

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

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

**K–5 On-Demand, Narrative Samples**

**K-5**  
**On-Demand, Narrative Samples**

These pieces were written in response to a photograph. The text changes at different grades, but the task and prompt remain essentially the same.

- K prompt: *Write a story about this picture. Then add your own picture to tell more about what happened.*
- 1-5 prompt: *Write a story to go with this picture. Your story may be realistic or imaginative.*

## Kindergarten Narrative Prompt



Write a story about this picture.  
Then add your own picture to tell  
more about what happened.

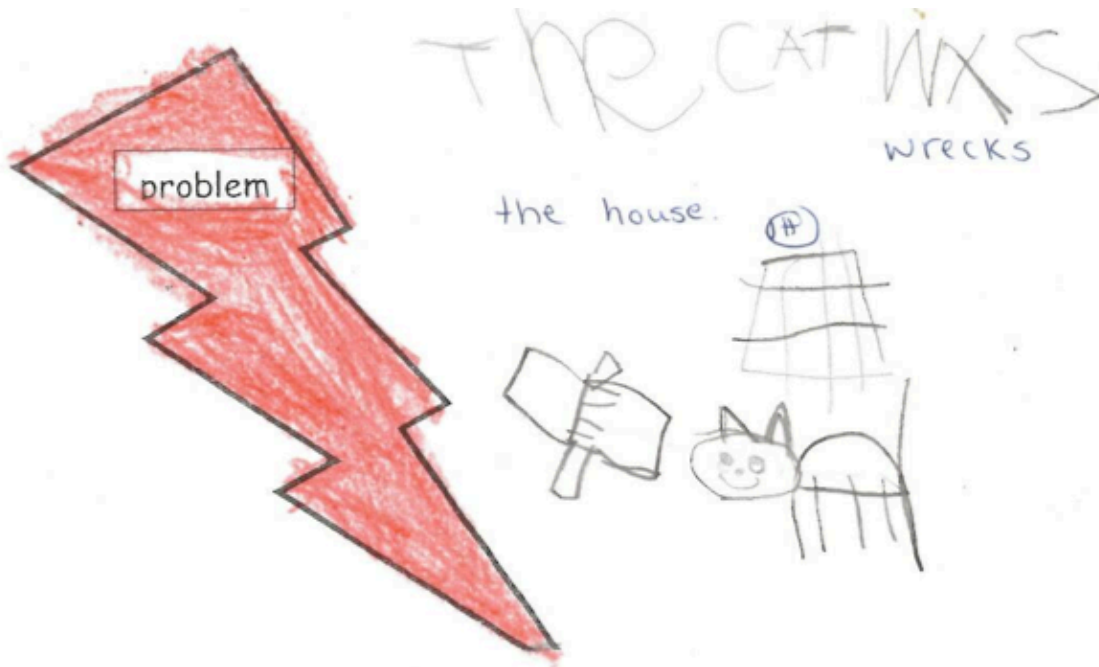
Kindergarten, Fall

In a house. (H)





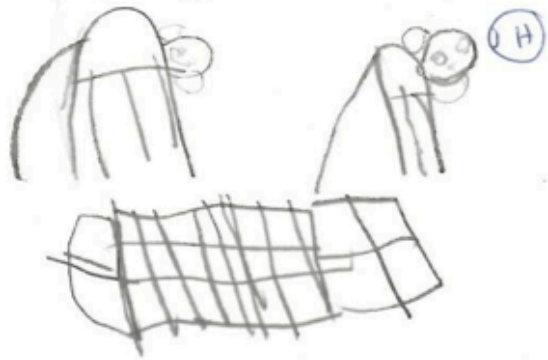
The dogs want  
the cat. ⊕





Dogs

The dogs clean it up.





A cat was trying to get in to  
trying

A stor becuse star war  
store there were

gugs fo mudi tow dogs  
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kam to hel .sone it op:nd.  
came help soon opened

the cat Aet all the melk.  
ate all milk.



