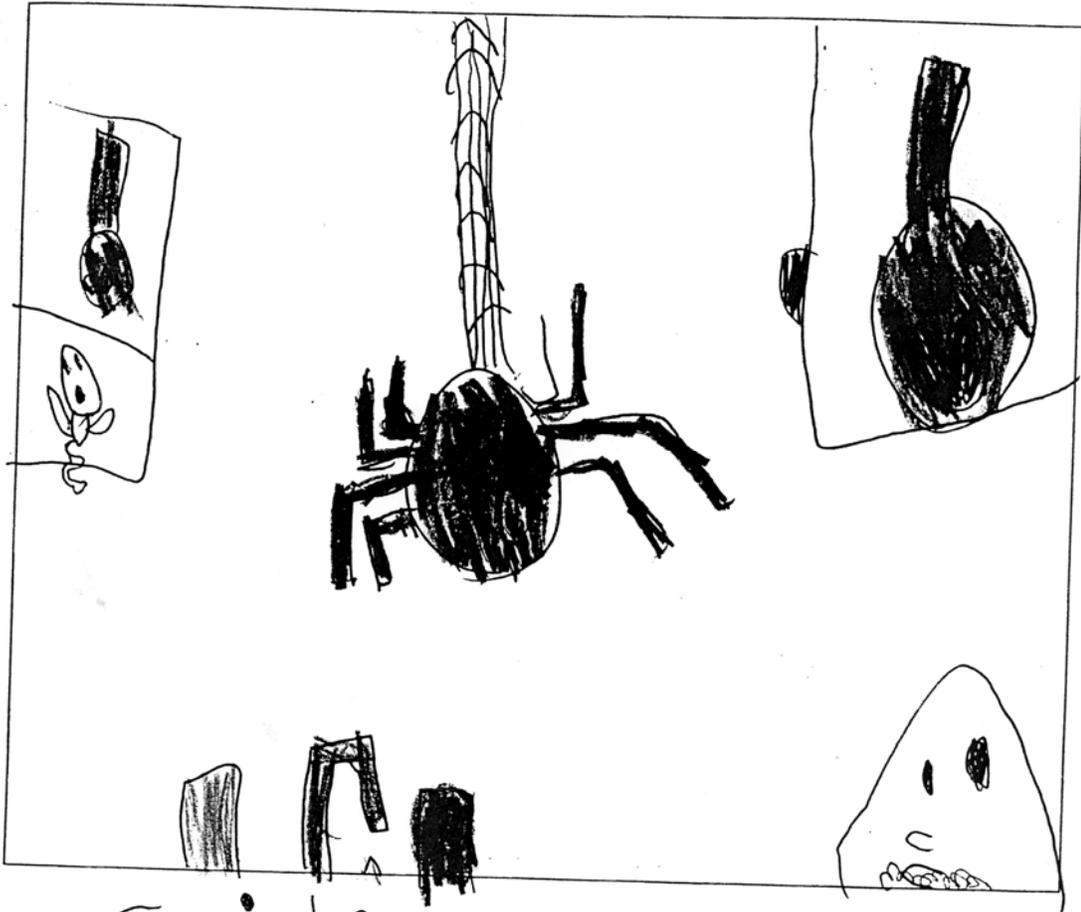


I WAS BRASH IN MY

TEXT

I Like

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



A SPIDER CAM. IN MY

MOF

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

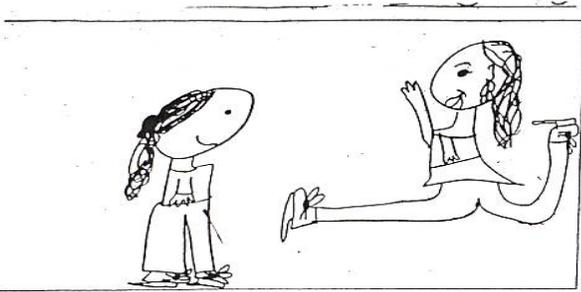


I split the spider  
out

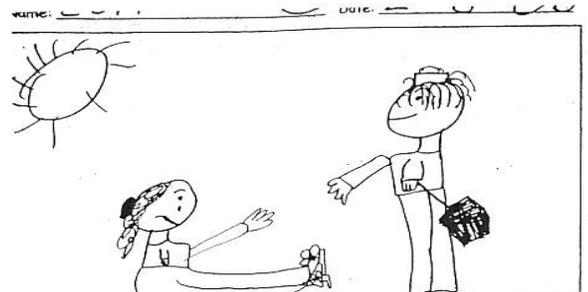
<p><b>Level 4</b></p> <p><i>Ice Skating</i></p>	<p><b>A sequential written account that is focused by time, and includes elaboration.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of subject/focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This remains the same as in level 3: when asked to write a story, the writer produces a chronological account about the narrator or a character who progresses through a sequence of micro events (the level of focus is apt to be new at this stage).</li> <li>○ The text tells the story of a <i>focused</i> ‘small moment’ event, one which occurs over a small period of time. (The writer may have done this earlier as well.)</li> <li>○ Each step of the narrative is more developed than at previous levels (see elaboration/ show don’t tell).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/cohesiveness of story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer may begin to demonstrate some sense that a narrative account requires an ending. The ending may involve an emotional response (‘I hugged my Mom.’) or an activity that brings closure (‘I went home.’).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At this level, the writer tends to either take smaller, more precise steps through the sequence of events (“I went to the store. I waited in line. I got soda. Then I was drinking my soda and I saw a hurt bird.”), or else the writer conveys each step with more detail (“I bought a soda.” I love root beer the best. It tastes like candy. I had diet root beer. Then I saw a hurt bird.”).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The text is more detailed than that which writers produced at earlier levels. Each action/step may be told in several sentences.</li> <li>○ The writer often conveys not only actions but also responses to those actions (feelings or thoughts the writer/narrator had in response to the action).</li> <li>○ The writer is not yet apt to include details that convey <i>how</i> something is said or done.</li> <li>○ The writer is not yet apt to develop characters by telling details about them. However, often the writer does add distinguishing traits into his or her drawing: ‘Dad has bushy hair and a big belly,’ ‘Mom has on glasses.’ But it is unlikely that the character development occurs yet in the written text. The characters do different things, but their traits aren’t conveyed with words.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters’ traits/words/thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Writers now include some specifics about what characters say, think and feel, though what characters say is still apt to be summarized by the narrator or in speech bubbles, rather than written in exact dialogue. Similarly, if the writer includes information about how the narrator (or a character) feels, the feeling is probably stated not shown. (“I was sad.”)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i></li> </ul>

	As in previous levels, the writer is not apt to develop the setting, though it may be inferred through the chronicle of a character's events ("I went ice skating," "I went to the ballet.").
<b>Concept of Writing/ Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in the previous level, the written portion of this text shows a grasp of directionality as well as a sense of word. At this point, each word is generally represented by most of the letters that make it up (or by ones that children hear in the word) and with spaces between many of the words.</li> <li>• The writer has a greater sense of the purposes for writing.</li> <li>• If texts at this level show any signs that the writer is deliberately aiming to not only tell content but to tell the story well, in a way that creates an effect on readers, the evidence of this will be rudimentary. For example, the writer may have added some sound effects or exclamation marks "to add excitement."</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer has chosen to write a story about a small, focused moment, which is apt to be a rather ordinary everyday moment. This suggests the writer is coming to believe that small everyday events merit being subjects of writing. The writer is not yet apt to feel that it is important to advance the significance of the event depicted in the narrative, although the writer may seem to be trying to make the event seem exciting.</li> </ul>

