



**English Language Arts
Grade 3**

**Sample Text-Dependent
Writing Item**

To Convey an Experience
(Real or Imagined)

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General Introduction

The South Carolina Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the *South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards*. The Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) sampler was designed as a resource for South Carolina educators to provide guidance and clarity around state summative assessment.

This document contains an example of a narrative TDW from the SC READY English Language Arts assessment. The TDW item is composed of a reading passage and a writing prompt aligned to the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards*. The passage and prompt were reviewed by a committee of South Carolina educators to ensure appropriateness for the intended grade in terms of text complexity, wording, topic, and bias.

The TDW item requires that students read a passage and respond to a prompt while drawing upon the text for their written responses. Embedded within the TDW item is a mode-specific writer's checklist. Students can use the embedded writer's checklist to help them plan, write, and proofread their responses. Each student's response is then scored using the SC READY TDW Scoring Guidelines.

The TDW sampler contains student responses that illustrate the score points described in the holistic rubric and represent a point range of 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). These responses contain a combination of reader-scored responses and teacher committee-scored responses established during rangefinding. Each response is scored holistically by domain: structure, development, and language. Scores within each domain are earned by demonstrating most of the descriptors within a score point.

- 4 points: The 4-point response is a **well-crafted narrative** that skillfully develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.
- 3 points: The 3-point response is a **complete narrative** that develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.
- 2 points: The 2-point response is an **incomplete or oversimplified narrative** based on the text provided.
- 1 point: The 1-point response is a **weak attempt to write a narrative** based on the text provided.

Purpose

This document is intended to be a resource for educators; it is not designed to be a practice test for students. The sample items are examples of college- and career-ready assessment items. SC READY assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types or standards.

To Convey an Experience (Real or Imagined) Rubric

4 points – A well-crafted narrative that skillfully develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

Structure

- Skillfully establishes a setting
- Skillfully introduces a narrator and/or characters
- Organizes a logical plot structure
- Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to skillfully sequence events
- Provides a well-crafted ending

Development

- Skillfully integrates ideas and details from the text
- Uses well-crafted descriptive language and sensory details to skillfully develop events
- Uses well-crafted descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to skillfully develop a narrator and/or characters

Language

- Uses precise language and vocabulary to skillfully develop the narrative
- Uses varied sentence types and phrases to skillfully develop the narrative
- Has very few or no errors in grammar usage and conventions
- Uses a tone and/or voice that strengthens the narrative

3 points – A complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

Structure

- Establishes a setting
- Introduces a narrator and/or characters
- Organizes a logical plot structure
- Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to sequence events
- Provides a logical ending

Development

- Integrates ideas and details from the text
- Uses descriptive language and sensory details to develop events
- Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to develop a narrator and/or characters

Language

- Uses precise language and vocabulary to develop the narrative
- Uses varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative
- Has a few minor errors in grammar usage and conventions with no significant effect on readability

2 points – An incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on the text provided.

Structure

- Introduces a setting with little to no detail
- Introduces a narrator and/or characters with little to no detail
- Plot structure is unclear or disorganized
- Uses some transitional words and/or phrases that partially sequence events
- Provides a weak ending

Development

- Minimally integrates ideas and details from the text
- Minimally uses descriptive language or sensory details to develop events
- Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, or feelings to minimally develop a character

Language

- Uses basic language and vocabulary to develop the narrative
- Uses some varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative
- Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with readability

1 point – A weak attempt to write a narrative based on the text provided.

Structure

- Attempts to introduce a setting or character
- Response is too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events
- Makes little or no attempt to provide an ending

Development

- May use few, if any, ideas or details from the text
- Shows little or no attempt to use descriptive language or sensory details
- Descriptive language or sensory details may not be relevant
- Shows little or no attempt to develop a character
- Response is mostly a summary of the story

Language

- Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing
- Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that significantly interfere with readability

Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Passage and Prompt

Read the passage. Then respond to the TDW prompt.

