

In Common: Effective Writing for All Students
Collection of All Student Work Samples, K-12

By The Vermont Writing Collaborative, with Student Achievement Partners and CCSSO

Fifth Grade
Range of Writing - Narrative Writing
Writing Samples

Narrative**Grade 5****Range of Writing**

Frustration

Orients the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator

I dip my fountain pen into the ink container. I place the pen on the paper.

What will be the first words of the Declaration of Independence? They must be convincing, but also get the message to King George that we want to be free.

After waiting for what seems like an hour, I print the words: “*The Colonists of the new land want to*”...No! that won’t do. The words must be more convincing. I

crumble the paper and throw it across the room. I dip the pen again and place the

pen on a new clean sheet of paper. Now I print the words: “*We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal*”...No! that will go later in the

paper, I scream, now ripping up the paper. I’m so angry that when I dip my pen it splatters on my white cuff. After an hour I decide on the first words: “*When in the*

course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the

political bonds...” Yes! those will be the first words of the Declaration of

Independence, I say leaping for joy.

Uses a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events

Uses narrative techniques to develop events and show the responses of characters to situations

Uses concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely

Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated events

In this fifth-grade historical narrative, written as part of a unit on the American Revolution, the writer focuses on one event, the writing of the Declaration of Independence. The first three sentences effectively give a sense of the time period and provide historical context using well-chosen details (the fountain pen, the Declaration, and King George). Even in this very brief piece, transitions are needed to manage the sequence of events. Transitional words and phrases (“Now”, “After waiting for what seems like an hour”) allow the event to unfold naturally. The writer uses both dialogue and description to show Jefferson’s frustration and to bring the piece to a satisfying conclusion.

File Name: N5R Frustration

Narrative

Grade 5

Revised and Edited for Student Use

Frustration

I dip my fountain pen into the ink container. I place the pen on the paper. What will be the first words of the Declaration of Independence? They must be convincing and also get the message to King George that we want to be free. After waiting for what seems like an hour, I print the words "*The Colonists of the new land want to . . .*" No! That won't do. The words must be more convincing. I crumble the paper and throw it across the room. I dip the pen again and place the pen on a new, clean sheet of paper. Now I print the words "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal . . .*" "No! That will go later in the paper," I scream, now ripping up the paper. I'm so angry that when I dip my pen, ink splatters on my white cuff. After an hour, I decide on the first words: "*When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds . . .*" "Yes! Those will be the first words of the Declaration of Independence," I say, leaping for joy.

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Narrative

Grade 5

Range of Writing

Frustration

I dip my fountain pen into the ink container. I place the pen on the paper. What will be the first words of the Declaration of Independence? They must be convincing, but also get the message to King George that we want to be free. After waiting for what seems like an hour, I print the words: “*The Colonists of the new land want to*”...No! that won’t do. The words must be more convincing. I crumble the paper and throw it across the room. I dip the pen again and place the pen on a new clean sheet of paper. Now I print the words: “*We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal*”...No! that will go later in the paper, I scream, now ripping up the paper. I’m so angry that when I dip my pen it splatters on my white cuff. After an hour I decide on the first words: “*When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds...*” Yes! those will be the first words of the Declaration of Independence, I say leaping for joy.

File Name: N5R Tooth Trouble

Narrative

Grade 5

Range of Writing

Tooth Trouble

“Charlie if you don’t like your oatmeal just tell me and I’ll get you some cereal.” Mom said looking over the table with a puzzled face.

Orients the reader by introducing characters

Her daughter, Charlie, short for Charlene was chewing her favorite food

slowly and carefully and she was making a funny face. Charlie’s twin sister, Tess was doing the same thing. “We like oatmeal, but we don’t want to disturb them,” said Tess.

Uses dialogue and description to show the responses of characters to situations

“Disturb who?” asked Aaron, their older brother. He shook his curly black hair and looked strangely at Mom. She looked back and shrugged.

Tess and Charlie threw back their tiny red cropper heads and showed their teeth. They each wiggled one and smiled. “Looth tooth.” said Aaron getting up from the table and putting on his backpack.

Establishes a situation

“Looth tooth.” said Tess and Charlie at the same time. They were walking out the door with Aaron to catch the bus. Mom followed them out the door and

got into the car to go to work.

“Bye kids, see you after school!” called Mom backing out of the driveway.

On the bus Charlie and Tess decided to tell thier best best friend Molly first about thier teeth. When they got to school they ran into kindergaten room faster than Aaron could run to the eighth grade room. In the class room they met the very person they wanted to see, Molly Stagburn.

“Molly! Molly, guess what?” yelled the twins.

“What?” said Molly.

“We have loose teeth!” said the twins with a big smile. A look of horror spred across Molly’s face.

Oh, no!” she said.

“My big brother Zack said that when one tooth comes out the rest come out too. He knowes everything becausf he’s almost in third grade.” Tess and Charlie almost cried.

At snack they only ate one cracker each, and at lunch they decided not to eat at all.

After lunch, their teacher, Mrs. Tellen noticed they where looking sort of pale.

Uses description to develop events

“Charlie, Tess, are you feeling all right?”