Level 4 Writing Sample:

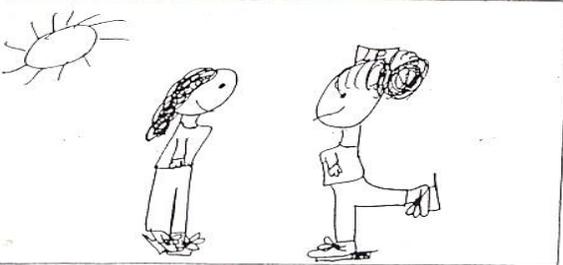


I went Ice skate  
and I saw a girl doing  
the jump and then  
I was doing the jump  
and I started doing it.



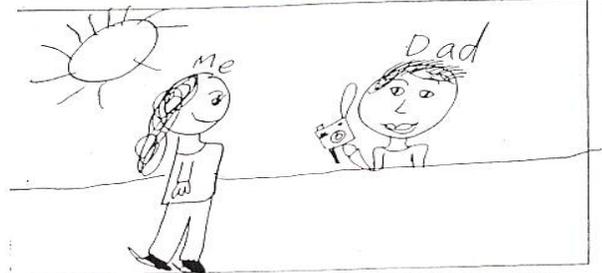
**AND I FELL AND  
SAID UOH!** and  
then the savers on  
the Ice came to  
me and said to me are  
you oh ok.

Name: LORI (3) Date: 2-8-06



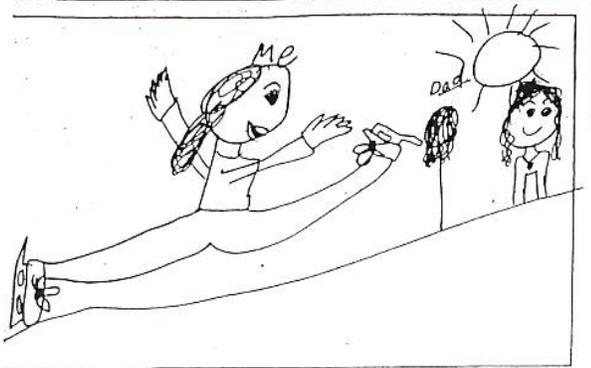
and I said yas and  
they said you  
sraired us and I  
said sarereuc and they  
said it isok.

Name: LORI (1) Date: 2-8-06

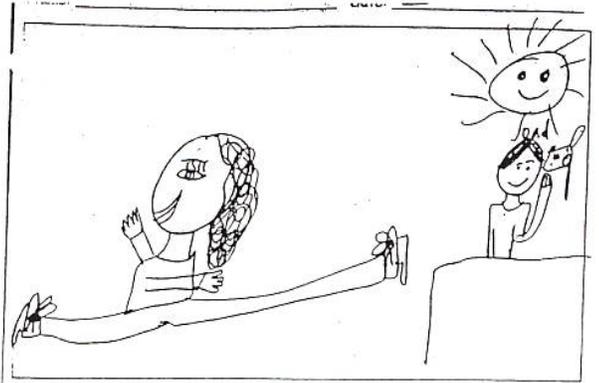


and then I went  
to my dad and he said  
are you ok and I  
said yas I am  
to my dad and he said  
you sraired me

Name: L V I



and then I tried  
the jump again and  
then I did not  
fell.

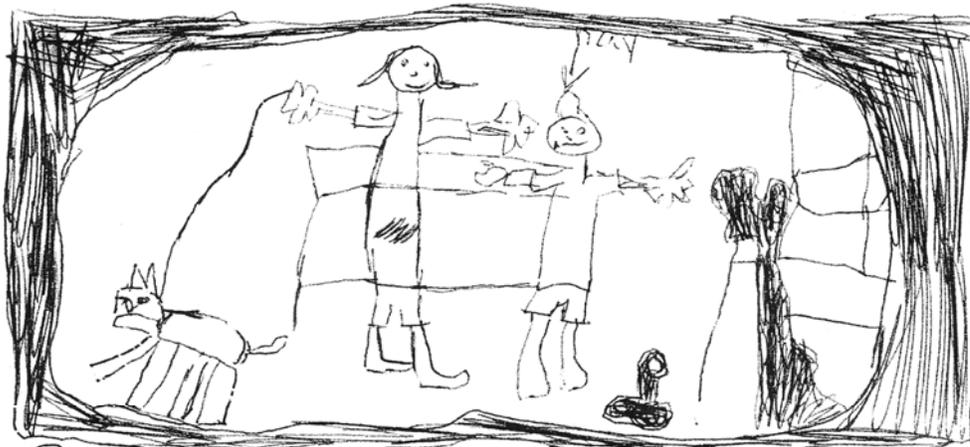


and then my cousin's  
came to me and said  
do you like my skate  
and yes? I do  
you Ice skate good I  
said yes.

<p><b>Level 5</b></p> <p><i>My Dog Kelo</i></p>	<p><b>A more developed account of a focused event</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This remains the same as in levels 3 and 4: when asked to write a story, the writer tells the story of a chronological sequence of micro-events.</li> <li>○ As in level 4, the text tells the story of a <i>focused</i> ‘small moment’ event, one which occurs over a small period of time.</li> <li>○ Each step in the narrative continues to be more elaborated upon.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer shows an early understanding of narrative structure in that the narrator (or the main character) makes an initiating action towards the start of the story and then does a sequence of related actions, all chronologically and often, causally related to each other.</li> <li>○ The writer shows a sense that something happens in a story. There is a loose sense of build-up, although often the narrative contains many unrelated details.</li> <li>○ As in level 4, the final portion of the story conveys a sense of ending. (The writer <i>may</i> record the last action in the sequence as a way to end the account – “I climbed down from the monkey bars”— or the writer may add a response to the event – “I’ll never forget that day!”)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer will either write several sentences to depict most of the steps in the sequence of activities, or the writer will progress with very small steps through a detailed sequence of events, in which case the text is apt to include many steps through the event (the timeline for such a text would show a progression of at least 8 actions).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The narrative contains much more detail than earlier levels.</li> <li>○ The details are apt to especially convey small steps in the progression of events.</li> <li>○ Much of the detail may seem to a critical reader to be unessential to the story. It is as if the writer recorded everything he or she remembered or imagined without weighing the contribution the details might make to the whole and without consideration for the intended effect.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell Cont'd</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/ words/thoughts/feelings:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer tends to cite what the central character (and perhaps others) did and said in a step-by-step list of actions and accompanying dialogue.</li> <li>○ In particular instances, the writer probably shows what the central character (or the narrator) said or did in such a way as to suggest the person's feelings ('I hugged my Mom and said thanks.')</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the writer develops setting, it is usually in one place only, and in a single summary phrase or sentence. ("One nice sunny day..." or, "There were slides at the park.")</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Craft</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the most part, pieces at this level often have a pedestrian (not literary) feel. They read like written versions of an oral account.</li> <li>• The writer may include direct quotations.</li> <li>• The writer may also include sound effects or a few descriptive words. In isolated sections of the text, then, it is evident that the writer tried to write well.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meaning/ Significance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer is apt to have written about a 'small moment' event in a way that suggests he or she found excitement or feelings in what could have been an ordinary moment.</li> <li>• The writer will probably include the narrator's (or central character's) response to the event. This may be woven throughout the text but is especially apt to occur at the end of the text: "I cried and cried."</li> </ul>

