## Common Core Narrative Writing Protocol

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Introduction**<br>Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters. | **Conclusion**<br>Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. |
| **Transitions**<br>Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. | **Conventions of Standard English**<br>Conform to the conventions of standard written English. |
| **Precise Language**<br>Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. | **Organization**<br>Organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. |

Common Core Standards

# Protocol for Analysis of Narrative Writing

Grades Six to Twelve

Macomb Intermediate School District

# Narrative Writing

Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain. In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator's and characters' personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense.

In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information.

In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.

**Figurative Language:** Whenever you describe something by comparing it to something else, you are using figurative language. Any language that goes beyond the literal meaning of words in order to furnish new effects or fresh insights into an idea or a subject is figurative language.

**Imagery**: Language that appeals to the senses. Descriptions of people or objects stated in terms of our senses.

**Simile**: A figure of speech which involves a direct comparison between two unlike things, usually with the words *like* or *as*. Example: *The muscles on his brawny arms are strong as iron bands.*

**Metaphor**: A figure of speech which involves an implied comparison between two relatively unlike things often using a form of *be.* The comparison is not announced by *like* or *as*. Example: *The road was a ribbon of moonlight.*

**Alliteration**: Repeated consonant sounds occurring at the beginning of words or within words. Alliteration is used to create melody, establish mood, call attention to important words, and point out similarities and contrasts. Example: *wide-eyed and wondering while we wait for others to waken.*

**Personification**: A figure of speech which gives the qualities of a person to an animal, an object, or an idea. It is a comparison which the author uses to show something in an entirely new light, to communicate a certain feeling or attitude towards it and to control the way a reader perceives it. Example: *a brave handsome brute fell with a creaking rending cry*—the author is giving a tree human qualities.

**Onomatopoeia**: The use of words that mimic sounds, appeal to our sense of hearing, and help bring a description to life; a string of syllables the author has made up to represent the way a sound really sounds. Example: *Crackle!*

**Hyperbole**: An exaggerated statement used to heighten effect. It is not used to mislead the reader, but to emphasize a point. Example: *She's said so on several million occasions.*

**Idioms**: Expressions specific to a particular language: http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/

From http://www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/yorba/figurative_language.htm

# Precise Language

# Precise Language

**6th Grade:** Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

**7th – 8th Grade:** Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to **capture the action and** convey experiences and events.

**9th—12th Grade:** Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey **a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.**

*- Common Core Standards*

**Sensory language** refers to the author's use of words and details that appeal to a reader's senses (sight, touch, taste, hearing, smell, emotion).

**Descriptive details** allow sensory recreations of experiences, objects, or imaginings. In other words, description encourages a more concrete or sensory experience of a subject, one which allows the reader to transport himself or herself into a scene.

**Showing vs. telling** is an important aspect of creating effective description. The distinction between these two types of writing can be defined in very basic terms. "Telling" refers to the process of creating text that does not speak to the imagination of the reader. Writing that "tells" is plain and straightforward, yet often has difficulty involving the reader. An example of a "telling" sentence would be "Kathy was sad." This sentence tells the reader what judgment needs to be made about Kathy, yet does not provide the evidence to support that judgment. For example, how do we know that Kathy is sad? How is she behaving? What does she look like? Writing that "shows" generally incorporates vivid descriptive detail in order to help the reader evaluate evidence in order to make the appropriate judgments. *Kathy's tear-streaked face and downcast expression revealed her mood.*

## Creative Writing Beyond Narrative

The narrative category does not include all of the possible forms of creative writing, such as many types of poetry. The Standards leave the inclusion and evaluation of other such forms to teacher discretion.

*- Common Core Standards, Appendix A*

## The Protocol

This protocol focuses on the key elements of writing narratives: **introduction** (narrator and/or setting and characters); **organization** (event sequence); **development** (narrative techniques such as dialogue, pacing, description reflection, and multiple plot lines); **transitions** (to sequence events); **conclusion**; and **conventions of standard English**. The analysis uses non-judgmental language and specific examples. The Common Core Standards provide guidance for the kind and range of writing expected in each genre.

**6th and 7th Grades:** Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

**8th Grade:** Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, **and show the relationships among experiences and events**.

**9th-12th Grades:** Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole **and build toward a particular tone and outcome (a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).**                                    **- *Common Core Standards***

| Words and phrases that indicate time/sequence | *after, afterward, before, then, once, next, last, at last, at length, first, second, etc., at first, rarely, usually, another, finally, soon, meanwhile, at the same time, for a minute, hour, day, etc., during the morning, day, week, etc., later, ordinarily, to begin with, afterwards, generally, in order to, subsequently, previously, in the meantime, immediately, eventually, simultaneously* |
|---|---|
| Words and phrases that indicate cause/effect | *because, then, as a result, for this reason, the result, therefore, what followed, in response, thus, because of this, consequently, so, the reaction…* |
| Words/phrases that indicate comparison | *like, same, in the same way, similar, in a similar way, similarly, likewise, also, in similar fashion* |
| Words and phrases that indicate contrast | *but, however, in contrast, instead, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, yet, different from, in spite of* |

# Development with Narrative Techniques

**6th, 7th and 8th Grades:** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

**9th-12th Grades:** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, **reflection, and multiple plot lines,** to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.                    *- **Common Core Standards***

## Narrative Techniques

### Dialogue
Narrative writers use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator's and characters' personalities and motives. Dialogue is used in narrative to introduce characters and conflict, to describe and develop characters, and to move the plot along. Dialogue can show rather than tell.