The Best Place in the Forest

Chapter 1

Once, in a faraway forest, a little pine tree grew. He had sprouted near the foot of an old oak tree. Old Oak cast a giant shadow over Little Pine. Again and again, Little Pine reached his branches toward the sun. He tried stretching to the right and bending to the left. Still, Old Oak's shadow covered him like a blanket.

"Take it easy," laughed Old Oak. "In time, you will grow tall enough to feel the sun's rays. For now, be patient and enjoy the spring morning. When the cool winds whisper through your needles, sing a song."

"Humph," grumbled Little Pine. Instead of singing, he shivered and sighed about the cold.

Before long, the sky filled with clouds, thunder rumbled, and spring showers fell. Little Pine tried to sip the rainy puddles on the grassy ground with his roots. However, some thirsty bushes crowded him and drank the water.

"Save some for me," complained Little Pine.

"Too much water is not good for you," the bushes told Little Pine.

Little Pine did not agree with them. He wished that he could drink a whole lake.

Finally, as the sun sank in the sky, Little Pine went to sleep. He dreamed about living in a special place in the forest where no other plants crowded him. "I would have everything I wanted," he imagined.

Chapter 2

The next morning, two woodcutters entered the forest with their strong horses. The woodcutters wore long jackets, thick hats, and rugged boots. Little Pine watched as the strangers circled Old Oak.

"This tree is straight and tall," said one woodcutter.

"Its fine wood will help the shipbuilder," said the other woodcutter.

The men began to clear away the bushes to chop down Old Oak. Little Pine watched with concern, but Old Oak was excited.

"Do not worry about me, Little Pine," Old Oak told him. "I look forward to my new adventures on the sea."

When the woodcutters finished their work, they dragged Old Oak from the forest with their horses. Suddenly, Little Pine discovered that his wish had come true. There were no longer any plants surrounding him.

Little Pine reached his branches toward the sun. He had never felt so happy. However, as the afternoon passed, Little Pine began to grow hotter and hotter. One by one, his branches wilted and sagged. Without Old Oak, there was no shade to cool him.

When the sun set, Little Pine sighed with relief. Yet a new problem soon appeared. A storm began, and the pouring rain formed puddles around Little Pine. He could not drink all the water, so the ground grew soggy and wet. Eventually, Little Pine's roots could not grip the soil, and the rainwater washed him away.

Chapter 3

All night long, the rainwater tossed Little Pine around like a toy boat. He floated over stones and tumbled down a hill. At last, Little Pine managed to grab onto a patch of soil near the foot of a towering elm tree. Thankfully, Little Pine sank his roots deep into the dirt.

“Good morning, new neighbor,” welcomed Elm. “I see you’ve found a spot to grow. I hope you enjoy our forest.”

Slowly, Little Pine raised his branches, shook the raindrops from them, and gazed around him. There were some nearby shrubs, and Elm cast a cool shadow over him. This time, Little Pine did not complain.

“I’m happy for your company,” Little Pine told Elm and the shrubs. “Together, we can grow strong and healthy.”

From that day on, whenever the cool winds whistled through Little Pine’s needles, he sang a song just like Old Oak had suggested.

Happily, he praised his new home. A home with helpful friends was truly the best place in the forest.

Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Prompt

In the passage, Little Pine learns to appreciate where he lives after Old Oak and the bushes are cut down. Write a narrative that shows the reader what life might have been like for Little Pine if Old Oak and the bushes had never been cut down. Use details from the passage to help you write your story.

Sample Student Responses and Annotations

Sample 1 Student Response – Score Point 4

A year later Little Pine saw a bunch of smoke in the distance.

“What’s going on over there?” said Little Pine.

“I don’t know,” said Old Oak.

Years and years and years went by and the smoke got closer to their forest. 30 years past and all the plants saw big office buildings cracking thru the clouds. Then one morning Little Pine woke up and he was in a plaza!

“Where am I!?” yelled Little Pine.

“While you were sleeping Old Oak was chopped down!” said the bushes.

“Look out!” cried one of the bushes.

Suddenly a guy came over with a tree shedder! vvvvvvvvwchhhh! Someone is trying to rip Little Pine out of the ground! Then Little Pine got an idea!