Isaac Rivera January 26, 20



One sunny morning I went to the park with my dog Kelo. I asked my dad can I take a with me to the park. My mom took my dog and I to the park on the train. Kelo was good. He was watching the people go in and out of the train. Suddenly my dog started acting strange. He tried to bite other dogs. I shouted Stop KELO.



I went up to him and his eyes were red. He started barking at me. I said, stop Kelo. I hit him on the head. He stopped barking at me. A girl dog came in the train. He started playing with the girl dog. I asked the man what was the dog's name. He said my dog's name was Sally. I said, your dog's name is Sally. it's nice. Then Kelo bit me on my leg. STOP KELO. My mom hit him



on the head and he finally he sat down. I r felt sad because Kelo couldn't play anymore.

<p><b>Level 6</b> <i>Not Funny!/ Ear Piercing</i></p>	<p><b>The internal story (the narrator’s or character’s thoughts and feelings) is interwoven into the sequence of actions, giving this focused account new cohesiveness.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This aspect of the writing remains the same as in level 5: the writer tells the story of a chronological sequence of micro-events</li> <li>○ As in levels 4 and 5, the writer writes about a focused ‘small moment’ event.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The resulting text gestures towards being a cohesive narrative. The cohesiveness will probably not come from any deliberate choices on the writer’s part so much as from the fact that by including the internal story (see elaboration), the writer now supplies the main character’s (or narrator’s) motivation for and response to the events, and this creates an (accidental, or perhaps unconscious on the part of the writer) impression of cohesion.</li> <li>○ Sometimes the writer’s efforts to relay a detailed story means that details swamp the story–structure. This may also mean the writer doesn’t end the story at a place that relates to the real heart/message of the story but instead tells more (and more).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As in levels 4 and 5, the writer either writes several sentences about most of the steps in the sequence of activities, or the writer progresses slowly through the sequence of events, so a timeline of the text would include approximately 8 steps.</li> <li>○ At this level, there is sometimes a sense that the writer is gesturing toward developing the heart of the story (i.e. the part that reveals what the writer is most trying to show), but this part is often either not clearly highlighted or it isn’t distinguishable from the rest of the story.</li> <li>○ There is a sense that the writer has tried to ‘make a movie in his or her mind’ but the result is often more of a soundtrack or just a chronicle of actions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The detail at this stage exists above all in the precision of the steps described and in the amount of dialogue.</li> <li>○ At this stage, the writer aims to tell not only <i>what</i> happened but also to show <i>how</i> it happened.</li> <li>○ Sometimes the cohesiveness of level 5 texts is sacrificed at this level; the writer’s newfound ability to show-not-tell can sometimes overwhelm other aspects of an effective story. For example, pieces at this level may be dialogue-heavy at the expense of reflection, description or summary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell Cont'd</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/words/thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer tends to use dialogue (and sometimes internal thoughts) to elaborate the important aspects of the story.</li> <li>○ The writer will tell what the central character (or the narrator) said or did in such a way as to show the person's feelings throughout the events and his/her responses to the events.</li> <li>○ The text may be so swamped in dialogue that it is hard to follow, but usually it shifts (unevenly) between action, dialogue and thinking, with a preponderance of one or the other (often dialogue).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer may have included a few, very specific details which help readers visualize portions of the story.</li> </ul> </li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pieces at this level sometimes have a feeling of inflexibility about them; often a writer is so focused on trying out an element of craft (e.g. dialogue or detail) that he or she overdoes it and the resulting text feels tedious.</li> <li>• These texts are apt to start 'right in the story' with a character saying something or engaged in a detailed action. Sometimes the writer seems to get stuck in this initial way of writing, and the ensuing draft may therefore contain little variation.</li> <li>• The writer aims not only to 'tell what happened' but also to write "a good story." This intention may mean that, in addition to including direct quotations, sound effects, and/or a few descriptive words, the writer may use some story language, a few literary words or some descriptive clauses. Usually, the result is a bit awkward or at least uneven; the writer doesn't yet know how to weave elements of craft seamlessly into the narrative.</li> <li>• When the writer builds up important sections of the story it seems as if the writer is trying not only to tell more but also to "help readers picture it" or to "make it more exciting." (See below.)</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer writes about a small event and about his or her (or the character's) thoughts, dialogue and feelings as they occurred within the events. Simply by doing this, the writer imbues that moment with meaning. For the most part, however, the writer tells a sequence of events which he or she believes has some significance, and then simply expects readers (on their own) to grasp the significance of the moment.</li> </ul>

NOT FUNNY!  
One day I asked my mom  
"when are we going to see  
Leslie and Crystal?" she said  
"I don't know I will call him."  
So she called him "Leslie  
can you pick up I said a  
Michael this weekend?" "oh"  
so they had their conversation  
I told my brother Michael,  
"Michael we might go to  
Leslie's house this weekend"  
He said "yesssss" while I  
said "you remind me of Freak  
the mighty." He was punching  
his fist in the air just like  
him. Then he said "Get on my  
shoulders" ~~and then~~ I climbed  
up then I started to punch  
my fists and yell "Freak the  
mighty" then my mom started  
laughing like crazy

She turned bright red as  
a shiny apple. She couldn't  
breathe so I got down and  
took some water and splashed  
some on her then let her  
drink some. She told me that

we were going to his house  
for the weekend. Then I climbed  
up again and chanted "Freak  
the mighty, Freak the mighty"  
Freak the mighty. A potential  
my mom said it was funnier  
the first time it's not funny  
anymore" so I stopped.

By: Claudia Marshall/1/1/06  
"1,2,3" said the lady with the ear  
piercing gun. As I saw the needle on  
the left side of my head I could  
not bear the pressure.

"Wait" I screamed I wouldn't be  
surprised if the ~~glass~~ window  
cracked. I tried to slide off  
of the chair but my cousin Emily  
who is 16 tried to relax me by  
saying  
"you will be fine Claudia" in a  
soothing voice.

"1,2,3" said the lady but before  
I could do anything she put  
the needle through my ear and  
quickly went to the other side of my  
ear and did the other side.

"oh my gosh" I said excitedly.  
"wow, Claudia you look great"  
said my mom and my aunt,  
"I love them" said my cousin  
I went to the mirror.