**File Name: N1P The London Castle**

**Narrative**

**Grade 1**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

### **The London Castle**

once there Lived A cat and three Dogs. they LivD in a caseL in New yorK. and one Day they Find the King of New YorK. and there was a carc in the Door. and they jumPD out the Door. and raNaway to a caseL in London and they LiKeD it there it was very nis. there the king of London Feed them ever daY. and wased them ever week. and the Qunne cLeaND the cats Litter Box everweek. and one Day they FionD a Rat in the wall and the cat chast the rat all aFtoNooN. and that Day 22 Fox came to attK. But they DiDnt becasue the 3 Dog capt them out. the cat was vere haPPy JumPt uP and Down and that Day they haD a Graet Day. But they meet 4 more Dogs. one was Named Reese one was NameD txox one was Named bob jr one was Named bob and they all Lovet to Play and sing and ResoL the END.

**File Name: N2P Kiana's First Day of School**

**Narrative**

**Grade 2**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

### **Kiana's First Day of School**

ones upon a time there was a new student the student's name was Kiana Kiana was nice and she was a panda all the other kids were super excited but Kiana was shy she walked in the classroom ms. moore said everyone say hello to Kiana Kiana was not shy anymore she realized they were all friendly too Dogs were helping her cause this was her first Day of school the Dogs were really nice one Dog's name was tito and the other Dog's name was maiJ they became Best friends and then they went home

**File Name: N3P The Barn Cat**

**Narrative**

**Grade 3**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **The Barn Cat**

"We should get a barn cat" Mrs. Thurlow told Mr. Thurlow. Bandit, Sonya and Sam's ears popped up. Bandit, Sonya and Sam were their barn dogs. "Yes! A cat to chase!" Bandit yelled. Then Mr. Thurlow said, "Sure, but what are we going to name her?" Sam thought for a moment. Then Sam walked up to Mr. Thurlow and started to bark. This is what Bandit and Sonya heard Sam say, "Whatever you do don't name her Samantha, don't name her Samantha, DON'T name her Samantha!" Mrs. Thurlow said "How about Baby?" Mr. and Mrs Thurlow thought for awhile. After much thought, Mr. Thurlow Announced "A splendid idea! Let's get her tomorrow!" Then the two farmer's fed the dogs, ate dinner, did the chores, then went to bed. The next morning at 6:00 they did the morning chores. They were ready to pick up Baby at 8:15 a.m. When they got to The Pet Shop in Woodstock they were in and out. Mr. and Mrs. Thurlow gave Baby a callor when they got home. Also Bandit, Sonya and Sam gave Baby a tour of everything they own. When they got to the barn Bandit started to chase Baby an he said "I can't resist!" Sam and Sonya tried to stop Bandit, but Bandit was too fast! Baby ran to the barn across the street. "We're not supposed to be here!" Sam and Sonya yelled to Baby, so she ran back home and the dogs followed. Baby jumped up in a foot rest. Then calm down. Bandit agreed to never chase Baby again.

**File Name: N4P The Haunted House**

**Narrative**

**Grade 4**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **The Huanted House**

There once was a dog who roamed an alley with another dog. That dog's name was Max. The other dog's name was Rocky. Max and Rockey were brother and sister, although they look nothing alike. In another alley not far from Max and Rocky's there was a dog and a cat who lived together in that alley. The dog's name was Surgar and the cat's name was Shantell. One day they all met behind a trashcan and became best buds.

One day while all the friends were out walking in the street and then Shantell(the cat) spotted a ghost flying around in a house and took off running to go see the ghost. Then all the dogs took off after her. When the dogs finally caught up to Shantell they were all deep in the haunted house. Max and Surgar started to shake. Rocky and Shantell started to quake. Then a loud Boom came from the floor above them. After, Max got a brilliant idea. They should sneak up on the monsters and attack them.

Finally all four animals were ready to put their maniac plan into action. Shantell tip-toed up the mantel while Max and Surgar went up the back stairs. Which left Rocky creeping up the front stairs. When they all were ready to attack the monsters they heard music. They went a lot like this "Shake, Shake shake dem bones now!" The

friends were confused but quickly got back on track. Shantell gave the ready signal and they all jumped up.

They were surprized to see what they saw. They saw about a dozen monsters doing the monster mash. One of the vampires said "Come in dogs and cats. Why don't you dance with us. So Max, Rocky, Surgar and Shantell danced with the monsters."