“No,” they replied.

“Oh dear, I suppose I should call your mother,” she sighed and walked over to the phone.

Half an hour later the twins found themselves in the back of their mothers car.

“Girls, I would like you to tell me what made you sick. Was it something you ate?” Charlie and Tess looked at each other.

Uses a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.

“Actually Mom, we haven’t eaten all day,” said Tess.

“But you told me what you wanted. Did you change your minds?”

“No. but we didn’t want all our teeth to fall out.”

“What did Aaron tell you this time?” Mom asked remembering the time Aaron had told them that if you ate bananas, monkeys would fly out your ears. “It wasn’t Aaron this time. Molly’s brother said that if one tooth comes out the others come out too,” said Tess as they pulled into the driveway.

“Molly’s brother has a grapenut for a brain.” Mom joked.

When they were inside the house, Mom put them on schools and gave them each apples. Almost emediately they forgot about their teeth and ate.

“Now you listen to me. All your teeth are not going to fall out. the only way that would happen would be if Aaron punched you hard enough. If that happend I would take you to the dentist to have him look at your teeth, and I would ground Aaron for 20 years,” Mom said softly.

“Hey my tooth came out!”

“Mine too!” Charlie and Tess yelled together.

“See, I told you Zack was wrong. Next time don’t listen to Molly,” said Mom.

Charlie and Tess looked at Mom and smiled. They both had big gaps in their smiles.

Uses concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey events precisely

Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated events.

THE END

This well-crafted fifth-grade narrative develops a humorous event through a series of events that unfold naturally. The main characters in the story are introduced one at a time, orienting the reader. The situation (the twins have loose teeth) is established through actions (*“They each wiggled one...”*) and dialogue (*“’Looth tooth’”*). The writer uses a variety of transitional words and phrases (*“Half an hour later”*, *“Almost emediately”*) to manage the sequence of events. The story is advanced largely through dialogue and description. Concrete words and details (*“Charlene was chewing her favorite food slowly and carefully and she was making a funny face.”*) paint a vivid picture of each event for the reader. The resolution of the story is effectively presented with a well-chosen image (*“They both had big gaps in their smiles.”*).

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Narrative

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Tooth Trouble

“Charlie, if you don’t like your oatmeal just tell me and I’ll get you some cereal,” Mom said, looking over the table with a puzzled face.

Her daughter, Charlie, short for Charlene, was chewing her favorite food slowly and carefully, and she was making a funny face. Charlie’s twin sister, Tess, was doing the same thing. “We like oatmeal, but we don’t want to disturb them,” said Tess.

“Disturb who?” asked Aaron, their older brother. He shook his curly black hair and looked strangely at Mom. She looked back and shrugged.

Tess and Charlie threw back their tiny, red copper heads and showed their teeth. They each wiggled one and smiled. “Looth tooth,” said Aaron getting up from the table and putting on his backpack.

“Looth tooth,” said Tess and Charlie at the same time. They were walking out the door with Aaron to catch the bus. Mom followed them out the door and

got into the car to go to work.

“Bye, kids, see you after school!” called Mom, backing out of the driveway.

On the bus, Charlie and Tess decided to tell their best best friend Molly first about their teeth. When they got to school, they ran into kindergarten room faster than Aaron could run to the eighth grade room. In the classroom, they met the very person they wanted to see, Molly Stagburn.

“Molly! Molly, guess what?” yelled the twins.

“What?” said Molly.

“We have loose teeth!” said the twins with a big smile. A look of horror spread across Molly’s face.

Oh, no!” she said.

“My big brother Zack said that when one tooth comes out the rest come out too. He knows everything because he’s almost in third grade.” Tess and Charlie almost cried.

At snack, they only ate one cracker each, and at lunch they decided not to eat at all.

After lunch, their teacher, Mrs. Tellen, noticed they were looking sort of

pale.

“Charlie, Tess, are you feeling alright?”

“No,” they replied.

“Oh dear, I suppose I should call your mother,” she sighed and walked over to the phone.

Half an hour later, the twins found themselves in the back of their mother’s car.

“Girls, I would like you to tell me what made you sick. Was it something you ate?” Charlie and Tess looked at each other.

“Actually Mom, we haven’t eaten all day,” said Tess.

“But you told me what you wanted. Did you change your minds?”

“No. but we didn’t want all our teeth to fall out.”

“What did Aaron tell you this time?” Mom asked remembering the time Aaron had told them that if you ate bananas, monkeys would fly out your ears. “It wasn’t Aaron this time. Molly’s brother said that if one tooth comes out, the others come out too,” said Tess as they pulled into the driveway.

“Molly’s brother has a grapenut for a brain.” Mom joked.

When they were inside the house, Mom put them on stools and gave them

each apples. Almost immediately, they forgot about their teeth and ate.

“Now you listen to me. All your teeth are not going to fall out. The only way that would happen would be if Aaron punched you hard enough. If that happened, I would take you to the dentist to have him look at your teeth, and I would ground Aaron for 20 years,” Mom said softly.

“Hey , my tooth came out!”

“Mine too!” Charlie and Tess yelled together.

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