"Oh my" I said so ~~we~~ we went to  
the car and got in and my aunt  
turned on the engine and put  
on some music and that was the  
end of my ear piercing adventure.

The End!

<p><b>Level 7</b> <i>Learning to Swim with Uncle/Matches/What's in the Box?</i></p>	<p><b>The writer shows (not tells) this sequence of events—as a result the plot unfolds so readers experience the evolving drama rather than simply hear an account of what the character or narrator did.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This remains the same as in levels 5 and 6: the writer conveys a chronological sequence of micro-events (and responses to events).</li> <li>○ As in levels 4, 5 and 6, the writer writes about a focused ‘small moment’ event.</li> <li>○ The story unfolds in a step-by-step fashion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The story often begins with the narrator or the main character in the midst of an action; that is, there is rarely a prelude to the unfolding plotline.</li> <li>○ Time tends to progress evenly.</li> <li>○ The writer begins to use a traditional problem/solution structure in the piece. There is perhaps something big that happens and some sense of rising tension and of resolution, although some uncontrolled detail may still overwhelm this underlying (and perhaps unconscious) story-structure.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/Show Don't Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ By this level the writer not only progresses slowly through the sequence but also develops some of these steps with a few sentences about each</li> <li>○ The text is no longer a summary; instead, it is a story retold step by step. The characters act and interact on the page.</li> <li>○ The writer seems to have ‘made a movie in his or her mind,’ envisioning or reliving the experience and then writing about it so that readers can do the same.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There are lots of details – often too many, in fact. That is, there may be a great amount of detail that doesn't embellish the main idea, enhance the message, or work in alignment with the story's mood.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell Cont'd</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/ words/thoughts/feelings</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As in level 6, the writer shows not only what the character <i>did</i> and <i>said</i>, but also what the character <i>thought</i> and <i>felt</i>. This is especially true for the heart of the story. Usually this means the main character (or narrator) makes smaller movements at this section of the story. That is, any action—setting the table—can be told in a single sentence, or broken into smaller steps and interlaced with the character's thoughts and comments. This may also happen as the tension is rising in the story.</li> <li>○ The writer continues to use dialogue and internal thought to show what is happening and to show the narrator's or main character's internal experience of those events. The fact that the internal story is revealed often allows readers to not only follow the sequences of a character's feelings but also to ascertain the cause-and-effect links which glue together unfolding micro- events.</li> <li>○ If there are several characters in the story, the characters are often not differentiated from each other. Unless they are widely different in age, their dialogue and actions aren't distinctly different one from another. Often only the main character (or narrator) is developed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer begins to develop the setting so that readers do not simply know where the characters are (a pool), but can see some of the details of where they are (in a deep pool).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Craft</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in texts written at the previous level, these texts are apt to start 'right in the story' with a character saying something or engaged in a detailed action. Sometimes the writer seems to get stuck in this initial way of writing, and the ensuing draft may therefore contain little variation.</li> <li>• This writer may begin to develop story tension, building up the rising action in the story by showing the character doing small actions that serve to convey the character's feelings and motivations or reactions to the problems. The draft may generate a sense of anticipation in readers.</li> <li>• The writer may build up the important section of the story, as if trying to draw readers into the drama that the main character (or narrator) is experiencing.</li> <li>• Often there is a sense that the craft in pieces at this level is somewhat accidental, not deliberate. The topic itself may generate a degree of craft not yet fully understood or controlled by the writer. It is almost as if the writer has stumbled upon good craft moves simply because of the topic (often one with great tension or drama) he or she is writing about.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meaning/ Significance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in level 5, the writer gestures towards imbuing a small moment with meaning by writing about that moment in a fashion that attempts to make the moment interesting. The change in this level is with the meaning created by show-don't-tell; the writer tries to show that the event was exciting, sad, proud or scary for the main character (or the narrator).</li> </ul>

Level 7 Writing Sample:

PSZ8Man  
class-4-403

Arleniss  
2/2/06

I was in the pool and my uncle came to me and said "do you want me to teach you how to swim?" I said "yes" I was so nervous that I felt butterfly in my stomach. so then I took off the floaties that I use to float in the water with. I was so scared that I felt that my heart exploded. because the water was cold the pool was deep. so then I close my eyes and tried to swim buy moving my feet and my hands but I was really nervous I thought I was going to drown

so then I close my eyes my uncle was beside me then I started to feel that I was going to drown I started to move my legs and my arms then I felt that my uncle wasn't next to me I was going to cry my face was red when I turned around to see where was my uncle I saw that I was in the other side of the pool in the deep side I wasn't going to cry anymore I was going to laugh because I couldn't believe that I learned how to swim so fast.

so I learned how to swim in water I was very proud of my uncle that thought me how to swim and I'm proud of myself because I learned how to swim. every time I go swimming I remember about my uncle who thought me how to swim.

## Whats in the box?

It was a warm dark night. All of a sudden, my mom came through the door.

"MOMMY, MOMMY, MOMMY!" I shouted I jumped on her giving her a hug.

I was about to drag her in when I noticed she was carrying a little brown box.

What could be in that box? I wondered.

"Pitter, pat, pitter, pat!" a noise came from the box.

"Pitter pat, pitter pat!" there it was again for a second time.

Something was moving inside that box.

"Mabeey there's a monster in there!" I thought, "A mini one!"

I started backing away slowly.

"Whats in the box mummy?" I asked.

"A Monster?"

"No, No" said my mom

My mom slowly opened the box. I peeked inside very, very cautiously.

"A Bird!" I screamed. "So that was the mystery noise maker!"

## Terrance

"MATCHES!" I thought. I picked them up. I flipped them open and took out a match. "This is not right. I thought, I'm going to do it any way I said. I rushed to my room to set a string on fire. I crawled under my bed no one can see me now. I thought I set the string on fire. WOOF the sheets burst into flames. What's that small my mom yelled! or nothing I said that's when I heard running feet step. The last step she took was to my room. She saw the flaming sheets she ran to my room. She flipped the bed over the flame burst into his face almost leaving his face like rice crispies she backed away from the fire. I crawled out from under my bed. My mom ran to the bathroom. She got two big buckets of water. She threw the water on the bed to make the fire stop. But the fire was too strong to put out so my mom called the fire department. They brought fire hoses and other materials. They put out the fire. Then I got on punishment for 4 months.