“Pull my roots back into the ground with y’alls roots!” cried Little Pine.

So the bushes pulled and pulled, wrapping their roots around Little Pine.

“This tree is to strong!” said the man as he turned off the machine.

“We won!” cried the plants, waving their branches in the air.

“But I still miss Old Oak.” said Little Pine.

“Hi!” said Old Oak with a big booming voice.

“Ahh!” yelled the plants.

Luckily Old Oak was built into a apartment building in the plaza!

“Yipee!” said everone.

Sample 1 Annotation – Score Point 4

Score Point 4 – Exceeds Expectations: A well-crafted narrative that skillfully develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE**Skillfully establishes a setting of a forest with approaching smoke:**

- “A year later Little Pine saw a bunch of smoke in the distance.”
- “Years and years and years went by and the smoke got closer to their forest.”
- The forest setting then changes to a more urban setting:
 - “. . .saw big office buildings cracking thru the clouds. Then one morning Little Pine woke up and he was in a plaza!”

Skillfully introduces a narrator and/or characters using description and dialogue:

- Little Pine, Old Oak, and the bushes are introduced:
 - “A year later Little Pine saw a bunch of smoke in the distance.”
 - “‘What’s going on over there?’ said Little Pine. ‘I don’t know,’ said Old Oak.”
 - “‘While you were sleeping Old Oak was chopped down!’ said the bushes.”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

Organizes a logical plot structure:

- Throughout the response, each event leads logically to the next.
- The response begins with mild apprehension as the characters notice the smoke moving closer.
 - “. . .Little Pine saw a bunch of smoke in the distance. . .smoke got closer to their forest. . .the plants saw big office buildings cracking thru the clouds.”
- This turns into fear as Little Pine realizes the forest has largely disappeared, and then he must face the moment of crisis as the tree-trimmer tries to remove him.
 - “. . .Little Pine woke up and he was in a plaza!”
 - “Someone is trying to rip Little Pine out of the ground!”
- The plants work together to solve the problem, and the writer then gives the reader a happy ending, as the plants are happily united with Old Oak.
 - “So the bushes pulled and pulled. . .”
 - “‘This tree is to strong!’ said the man as he turned off the machine.”
 - “‘We won!’ cried the plants. . .”
 - “‘Hi!’ said Old Oak. . .”
 - “‘Yipee!’ said everone.”

Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to skillfully sequence events:

- The writer consistently uses transitions to show the reader the passage of time and the connection between events:
 - “A year later,” “Years and years and years went by,” “30 years past,” “Then one morning”
 - “While you were sleeping,” “Suddenly,” “Then Little Pine,” “So the bushes”

Provides a well-crafted ending as the reader learns that all the forest characters are joyfully united once again on the plaza:

- “Luckily Old Oak was built into a apartment building in the plaza! ‘Yipee!’ said everone.”

DEVELOPMENT**Skillfully integrates ideas and details from the text:**

- The response uses the passage characters and the ideas of friendship and plant removal/ forest destruction from the text to tell the story of what happens in the future.
- The writer introduces Old Oak at the beginning, and then skillfully uses dialogue to show the reader what happened to him:
 - “‘While you were sleeping Old Oak was chopped down!’ said the bushes.”
 - **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

Uses well-crafted descriptive language and sensory details to skillfully develop events:

- The response uses some descriptive language which allows the reader to see and hear events and share in the experiences of the characters:
 - “. . .smoke in the distance. . .smoke got closer to their forest. . .big office buildings cracking thru the clouds. . .”
 - “Suddenly a guy came over with a tree shedder! vvvvvvvwchhhh!”
 - “Someone is trying to rip Little Pine out of the ground!”
 - “So the bushes pulled and pulled, wrapping their roots around Little Pine.”
 - “‘This tree is to strong!’ said the man as he turned off the machine.”
 - “‘We won!’ cried the plants, waving their branches in the air.”
 - “‘Hi!’ said Old Oak, with a big booming voice.”
- Some language is vague, and the narrative would be more vivid if the writer provided more sensory details to help the reader picture the events:
 - What does the smoke look like? What does the man look like? How did the man move around? What do the bushes look like? How did the bushes pull Little Pine back? What does the plaza look like? Where were the plants located in the plaza?