**File Name: N5P Queen and The Three Dogs**

**Narrative**

**Grade 5**

**On Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Queen and The Three Dogs**

"It's too bad that Mr. Griff is closing the shop," Queen thought to her self. Queen and three dogs had been pets of Mr. Griff the owner, but now the shop was going out of business and Mr. Griff put all the furniture outside his shop so people could look at them. Queen had to hold a meeting with the dogs. They loved the shop but they would probably have to go to the pound because Mr. Griff wouldn't be able to feed them with what little money he had. Queen meowed a couple of times and the dogs came bounding over. First Charlie then Skip and then Spot. Queen climbed up to the top of the velvet chair and got right down to the point. "You guys are going to have to leave here or go to the pound. What do you want to do?" "We wouldn't go to the pound for anything," they chorused, "So I guess you're leaving," Queen said. Queen \*\*\* trying to hold tears back. She loved the dogs but she wouldn't be able to come with them. She had a bad leg and whenever she tried to run pain shoot up her leg like a lightning bolt electricuting someone. Queen would have to go to the pound or be a street cat which she disliked. Do you boys have all your toys with you? Yes we do. Are you sure you will be ok without me? We think so. Queen followed the boys in the shop so she could hear their barks of goodbye to Mr. Griff. But he was talking to a man. After what seemed like an eternity the man left with a grin on his face. Mr. Griff also had a grin on his face. My wonderful

pets we will be able to stay in the upstairs apartment because that wonderful man bought the shop from us but he is letting us stay upstairs still! The dogs jumped for joy and even though Queen couldn't jump she started to purr.

*\*\*\* words unclear on copy*

## Kindergarten Narrative Prompt



Write a story about this picture.  
Then add your own picture to tell  
more about what happened.



**File Name: NKFP Cats and Dogs****Narrative****Kindergarten, Fall****On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt****Cats and Dogs**

hou

CAT

**Narrates***In a house, the dogs want the cat. \****several loosely  
linked events in  
the order in  
which they  
occurred**

The CAT WXS

*The cat wrecks the house.*

Dogs

*The dogs clean it up.***Provides a reaction to what happened***\*dictation in italics*

Produced through a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing, this Kindergarten narrative relays a short series of events in chronological order. This piece was originally written as a small stapled booklet, with one event on each page. For Kindergarteners, written language is a very new medium of expression, and much of the story is expressed orally (recorded as dictation) and in the pictures. Combining more familiar modes of communication with written language helps solidify a young child's understanding that spoken words can be written down and is an important step in the developmental process.

**File Name: NKSP Cat Burglar**

**Narrative**

**Kindergarten, Spring**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

A cat was triing to git into a stor becuse star war guGs fo muki. tow Dogs kam to hep. sone It opinD. the cat aet oll the melk.

**Narrates  
several loosely  
linked events in  
the order in  
which they  
occurred**

This Kindergarten narrative, written in the spring, relays a short series of loosely linked events in the order in which they occurred. The story begins with a problem (*A cat was triing to git into a stor*), which is resolved at the end of the piece (*It opinD. the cat aet oll the melk.*). Some of this story is told through the illustrations. The writer **provides a reaction** to what is happening **by drawing** a clearly angry store keeper, complete with a speech bubble containing the words, “*My melk!*”. The motivation of the cat is also clarified in the illustrations with an arrow labeled with the word, “*eat*” drawn between the cat and the milk. As specified by the standard, Kindergarten writing is often supported by drawing and labeling.

**File Name: N1P The London Castle**

**Narrative**

**Grade 1**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

**The London Castle**

once there Lived A cat and three Dogs. they LivD in a caseL in New yorK. and one Day they Find the King of New YorK. and there was a carc in the Door. and they jumPD out the Door. and raNaway to a caseL in London and they LiKeD it there it was very nis. there the king of London Feed them ever daY. and wased them ever week. and the Qunne cLeaND the cats Litter Box everweek. and one Day they FionD a Rat in the wall and the cat chast the rat all aFtoNooN. and that Day 22 Fox came to attK. But they DiDnt becasue the 3 Dog capt them out. the cat was vere haPPy JumPt uP and Down and that Day they haD a Graet Day. But they meet 4 more Dogs. one was Named Reese one was Named txox one was Named bob jr one was Named bob and they all Lovet to Play and sing and ResoL the END.

**Uses temporal words to signal event order**

**Recounts two or more appropriately sequenced events**

**Includes some details regarding what happened**

**Provides some sense of closure**

In this first-grade narrative, we hear about the adventures of a cat and three dogs. Temporal words (“once”, “one Day”, “ever daY”, “ever week”, “that Day”, “all aFtoNooN”) are used to signal order, and some details are provided (“they LiKeD it there it was very nis”). First experiments with telling stories, such as this one, may ramble a bit and lack a central focus; this writer does, however, show a firm understanding of the importance of establishing a basic chronology and including detail when recounting events.