<p><b>Level 8</b></p> <p><i>Goosebumps/ Anxiety</i></p>	<p><b>A more developed, and/or crafted version of level 7, perhaps containing more complex use of time. The story is again dramatized so readers experience it, and it is not yet structured with the coherence or imbued with the significance found in level 9.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As in texts categorized as level 7, these stories unfold in a step-by-step fashion and tend to begin with the narrator or the main character in the midst of an action or dialogue and then they proceed chronologically through the sequence of micro-events within a focused ‘small moment’.</li> <li>○ Texts at this level show more flexibility. The writer is less apt to stick doggedly to chronologically depicting a single small moment. The text may begin with a prelude in which the writer situates this one event, may jump forwards or backwards in time, or may include small bits of summary when this is warranted.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ These texts tend in general to follow traditional story structure, with the character or the narrator meeting with some difficulty and finding some way to either resolve the difficulty or to learn from the experience.</li> <li>○ Often writers will gravitate toward events with ready made significance; the event itself creates the structure vs. the author making a conscious effort to structure the events. Increasingly, however, there will be times when the writer seems to bring bigger meanings to smaller events (i.e. ‘That moment shows my relationship with my father’).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At this level, as in the previous one, the writer has “made a movie in his or her mind,” and writes so that readers can do the same, envisioning and experiencing the unfolding drama.</li> <li>○ Often texts at this level are significantly more developed than those at the earlier levels, and the writer brings out a greater variety of details which show his/her (or the main character’s) feelings about the events. That is, if the story is about a person’s joy over her first dog, the fact that the dog sheds all over the place is either deleted or subordinated so that it does not distract from the effect.</li> <li>○ The writer has stretched out the part he or she deems most important, writing this section with more elaboration and probably progressing in smaller steps through this section of the sequence. That is, every section of the story is not developed equally.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Writers at this level use a greater variety of details, creating a more successful balance. For example, whereas dialogue may overwhelm texts at level 6 (and possibly those at level 7, too), texts at this level are apt to contain a braid of dialogue, setting, actions and internal thought.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/words/thoughts/feelings/Show don't tell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If there are several characters in the story, one may talk and act a bit differently than the other. The defining features may not be subtle, resulting in the characters sometimes being portrayed almost as stereotypes. Still, the story reveals not only what the characters do but also what makes the characters distinct.</li> <li>○ Often texts at this level demonstrate a greater attention to the internal story; the main character's (or narrator's) reflections are more developed and often display great depth or more nuance. The feelings seem more unique to each person. That is, if a person is mad, that madness feels like it isn't exactly the same madness that another person might feel.</li> <li>○ There is often a sense that the internal story has its own timeline. That is, a reader could plot the internal story, showing a clear beginning, middle and end. The writer/main character does not just experience one feeling, but instead the feeling, like the plot, progresses and changes from the beginning to the end of the story.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writing begins to develop the setting in multiple parts of the piece, and/or with a wider range of detail.</li> <li>○ Whereas the writer used to include visual details only about the setting, she now tends to include details about how the character/narrator interacts with the setting, and/or what the character/narrator hears, feels, smells, etc. in their environment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in texts at the previous level, writers develop story tension, building up the rising action. Writers are apt to do this in part by showing the main character doing small actions that reveal the character's feelings, motivations or reactions to problems. The texts generate a sense of anticipation in readers and draw readers into the drama the main character (or the narrator) is experiencing.</li> <li>• The texts contain a balance of dialogue, precise actions, setting and thoughts.</li> <li>• Writers use their knowledge of good writing to make some parts of the text noteworthy. This may mean using sensory details or figurative language to create a sense of place or mood, it may mean using dialogue which reveals the personality of a character. In any case, the text is written in such a fashion that some readers find sections which are especially well-written, and smile in appreciation.</li> <li>• Writers at this level display a control over craft; their craft choices seem deliberate and are used to convey the larger meaning of the piece.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in levels 6 and 7, the writer has made a small moment interesting by showing that the moment was exciting, sad, proud or scary for the main character or the narrator. The writer does not yet, however, seem to invest a great deal of effort in imbuing the story with a larger significance. That is, the writer does not often appear to have tried to teach a lesson, convey an insight, or explore a big idea through the narrative. If a reader were to ask, "What's this story <i>really really</i> about?" the answer would be something which is immediately evident, not grasped through a close interpretive read of the text.</li> </ul>

# Anxiety

By Sandra  
Friedman.

"16 pairs of socks," I read from my list. I opened ~~my~~ my top drawer and humped 16 pairs of socks in my pile of things for camp. I pulled off the cap of my pen and checked SOCKS of my list.

"Okay now, 4 bathing suits," I murmured softly. I want my bathing suit and cross cross, went it on ~~the~~ list. I had it all organized just as I always do. Today I was getting all my stuff together. Tomorrow I would be packing. After that I would be off.

Although, the organization brought tension to my mind. I don't know why. I guess it really made me realize how soon I'd be at sleep-away camp.

I looked at my shelf, searching for my box. "ah ha," I said grabbing the small box covered in flowers. I opened up my box making sure everything was inside. Out came charms for my mom and I. For my sister and I, a locket that had my pictures inside. The last thing was a heart

shaped locket with a mirror  
inside. For me. My dad and I  
hadn't gotten around to doing some-  
thing for the bra yet.

I closed the tiny box and carefully  
laid it next to everything else.

"Lardy, you need to go to bed,"  
my mom ordered me sticking  
her head through the door. I  
jumped, startled by her presence.

"God you scared me!" I replied.

"You need to go to bed my  
mother reminded me one more  
"okay okay" I grumbled limping  
into my left bed.

"Goodnight," whispered my mom,  
shutting of the light.

"Okay," I murmured in a high  
pitch voice. My mother sighed  
and left.

I squirmed under the covers  
trying to get in a good position,  
but I couldn't. I was too nervous.  
Two days. That's all I had left.

"lets see, 24 hours x 2 days that's 48 hours"  
I thought to myself. Only 48  
hours I'd be riding in my car.

only to feel more fight and anxiety.  
Oh right! No negative thinking  
past 9! I giggled in my mind.

"But seriously, was I ready for this?" I wondered. "There was no twinning back. No having second thoughts. No chickering out. It was a done deal." I had made a Pro & Cons list but some of those things counted for more than I point. One of those things being homesickness. That was definitely the thing I was worried about. I'd been away for this long. The longest time I had ever been away from home was a week. My parents called me every night but I was still homesick. Then again, I had only been going to be in 3rd grade now I was going to be in 5th grade.

# Goosebumps

I had up my knee length nightgown. My mom held up my fleece ankle length PJ's. "Why should I wear those?" I said. I wondered why she wanted me to wear fleece on a warm summer night in Montana. "It gets very cold in the night," my mom said with a serious look on her face. I gave her a look, she looked right back at me. For a moment there was silence. Then she let out a long sigh. I could tell I had won because she was putting away the PJ's. "A" I said on my nightgown. I could feel my mom herding me to my bed. I stopped and changed in. I pulled up my light sheets. My mom opened her mouth and said "Put your wool cover over you, I'm serious!" I gave her a look. She let out a sigh. She hugged me and whispered in my ear, "Good night." I woke up with a tingle. I sat up in my bed. I looked at the clock, only ten minutes went by. I looked at my arms they were covered in goosebumps, so were my legs. It felt like it had dropped thirty degrees. I bent down and grabbed the wool blanket and pulled it over me with a sigh of relief.

As I got comfy my mind  
sawed. I thought about all the times  
my mom had been right, like the  
time my mom told me pack extra  
snack, I didn't and got hungry. Or  
the time I didn't wear rain boots  
when my mom told me and got  
cold. Then the time my mom told  
me to put on sunblock, I didn't  
and got a really bad sunburn.  
But out of all my thoughts I wondered  
why I acted like that? Was I cranky  
or mad? But before I could think  
my eyes got heavy and started  
to close, before I knew it everything  
was black and then gone.