Uses well-crafted descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to skillfully develop a narrator and/or characters:

- The character of Little Pine is the best-developed, as the writer uses dialogue to show his curiosity, fear, problem-solving skill, determination, loyalty to his old friend, and joy at the end:
 - “‘What’s going on over there?’ said Little Pine.”
 - “Then one morning Little Pine woke up and he was in a plaza!”
 - “‘Where am I!?’ yelled Little Pine.”
 - “Then Little Pine got an idea!”
 - “‘Pull my roots back into the ground with y’all’s roots!’ cried Little Pine.”
 - “‘But I still miss Old Oak.’ said Little Pine.”
 - “‘Yipee!’ said everone.”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

Skillfully uses dialogue to develop events and/or characters:

- Dialogue is used to advance the plot, as well as to reveal the emotions of the characters and the relationships between them.
- The writer successfully uses dialogue and dialogue tags to convey curiosity, apprehension, fear, frustration, excitement, and joy on the part of the characters as they react to different events.
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

LANGUAGE**Uses precise language and vocabulary to skillfully develop the narrative:**

- The words chosen by the writer allow the reader to picture the setting and to feel the fear and joy of the characters:
 - “cracking thru,” “plaza,” “Look out!,” “tree shredder,” “rip,” “cried,” “wrapping,” “waving,” “booming,” “Ahh!,” “yelled,” “apartment building,” “Yipee!”

Uses varied sentence types and phrases to skillfully develop the narrative:

- “Then one morning Little Pine woke up and he was in a plaza!”
- “So the bushes pulled and pulled, wrapping their roots around Little Pine.”
- “‘Ahh!’ yelled the plants.”

Has very few or no errors in grammar usage and conventions:

- There are minor usage errors and a spelling error:
 - “past” for passed, “to” for too, “a” for an
 - “everone”

Uses a tone and/or voice that strengthens the narrative. The writer creates a suspenseful tone, successfully building tension throughout the response.

Score Justification

- Despite dialogue not being a requirement for third-grade students, the inclusion of dialogue in the response is skillfully used to establish setting and characters.
- There is a logical plot structure which establishes a problem and leads the characters through a moment of crisis to the resolution of the problem.
- Transitions between events are skillful.
- There is skillful integration of text ideas.
- Descriptive language allows the reader to share in the characters' experiences.
- Precise language and sentence variety enhance the response.
- The happy ending is well-crafted and skillful.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Use more sensory details to make the experiences more vivid, helping the reader to see, feel, and hear the details of what is happening. This allows the reader to more fully share the characters' experiences.
- Use more descriptive details, including adjectives and adverbs, to help the reader picture the setting, characters, and events.

Sample 2 Student Response – Score Point 4

One rainy day, Little Pine was leaning over for a sip of water from a puddle when a bunch of bushes (who were much older than Little Pine) went to the puddle seconds before him and drank up the whole puddle!

“Hey!” said Little Pine “what about me?”

“You? Ha!” Laughed the bushes.

“You need less water than us!” The bushes exclaimed.

Poor Little Pine, he was very thirsty and also sad.

This is when wise Old Oak bent down and said, “Do not hold grudges, fix your problems.”

Those couple words filled Little Pine’s head, and with that he fell asleep peacefully.

The next morning, Little Pine leaned over for a sip of water, and just like always, the bushes got there first.

But this time, Little Pine said “Stop! Let me have a sip! I am very thirsty and I can never drink! I am sick and tired of it!”

“We are so sorry!” said the bushes. “We didn’t mean to hurt you. Here, drink it all!”

And now Little Pine gets to drink every day!

The End!