**File Name: N2P Kiana's First Day of School****Narrative****Grade 2****On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt****Kiana's First Day of School**

ones upon a time there was a new student the student's name was Kiana Kiana was nice and she was a panda all the other kids were super excited but Kiana was shy she waited in the classroom ms. moore said everyone say hello to Kiana Kiana was not shy anymore she realized they were all friendly too Dogs were helping her cause this was her first Day of school the Dogs were really nice one Dog's name was Tito and the other Dog's name was Mimi they became Best friends and then they went home

**Includes details to describe feelings**

**Includes details to describe actions**

**Includes details to describe thoughts**

**Provides a sense of closure**

The short sequence of events in this second-grade narrative is well elaborated with details that describe feelings (*"all the other kids were super excited"*), actions (*"ms. moore said everyone say hello to Kiana"*), and thoughts (*"she realized they were all friendly"*). Temporal words (*"first"*, *"waited"*) establish the sequence of events. This narrative revolves around a central problem, Kiana's shyness on her first day of school, which is resolved at the end of the story when Kiana overcomes her shyness and makes friends.

**File Name: N3P The Barn Cat**

**Narrative**

**Grade 3**

**On-Demand Writing, Uniform Prompt**

### **The Barn Cat**

“We should get a barn cat” Mrs. Thurlow told Mr. Thurlow. Bandit, Sonya and Sam’s ears popped up. Bandit, Sonya and Sam were their barn dogs. “Yes! A cat to chase!”

Bandit yelled. Then Mr. Thurlow said, “Sure, but what are we going to name her?” Sam thought for a moment. Then Sam walked up to Mr. Thurlow and started to bark. This is what Bandit and Sonya heard Sam say, “Whatever you do don’t name her Samantha, don’t name her Samantha, DON’T name her Samantha!” Mrs. Thurlow said “How about

Baby?” Mr. and Mrs Thurlow thought for awile. After much thought, Mr. Thurlow Announced “A slendid idea! Let’s get her tomarrow!” Then the two farmer’s fed the dogs, ate dinner, did the chores, then went to bed. The next morning at 6:00 they did the morning chores. They were ready to pick up Baby at 8:15 a.m. When they got to The Pet Shop in Woodstock they were in and out. Mr. and Mrs. Thurlow gave Baby a callor

when they got home. Also Bandit, Sonya and Sam gave Baby a tour of everything they own. When they got to the barn Bandit started to chase Baby an he said “I can’t resist!” Sam and Sonya tried to stop Bandit, but Bandit was too fast! Baby ran to the barn across the street. “We’re not supposed to be here!” Sam and Sonya yelled to Baby, so she ran

back home and the dogs followed. Baby jumped up in a foot rest. Then calm down. Bandit agreed to never chase Baby again.

**Establishes a situation and introduces characters**

**Uses descriptions of actions and thoughts to develop events and show the response of characters to situations**

**Uses dialogue to develop events and show the response of characters to situations**

**Uses temporal words and phrases to signal event order**

**Uses effective technique and descriptive details**

**Provides a sense of closure**

This third-grade narrative relays a connected sequence of events that focuses on Baby's arrival at the barn. The writer uses dialogue to set up the action ("*We should get a barn cat*"), advance the plot ("*A splendid idea! Let's get her tomorrow!*"), and show the characters' thoughts and reactions ("*I can't resist*"). The writer uses other narrative techniques, as well. For example, we learn subtly of Sam's worry about losing her place in the family when she barks, "*Whatever you do, don't name her Samantha.*"

The writer organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally. Temporal words and phrases ("*the next morning*", "*in and out*") help manage the flow of time in the piece and keep the reader oriented. Although a little abrupt, the ending shows the writer's awareness of the need to wrap up the action, and the last line ("*Bandit agreed to never chase Baby again*") provides a sense of closure.

**File Name: N4P The Haunted House**

**Narrative**

**Grade 4**

**On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **The Huanted House**

There once was a dog who roamed an alley with another dog. That dog's name was Max. The other dog's name was Rocky. Max and Rockey were brother and sister, although the look nothing alike. In another alley not far from Max and Rocky's there was a dog and a cat who lived together in that alley. The dog's name was Surgar and the cat's name was shantell. One day they all met behind a trachcan and became best buds.