<p><b>Level 9</b></p> <p><i>Gum</i></p>	<p><b>Cohesive, coherent story which sets up and resolves a problem, and gestures towards conveying not only a feeling but an idea or a message.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writing is usually a cohesive story involving either a prelude or a follow-up action or reflection; that is, although the story is centered on a single, focused episode, the entire text is not apt to be contained within that episode.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The story sets up and resolves a problem or builds and resolves tension.</li> <li>○ The writer may have attempted foreshadowing or flashback, usually in the service of developing tension, an infernal story.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer re-experiences, imagines or represents the episode with more fidelity and in a way which allows the reader to have his or her own experience while reading the text.</li> <li>○ <i>Amount and organization of detail</i></li> <li>○ As in Level 8, the writer has chosen details that pertain to and therefore highlight the writer's interpretation of the event, and seems to have consciously deleted details that do not add to the writer's interpretation of the event.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/words/thoughts/feelings/Show don't tell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Throughout the story, the writer records not only what the character/narrator <i>does and thinks</i> but also what he/she <i>remembers, feels, wonders, notices, yearns for</i>.</li> <li>○ These texts are less apt to be comprised of sections which tell what the narrator or character did, than with sections which tell about what the narrator/central character thought, noticed or felt. That is, the writer combs the internal story into the external story throughout the entire piece, and does so with more flexibility and grace.</li> <li>○ The reader not only learns <i>about</i> the central character (or narrator,) the reader also finds herself or himself being drawn to see <i>through</i> the eyes of this person.</li> <li>○ Characters are more differentiated, one from another.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting/What characters see/hear</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer continues to develop the setting throughout the story, but now, she does it in a way that means the reader experiences the same details and in the same timing as the characters/narrator in the story; in other words, setting details unfold alongside the events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts at this level contain the same sense of craft as previous levels, only these texts are apt to involve a more complex treatment of time. Although time will mostly move forward evenly, in a step-by-step fashion, here will probably be some gaps in time (“a little later.” or “Not long after that...”) and there will be more use of anticipation and memory.</li> <li>• As in texts at the previous level, writers develop story tension, building up the rising action. Writers are apt to do this in part by showing the main character doing small actions that reveal the character’s feelings, motivations or reactions to problems. The texts draw readers into the drama the main character (or the narrator) is experiencing.</li> <li>• The texts contain a balance of dialogue, precise actions, setting and thoughts. The internal story, as noted above, not only tells what the character thought but also shows this, perhaps by showing what the narrator/ main character noticed, pretended, wondered, wanted to say....That is, the internal story that is brought out is a more complex one.</li> <li>• Writers use their knowledge of good writing to make some parts of the text noteworthy. This may mean using sensory details or figurative language to create a sense of place or mood; it may mean using dialogue which reveals the personality of a character. In any case, the text is written in such a fashion that some readers find sections which are especially well-written, creating a smile of appreciation in the reader.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer seems to have made a conscious decision to forward a particular response to the events in the story. The beginning and the end of the story are apt to relate to the heart of the story, and all three bring forth the writer’s point (which tends to be the writer’s feeling about the event).</li> </ul>

## Level 9 Writing Sample:

*It was a sunny Day in August. My brother Sam and I went to Six Flags with my mom. As we stepped out of the car into the parking lot, my mom said, "David, you hold onto Sam's hand today. I have to watch the twins. Don't you let go even for a second." "Ok Mom, I said." Inside I thought that I was tired of holding Sam's hand. Sam is six and his hands are always sticky. Its like holding warm gum.*

*My mom took the twins to the baby rides. Sam and I rode all the ones he could ride together. We bought hot dogs and gumballs. Sam chewed his gumball for two hours. His hand got warmer and stickier. Then he stepped in gum. It was like his whole body was becoming a gumboy. "Sam!" I said. "Watch it." "I'm not taking that gum off your shoe." Sam said ok and he blew a bubble.*

*Then we were there. At the roller coaster. Sam was too small to go on. "Stay here, Sam" I said. "I'm going on the roller coaster." Sam said ok and he blew a bubble. I rode the roller coaster. I was scared the whole time. I was scared because it was scarey. I was scared because I knew my mom would be mad if she found out I had left Sam by himself. I was scared that Sam might get lost. I was scared of those kidnapers who take children. But I thought that any kidnaper would take Sam's hand and then let go because it would be too sticky.*

*When I got off the roller coaster, Sam was there. "Let's find Mom" I said. Sam said ok and he blew a bubble. I looked at him. Inside I was so glad he was there still. I took his hand. It was warm and sticky like gum. I like gum.*

<p><b>Level 10</b> <i>My Sister</i></p>	<p><b>Cohesive, coherent story, ideally with more than one episode; in any case, the story sets up and resolves a problem.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer creates a story which feels coherent and cohesive.</li> <li>○ The story often includes more than a single episode.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer also seems to draw on his or her sense of story.</li> <li>○ The writer may handle time in more complex ways. Usually, the writer will write one vignette that lays out the situation, perhaps setting up the problem, and another vignette that shows the ensuing event. That is, the story might begin with a boy begging for a dog and longing for a dog, and then tell of the boy receiving the dog (or a cat, in lieu of the dog).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don't Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As in levels 8 and 9, the writer is more successful at writing in a way that lets readers live through the moment. The writer re-experiences, imagines or represents the episode with more fidelity and/or in a way which therefore allows the reader to have his or her own experience while reading the text.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The details often help to shape the story, relating to the larger significance a writer hopes to convey. They also form a more intricate and meaningful image of both the main and other characters.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters' traits/words/thoughts/feelings/Show don't tell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer employs many elements of the story in the service of character development. That is, the writer may have the character notice the weather (setting) in such a fashion that allows the weather to actually reflect the character. The writer may in a similar way reveal character through use of objects, etc.</li> <li>○ Often the writer uses dialogue and inner thinking to display change or growth in a character, or to convey a valuable lesson the character learns about him/herself.</li> <li>○ Writers at this level demonstrate a more advanced understanding of show don't tell; their pieces invite readers to live through the moment as readily in moments of action as in moments of reflection, i.e. internal story.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting/What characters see/hear</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer now develops the setting in a way which allows readers to visualize where events unfold, but that also shows the relationship between characters and their surroundings; at this stage, the development of the setting feels less arbitrary and more central to the meaning of the story.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts at this level contain more advanced elements of craft such as simile, metaphor or a small image threaded throughout to imbue the piece with more meaning and cohesion.</li> <li>• The writer develops story tension as in texts at the previous level, but there is a sense that he or she does so with greater ease; the tension created is more gradual and subtle, rather than exaggerated or dramatic.</li> <li>• The writer weaves elements of craft almost seamlessly and the result is a piece that merits the title “well crafted.” Pieces at this level have a lyrical quality when read aloud; there is a sense that the writer understands not only the elements of craft but also the rhythm.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts at this level reveal an added self-awareness or awareness of a larger meaning side by side the resolution. That is, the resolution may have more than one level – an obvious one and a deeper one that the writer reveals throughout the piece through the narrator’s (or main character’s) growing insights.</li> <li>• The writer shows greater sophistication in how he or she brings out significance in the piece; for example, the writer may gradually give a tiny detail or a small action or moment increasingly larger meaning so that something seemingly insignificant turns out to be integral to the heart of the story.</li> </ul>