Sample 2 Annotation – Score Point 4

Score Point 4 – Exceeds Expectations: A well-crafted narrative that skillfully develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE

Skillfully establishes a setting to show the reader the environment and situation experienced by the characters:

- “One rainy day, Little Pine was leaning over for a sip of water from a puddle when a bunch of bushes (who were much older than Little Pine) went to the puddle seconds before him and drank up the whole puddle!”

Skillfully introduces a narrator and/or characters:

- After introducing Little Pine and the bushes, the writer skillfully uses dialogue to show the relationship between them, and then introduces Old Oak:
 - “‘Hey!’ said Little Pine ‘what about me?’”
 - “‘You? Ha!’ Laughed the bushes.”
 - “This is when wise Old Oak bent down and said, ‘Do not hold grudges, fix your problems.’”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

Organizes a logical plot structure with a sequence of events that follow logically from one to the next:

- The response begins with Little Pine’s frustration at not getting any of the water.
- This leads to Old Oak’s advice, which allows Little Pine to overcome his frustration and assert himself in an attempt to solve his problem.
- This results in the resolution of the conflict as the bushes apologize, leading to the satisfying ending.

Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to skillfully sequence events:

- “One rainy day,” “Hey,” “This is when,” “The next morning,” “But this time,” “And now”

Provides a well-crafted ending by showing the reader the positive change in Little Pine’s life:

- “And now Little Pine gets to drink every day!”

DEVELOPMENT

Skillfully integrates ideas and details from the text:

- The writer combines passage characters (Little Pine, Old Oak, bushes) and the passage conflict over drinking water with an original idea for the resolution of Little Pine’s dilemma.

Uses well-crafted descriptive language and sensory details to skillfully develop events:

- The critical events that cause changes in the character are described, but there are few sensory details to help the reader see exactly what happened, like movements, body language, or facial expressions:
 - “One rainy day, Little Pine was leaning over for a sip of water from a puddle when a bunch of bushes (who were much older than Little Pine) went to the puddle seconds before him and drank up the whole puddle!”
 - “. . . wise Old Oak bent down and said, ‘Do not hold grudges, fix your problems.’”
 - “The next morning, Little Pine leaned over for a sip of water, and just like always, the bushes got there first.”

Uses well-crafted descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to skillfully develop a narrator and/or characters:

- “Poor Little Pine, he was very thirsty and also sad.”
- “Those couple words filled Little Pine’s head, and with that he fell asleep peacefully.”
- “The next morning, Little Pine leaned over for a sip of water, and just like always, the bushes got there first.”
- “And now Little Pine gets to drink every day!”

Skillfully uses dialogue to develop events and/or characters:

- Dialogue is used to show the feelings of the characters, the relationships and conflict between them, and the resolution of that conflict:
 - “‘Hey!’ said Little Pine ‘what about me?’”
 - “‘You? Ha!’ Laughed the bushes.”
 - “‘You need less water than us!’ The bushes exclaimed.”
 - “But this time, Little Pine said ‘Stop! Let me have a sip! I am very thirsty and I can never drink! I am sick and tired of it!’”
 - “‘We are so sorry!’ said the bushes. ‘We didn’t mean to hurt you. Here, drink it all!’”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

LANGUAGE**Uses precise language and vocabulary to skillfully develop the narrative:**

- “leaning over,” “sip,” “puddle,” “laughed,” “exclaimed,” “grudges,” “peacefully,” “sick and tired”

Uses varied sentence types and phrases to skillfully develop the narrative:

- “‘You need less water than us!’ The bushes exclaimed.”
- “The next morning, Little Pine leaned over for a sip of water, and just like always, the bushes got there first.”

Has very few or no errors in grammar usage and conventions, except for some minor punctuation and capitalization errors in sections of dialogue.

Uses a tone and/or voice that strengthens the narrative. The response has a tone of optimism, with a sense that there is a possibility for overcoming the conflict.

Score Justification

- The response skillfully establishes setting and characters.
- There is a logical plot as characters undergo changes in response to events.
- Well-crafted description of actions, thoughts and feelings show character development.
- Characters and events are based on the text.
- Precise vocabulary enhances the response.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Provide more descriptive details of the setting so that the reader can “see” some of the details, like where the puddle is, what it looks like, and exactly what happens there.
- Use transitions more consistently to show how ideas are connected, and how one event leads to the next.
- Use more descriptive details and sensory language to develop characters and events.

