

Teacher-Friendly Scoring Guide for Narrative Writing

Purpose: To tell a story

6 EXCEPTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer starts with a lead that sets up the story and draws the reader in. The writer includes fresh, believable characters that grow and learn. The writer offers a rich setting that is easy to visualize. The writer includes events that are logically sequenced and move the story forward. Time and place work in harmony. The writer tells a completely new story or puts an original twist on a familiar story. The plot is well developed. There is a compelling conflict or problem that is eventually solved. The writer uses literary techniques, such as foreshadowing, symbolism, and figurative language, well.
5 STRONG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer leaves the reader feeling intrigued, surprised, or entertained. The writer solves the compelling conflict or problem thoughtfully and credibly.
4 REFINING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer starts with a lead that sets the scene but is predictable or unoriginal. The writer includes characters that are a bit too familiar. His or her thinking or understanding hardly changes as the story progresses. The writer offers a predictable setting that is somewhat easy to visualize. The writer devotes the same level of importance to events. Significant events mingle with trivial ones and sometimes stray from the story line. The writer tells a nearly complete story that may not contain new or original thinking. The writer presents minor conflicts and problems that distract from major ones. The writer uses literary techniques but not all that effectively. The writer engages the reader at some points but not at others.
3 DEVELOPING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer ends with a sense of resolution, but the reader may feel unsatisfied and/or perplexed.
2 EMERGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer starts with a perfunctory lead: "I'm going to tell you about the time. . ." The writer includes characters that don't feel real. They feel more like stereotypes or cardboard cutouts. The writer offers a setting that is almost impossible to visualize. The writer includes simple, unrelated events that don't add up to anything much. The writer jumps around illogically. There is no clear conflict or problem to be solved. The writer does not use literary techniques or uses them imprecisely or with no clear purpose. The writer leaves the reader frustrated or disappointed. He or she did not think through the story before committing it to paper.
1 RUDIMENTARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer finishes with no clear ending or, at most, a halfhearted ending, leaving the reader wondering why he or she bothered.

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