**Introduces main characters**

One day while all the friends were out walking in the street and then Shantell(the cat) spotted a ghost flying around in a house and took off running to go see the ghost. Then all the dogs took off afterer her. When the dogs finaly cought up to Shantell they were all deep in the huanted house. Max and Surgar started to shake. Rocky and Shantell started to quake. Then a loud Boom came from the floor above them. After, Max got a brillent idea. They should sneak up on the monsters and attack them.

**Orients the reader by establishing a situation**

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

Finally all four animals were ready to put their maniecle plan into action. Shantell tip-toed up the mantel while Max and Surgar went up the back stairs. Which left Rockey creeping up the front stairs. When they all were ready to attack the monsters they heard music. The went alot like this "Shake, Shake shake dem bones now!" The

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

**Uses dialogue and description of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop events and show the response of characters to situations**

friends were confused but quickly got back on track. Shantell gave the ready signal and they all jumped up.

They were surprized to see what they saw. They saw about a dozen monsters doing the monster mash. One of the vampires said “Come in dogs and cats. Why don’t you dance with us. So Max, Rocky, Surgar and Shantell danced with the monsters.”

**Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated events**

The first paragraph of this fourth-grade narrative introduces the four main characters and the relationship between them. In the second paragraph, the writer sets up the story, establishing an event (the ghost chase) that brings the characters into the haunted house, where most of the story takes place. The sequence of events unfolds naturally and the writer develops these events with concrete, sensory details (*“they heard music. The went alot like this”*), dialogue (*“Why don’t you dance with us”*), and descriptions of thoughts, actions, and feelings (*“they were surprized”*). Transitional words (*“one day”, “then”, “after”, “finally”*) manage the sequence of events. The story comes to a satisfying conclusion, which is developed over the course of the last paragraph.



**File Name: N5P Queen and The Three Dogs****Narrative****Grade 5****On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt****Queen and The Three Dogs**

“It’s too bad that Mr. Griff is closing the shop,” Queen thought to her self. Queen and three dogs had been pets of Mr. Griff the owner, but now the shop was going out of business and Mr. Griff put all the furniture outside his shop so people could look at them. Queen had to hold a meeting with the dogs. They loved the shop but they would probably have to go to the pound because Mr. Griff wouldn’t be able to feed them with what little money he had. Queen meowed a couple of times and the dogs came bounding over. First Charlie then Skip and then Spot. Queen climbed up to the top of the velvet chair and got right down to the point. “You guys are going to have to leave here or go to the pound. What do you want to do?” “We wouldn’t go to the pound for anything,” they chorused, “So I guess you’re leaving,” Queen said. Queen \*\*\* trying to hold tears back. She loved the dogs but she wouldn’t be able to come with them. She had a bad leg and whenever she tried to run pain shoot up her leg like a lightning bolt electrifying someone. Queen would have to go to the pound or be a street cat which she disliked. Do you boys have all your toys with you? Yes we do. Are you sure you will be ok without me? We think so. Queen followed the boys in the shop so she could hear their barks of goodbye to Mr. Griff. But he was talking to a man. After what seemed like an eternity the man left with a grin on his face. Mr. Griff also had a grin on his face. My wonderful

**Orients the reader by establishing a situation and introducing**

**characters**

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

**Uses dialogue and description to develop experiences**

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

pets we will be able to stay in the upstairs apartment because that wonderful man bought the shop from us but he is letting us stay upstairs still! The dogs jumped for joy and even though Queen couldn't jump she started to purr.

**develop events and show the responses of characters to situations**

**Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated events**

This fifth-grade narrative is focused on a single problem (finding a new place to live) and its solution (being given permission to live in the apartment upstairs). The sequence of events unfolds naturally, and a variety of transitional words and phrases (*“first”, “then”, “After what seemed like an eternity”*) manage the sequence of events. This writer shows considerable control of narrative techniques. The problem is introduced in the first line using dialogue; events are often developed subtly through a character’s response to a situation (*“the men left with a grin on his face”*); concrete details are used throughout (*“pain shoot up her leg like a lightning bolt electricuting someone”*). The satisfying conclusion shows how characters are feeling using actions, as well as words (*“The dogs jumped for joy and even though Queen couldn’t jump she started to purr.”*). There are few events and little action in this story. Instead, the writer has taken a single experience and fully developed it using narrative techniques such as dialogue and rich description.