### Level 10 Writing Sample:

*Before my sister went to middle school, when the shine in her eyes was still there, matching her bright smile, she used to play with me. We used to play merry-go-round – chair on my mom’s spinning chair, but all that changed when she went to middle school.*

*One afternoon she called me to her room. “Come on my bed,” Jen said, patting the bed next to her. “Now stay still.” She took out a suitcase from under her bed and put it beside us. She opened it and told me to close my eyes. “Don’t move,” she whispered while putting powder on my eyes. She spread it around and around with a brush. It felt cold. “Okay open,” she said. She moved back to get a far view of me.*

*Then she dabbed pink powder on my cheeks and nose. Her brush swept up and down. “That tickles!” I said, giggling. Soon Jen was putting goop on my lips. She spread it around with a lip-gloss wand.*

*“Pthhhh!” I spit the yucky stuff off, and wiped the remaining goo. Jen put an extra dab of blush on my cheeks and finished.*

*“Voilà. Done.” But then she changed her mind and started putting curlers in my hair. “While we wait, come here,” she said. I followed her around the house as she gathered clothes. “Wear this and this.” I looked at what she was holding: my mom’s furry shawl.*

*I went into the bathroom and wrapped it on. I stared at myself in the mirror. I took the curlers off and fluffed my hair. I looked great! I was finally old; I’d always wanted to be. I looked like one of those old Hollywood actresses with big fur coats and curly hair, walking down the red carpet. I scrunched my hair. “Omigod!” I say to myself trying to be like my sister. I pointed to the tub. “Omigod, it’s so round!” I walked over to the toilet “Omigod! That’s so gross!”*

*To the mirror, I said, “Omi-” I stopped. Something was wrong. This isn’t me, I thought. I’m not the thirteen year old I’m trying to be. I splashed water on my face, scrubbing the teenager away. I combed water through my hair and the curls unraveled.*

*Being a child means jumping on the bed, having laughing contests, making funny faces. I don’t want to lose that. When guests come over and look at my baby pictures, or if they haven’t seen me in a long time, they say, “Awwww, you’ve grown so much!”*

*I have grown taller, but inside I’m still the little girl who plays with Barbies, and the one who’s still afraid of lightning. I am the little girl who needs my mom right by my side. I don’t want to grow up! Not yet.*

*But I did look pretty good in that shawl.*

<p><b>Level 11</b> <i>Sophia</i></p>	<p><b>Cohesive, coherent story which contains many of the craft moves cited earlier. Meaning seems not preconceived but rather comes from the writer’s interpretation of and response to the event.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Treatment of Subject/Focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The story may include more than one moment. These moments are closely related.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Sense/Cohesiveness of Story:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer may do this by crafting a lead and/or an ending which is aligned to the section of the text which the writer decides is ‘the heart of the story.’</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is vivid imagery.</li> <li>○ There may be comparisons / metaphors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The writer includes details which highlight the significance that the writer hopes to comb through the text, by not only stretching out the most important part of the story with smaller actions and internal thoughts but also by doing this in a way which highlights whatever the writer decides is especially significant to the story.</li> <li>○ The details often help to shape the story, relating to the larger significance a writer hopes to convey. They also form a more intricate and meaningful image of both the main and other characters.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters’ traits/words/thoughts/feelings/Show don’t tell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dialogue and inner thinking are apt to not only reveal what people say/think, but also <i>how</i> they say/think it, showing the speaker’s personality and mood.</li> <li>○ The main character (or narrator) is shown to be a complex person. His or her feelings and traits are not just one way. That is, the character may be anxious to grow up, yet this feeling is tempered by a nostalgia for her childhood.</li> <li>○ The writer sometimes contrasts dialogue and inner thinking in a way which builds tension, reveals complexity, or shows inner struggle.</li> <li>○ Keeping in mind that a story includes both plot and character development, by this level it is the latter which feels more significant in a story than the former. One senses that the characters’ traits and motivations engine the plot. What happens is a result of the characters, of their cares, hopes, and personalities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting/What characters see/hear</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As with the previous level, the writer develops the setting in ways that are central to the meaning and/or tone of the story.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Craft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains many of the craft moves cited earlier craft techniques such as simile, metaphor or a small image threaded throughout to imbue the piece with more meaning and cohesion.</li> <li>• The writer also seems to draw on story language and rhythm, varying his or her sentence length and structure, and weaving internal and external story to create an effect.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readers suspect that instead of conveying a meaning that was obvious to the writer from the start, the writer has discovered and conveyed meaning in the process of writing and by writing with attentiveness and respect for detail.</li> <li>• The writer writes about an event which does not come with ready-made significance. Instead, the writer imbues the event with meaning that comes from the writer's own attentiveness to and interpretation of the event.</li> </ul>

### Level 11 Writing Sample:

Today was the day. I was going to sit next to Sophia at lunch. Sophia, who wears flowered skirts and these tops that leave her arms bare. The other seventh grade girls look like they are trying to be callgirls, as my Dad would say. (Or he might say something worse). Sophia looks like she could be in a movie about Bonny and Clyde. Not that my classmates know who Bonny and Clyde are.

I walked to school up Chambers street thinking about Sophia's skirts and her long arms and the way she pulls her hair into a knot when she is working hard in class so you can see her bare neck. Sophia's hair is long and brown and soft. When she pulls it into a knot it won't stay, so that all these curls start, slowly, to tumble down her back. I watch it tumble. Sometimes it takes twenty minutes and I miss everything that happens in math. As I walked I also thought about how today, I would go over to Sophia in the cafeteria. "Hey" I'll say. But I couldn't think of ANYTHING to say next. ANYTHING.

At lunch, I still hadn't thought of what to say. I knew that I had to be like Bonny and Clyde though. I had to take a risk. I checked my hair quickly in the glass of the Coke machine. Good. Very smooth. I checked my fly. Also good. I walked up to where Sophia sat with all her friends. "Sophia," I said. She turned. She looked at me. I couldn't seem to speak. She kept looking at me. Then she pulled her hair up into a knot. "It takes twenty minutes for your hair to come out of that knot," I said. She stared at me. I felt myself getting hot. Still hot, I walked away from the table.

Later, when we went into math, Sophia didn't say hi. At 2:10 she pulled her hair into a knot. Then she looked around at me, and shook it out so it fell all over her shoulders. "Sometimes we can make things happen faster," she said.