### Pacing
Narrative writers manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense. Pacing in narrative differs from genre to genre. For example, adventures tend to be fast-paced. Narrative writers can compress/shrink time, forward time, explode a moment.

### Description
Narrative writers employ description for the development of setting, characterization, and plot events and action. Characterization involves describing the appearance, action, and thoughts of the persons discussed within a text. Characterization is an important part of description, because it causes readers to better understand the motivations of characters . Effective characterization works in harmony with setting and plot to make the reader connect with the text. In order to create realistic characters, a writer should be certain to give each person within the text a unique way of thinking, behaving, and speaking, as well as a unique appearance.

### Multiple plot lines
Multiple plot lines add to the complexity of a narrative. Many narratives have several sub-plots, each overlapping and interweaving to keep the pace racing along. Most novels develop multiple plots. These multiple plot lines are

# Organization

**6th, 7th and 8th Grades:**  Organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
**9th-12th Grades:  Create a smooth progression of experiences or events.**

### Common Core Standards

The **elements of story** include:
  **Characters:**  Who is in the story?
  **Setting:**  When and where does the story take place?
  **Problem/Conflict** :  What problem does the main character want to resolve, or what is the conflict?
  **Events/Plot**:  What does the main character do to solve the problem or resolve the conflict?
  **Resolution:**  How is the problem solved? Or How does main character deal with the conflict?
  **Theme:**  What is the universal theme or lesson learned?

                          *- Story Elements Defined by Stein and Glenn (1979)*

| Introduction |
| --- |
| Narrator, setting, characters, and/or conflict/problem |
| **Body** |
| Development of sequential plot |
| **Conclusion** |
| Dénouement and ending returning full circle to the introduction |

| Element | Definition | Example |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Setting | Introduction of main characters | *Once upon a time there were three bears, the momma bear, the poppa bear, and the baby bear. They all lived in a tiny house in a great big forest.* |
| Initiating Event | An action or happening that sets up a problem or dilemma for the story | *One day a little girl named Goldilocks came by.* |
| Internal Response | The protagonist's reactions to the initiating event | *She was surprised to see the house and noticed it was empty.* |
| Attempt | An action or plan of the protagonist to solve the problem | *She went inside to find the three bears gone and ate the baby bear's soup, broke the baby bear's chair, and fell asleep in the baby bear's bed.* |
| Consequence | The result of the protagonist's actions | *The bears return to find things eaten and broken and to find Goldilocks in the baby's bed.* |
| Reaction | A response by the protagonist to the consequence | *Goldilocks ran away.* |

# Conventions of Standard English

**Language Progressive Skills, by Grade**

| | |
| --- | --- |
| **L.3.1f.** | Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement. |
| **L.3.3a.** | Choose words and phrases for effect. |
| **L.4.1f.** | Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons. |
| **L.4.1g.** | Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., *to/too/two; there/their*). |
| **L.4.3a.** | Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. |
| **L.4.3b.** | Choose punctuation for effect. |
| **L.5.1d.** | Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense. |
| **L.5.2a.** | Use punctuation to separate items in a series. |
| **L.6.1c.** | Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. |
| **L.6.1d.** | Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). |
| **L.6.1e.** | Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language. |
| **L.6.2a.** | Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. |
| **L.6.3a.** | Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. |
| **L.6.3b.** | Maintain consistency in style and tone. |
| **L.7.1c.** | Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers. |
| **L.7.3a.** | Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy. |
| **L.8.1d.** | Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood. |
| **L.9–10.1a.** | Use parallel structure |

                                          *- **Common Core Standards, Appendix A***

# Transitions                                                          Conventions

# Introduction

**6th Grade:** Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters.

**7th – 8th Grade:** Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and **point of view** and introducing a narrator and/or characters.

**9th—10th Grade:** Engage and orient the reader by **setting out a problem or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view,** and introducing a narrator and/or characters.

**11th—12th Grade:** Engage and orient the reader **by setting out a problem, situation,** or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters.

*- Common Core Standards*

An introduction is the best chance for a writer to engage and orient the reader. The introductory paragraph:

**1**. Grabs the reader's attention with one of the following leads to involve the reader in the story:

- Begin with the main character doing something, saying something, thinking or feeling, or hearing a sound.
- Begin with a vivid description.
- Begin with dialogue that introduces characters, setting, and/or problem/conflict.

**2**. Introduces narrator, setting, characters, and/or problem or conflict.

# Conclusion

**6th Grade:** Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

**7th – 8th Grade:** Provide a conclusion that follows from **and reflects on** the narrated experiences or events.

**9th—12th Grade:** Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on **what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.** *- Common Core Standards*

**Successful story endings:**

- A memory of the main event
- A decision resulting from the main event
- An action reflecting an important decision
- Thoughts and feelings about the events that have taken place
- A hope or wish

**Questions to prompt effective story endings:**

- What would the main character remember most? (a memory)
- What decisions might be based on events that have taken place? (a decision)
- What action could the main character do as a result of the events of the story? (an action)
- Is there any appropriate call to action that could follow the events of the story? (an action)
- How would the main character feel about the events which have taken place? (a feeling)
- What could the main character or readers wish for as a result of the events which have taken place? (a wish)

The conclusion should wrap up the conflicts introduced at the story's beginning. If the story starts with a question, the end answers it. If it is a mystery, the end solves it. The end of the story should be like the solution to the equation that the story has set up. It has been said that all effective endings work symbolically (meaningfully): a symbolic line of dialogue, a symbolic ending, or a symbolic gesture.