<p><b>Level 12</b></p> <p><i>Pancakes and Waffles</i></p>	<p><b>The writer writes as in level 10 but now these craft moves appear to be natural, almost as if the writer did these moves by instinct with focus only on conveying meaning. There is also a sense of experimentation with story structure, craft and time which may result in moments of confusion for the reader, though the piece is more complex than texts at level 10.</b></p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The story is structured in ways that carry the author’s message. The narrative may encompass several scenes, linked together through the passage of time, or it may involve a single scene, with rich internal work and complex time treatment woven into that scene.</li> <li>• Experimentation with more complex treatment of time, character and imagery is evident.</li> <li>• The structure takes the reader on an emotional journey.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Elaboration/ Show Don’t Tell</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written in scenes produced through envisionment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is vivid imagery.</li> <li>○ There may be images that are repeated. Some images seem metaphoric.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Amount and organization of detail</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As events unfold, the writer uses details and may experiment with back story to develop secondary as well as main characters in fuller, richer ways.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Characters’ traits/ words/thoughts/feelings/Show don’t tell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not only the main character but also at least one secondary character is developed using some of the methods described in levels nine, ten and eleven.</li> <li>○ In many cases, the story is more internal than external; the story is often less about what is happening and more about what the character thinks, feels, realizes and how s/he changes in response to what is happening. The writer tends to use inner thinking/feeling, accompanied by characters’ tones and gestures, to show the internal story.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Setting/What characters see/hear</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The importance of the story has less to do with the events that the writer has recorded and more to do with the way in which those events evolve. The meaning and significance in this story is carried with subtlety through the details of setting, character, mood, language etc. and may not be directly stated.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The importance of the story has less to do with the events that the writer has recorded and more to do with the way in which those events evolve. The meaning and significance in this story is carried with subtlety through the details of setting, character, mood, language etc. and may not be directly stated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Craft</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craft moves appear to be natural, almost as if the writer did these moves by instinct with focus only on conveying meaning.</li> <li>• Dialogue is apt to not only reveal what people said, but also how they said it, showing the speaker’s personality and mood.</li> <li>• Inventive use of language, suggesting that the author uses literary devices to</li> </ul>

	<p>convey a coherent meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The setting is used to convey the theme or mood. It is developed throughout the narrative.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaning/ Significance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text conveys meanings that seem to have come from the writer using writing to reflect on his or her life. That is, one senses that by working with language and learning, the writer has arrived at a meaning which may have caught the writer by surprise, and now does the same for the reader. Insights which have subtlety, nuance, complexity, and originality are woven into the text.</li> </ul>

### Level 12 Writing Sample:

#### ***Pancakes and Waffles***

*I open my eyes and look around my colorful room. I wait a few seconds trying to decide if imagination is playing a helpless joke on me, or if what I smell is real. Then it hits me like a ship hitting land. He's cooking. I rushed out of bed eager to help him.*

*He stands over the stove with the small buzz of the news on the radio. His hand is over the stove and is pouring the pancake mix onto the skillet shaping the mix into each initial in my name.*

*I quietly stand beside him and he hands me the spoon. I in return receive the gift and continue the job he has taught me to do. Once the pancakes are done he calls my mother, and I call my sister to come to the table and eat breakfast.*

*The small brown circles adorn the table on a plate. The jelly and the orange juice flower it in decoration. Above each plate is a hungry face ready to eat. But before we start, we pray and my dad thanks God for having let us prepare this meal. I'm grateful too.*

*My mother and sister thank us, and my father and I just grin. We have been up since the past hour making pancakes and being alone away from the rest of the family. He has taught me how to make a pancake look like an S, and how to make a smiling pancake. He puts those at the top of the plate so we can enjoy those special pancakes. Once he opens the bottle of maple syrup we slowly begin.*

*Only too soon am I eyeing a waffle. I have toasted alone in the early morning, and thanking God for letting me have a waffle. I look around and see empty chairs. They're all sleeping and they won't come out to play. I let the silence deafen my ears and slowly start to stuff the syrupy waffle into my mouth, letting the syrup slide down my fingers.*

*Nowadays, I wake up late and when I lay in bed awaiting that smell, it never comes. I get out of bed hoping my mind has been playing tricks on me. But it hasn't. Instead of stopping in front of the kitchen, I move silently into their bedroom and I see them both sleeping.*

*He doesn't make those pancakes anymore-the ones he taught me so long ago how to make. He's always had a hard day and wakes up tired in the morning. He used to fry Johnnycakes. He would barbecue burgers, boil hotdogs, bake cakes, cook refried beans and bake small blueberry muffins until my mother and sister were stuffed with delicious work of art. Now, he can't even toast a waffle. We're all too busy to sit and have breakfast as a family. What used to make our family unique has now converted itself into something that makes us the same to all other families.*

*My mother would try to make oatmeal and eggs. Me sister could make cold chocolate milk and offer it to me, but I always refused because they weren't products of my*

*father's unique art. I myself tried to make breakfast. I always ended up burning the pancakes. They were never as soft and crispy at the edges the way my father could make them. My mother complained that she could still taste the egg in my pancakes.*

*I open my eyes and look around my colorful room. I wait a few seconds trying to decide if my imagination is playing a helpless joke on me, or if what I smell is real. Then it hits me like a ship hitting land. He's cooking. I rush out of bed eager to help him.*

*When I turn to the kitchen I see my father. But I don't see him over the stove. I see him sitting on a stool, waiting for his coffee to boil. I quietly start to leave, hoping he hadn't noticed that I was even there.*

*"Stephanie" he calls out quietly. I turn around and look at him quietly. My eyes are flooding with questions that have been unanswered. Those floods are about to burst when my father motions for me to sit next to him.*

*We sit quietly together in the dim lighted kitchen painted yellow. I imagine the sounds of the pancake mix cooking and my father's news station buzzing in the distance.*

*"Daddy, why don't we make pancakes anymore?" I whisper. He lets silence deafen our ears for only a moment. I put my head back down and wonder if I've hurt him. He slowly turns his head to look at me and says*

*"I'm not sure sweetheart. But I promise you we can start making pancakes again as soon as time permits."*

*The following weeks I wake up early and run into his room begging for him to keep his promise and cook pancakes with me. Even if it for the last time.*

*"There's no more pancake mix. There's no syrup. There aren't enough eggs. I need a better skillet for our pancakes" he says quietly in his sleep.*

*Slowly walking into the kitchen, I walk until I am over the stove. I am now tall enough to see the fire burning inside, and the four black circles, that hold hot pans. He always used to warn me: Be careful. Don't get your hands near the fire cause they'll burn.*

*I run my fingers across the pancake whisk and the skillet that would have sustained me with joy so long ago. I stare at the skillet for some time until I notice my reflection.*

*It's sad how time can steal your family away from you. The city in which we live in is always in a rush, and they pressure everyone else living in the city to live in a rush as well. This leads to family's having less time to spend with each other.*

*Why is it that in the country everything seems to be slower and people seem to have more than 24 hours in a day? Why do those big families get to enjoy big breakfasts together? Back in the city, the traffic and all the commotion wares you down with stress. What makes the city special for some is what makes others cringe. We seem to have less than 24 hours a day, and we seem to be using them poorly.*

*I wish we could find ourselves again and start using up every second in our 24 hours. My reflection on the skillet brings me back from the journey I've made. As I stand over the stove I can feel-a hungry and empty stomach. I walk to the refrigerator and take out toast and butter. Then I quickly prepare myself a simple breakfast and begin to eat with only myself for company.*