Sample 3 Student Response – Score Point 3

Life for Little Pine would have been sad but happy eventually. He would think he had nothing he wanted. He would think his dream would never come true. Old oak gave him shade, the bushes drank more water than him and he barely got any.

But one day, he had a dream about what would happen if the plants near him wouldn't be there. Old oak was gone when he woke up and the bushes were too in his dream. He got too hot during the day and wilted. There was a storm and too much water. He drank it all and then got sick.

When he woke up, he learned to be happy with the plants near him. He learned that this was protecting him from death. He learned the life of a plant.

That was the best place in the forest.

Sample 3 Annotation – Score Point 3

Score Point 3 – Meets Expectations: A complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE**Establishes a setting:**

- The response lacks details to help the reader “see” the setting, but the circumstances of the character are made clear.

Introduces a narrator and/or characters:

- The reader learns something about Little Pine and his relationships with others:
 - “. . .had nothing he wanted.”
 - “. . .his dream would never come true.”
 - “Old oak gave him shade, the bushes drank more water than him. . .”

Organizes a logical plot structure:

- The response sets up the context that Little Pine wants less shade and more water, leading to the dream sequence which offers a different reality.
- The dream sequence leads to the resolution of his internal conflict as he learns that he’s better off living as he is:
 - “. . .the bushes drank more water than him and he barely got any.”
 - “He. . .wilted. . .and then got sick.”
 - “. . .learned to be happy with the plants near him. . .protecting him from death.”

Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to sequence events:

- The writer transitions the reader to the dream sequence, and then back to reality:
 - “But one day. . .”
 - “When he woke up. . .”

Provides a logical ending which follows from the preceding events:

- “He learned the life of a plant. That was the best place in the forest.”

DEVELOPMENT**Integrates ideas and details from the text:**

- While the response adheres closely to the text, a dream sequence is used to help Little Pine learn his lesson by showing what happens after the plants are removed.
 - “. . .what would happen if the plants near him wouldn’t be there. Old oak was gone. . .the bushes were too. . .”
 - “He got too hot during day and wilted. There was a storm and too much water. He drank it all and then got sick.”

Uses descriptive language and sensory details to develop events:

- The reader is left to imagine why Little Pine was hot, what he looked like as he wilted, what the storm was like and how he experienced it, and what symptoms developed when he became ill:
 - “. . .he had a dream about what would happen if the plants near him wouldn’t be there.”
 - “Old oak was gone. . .the bushes were too. . .”
 - “There was a storm and too much water.”
- The response lacks sensory details to help the reader “see” what the characters are doing, like how Little Pine was shaded by Old Oak or why he wasn’t able to drink enough water.

Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to develop a narrator and/or characters:

- “. . .would think he had nothing he wanted. . .would think his dream would never come true.”
- “Old oak agve him shade, the bushes drank more water than him and he barly got any.”
- “He got too hot. . .wilted. . .too much water. . .drank it all. . .got sick.”
- “. . .learned to be happy with the plants near him. . .prectecting him from death. . .learned the life of a plant.”

LANGUAGE**Uses some precise language and vocabulary to develop the narrative:**

- “evantly,” “never come true,” “barly,” “wilted,” “prectecting him from death”

Uses varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative:

- “Old oak agve him shade, the bushes drank more water than him and he barly got any.”
- “But one day, he had a dream about what would happen if the plants near him wouldn’t be there.”
- “When he woke up, he learned to be happy with the plants near him.”

Has a few minor errors in grammar usage and conventions with no significant effect on readability:

- There are some errors in capitalization and spelling:
 - “Old oak”
 - “evantly,” “agve,” “barly,” “prectecting”

Score Justification

- Setting and characters are established.
- There is a logical plot structure, with some transitions used to sequence events.
- Text ideas are integrated into the narrative.
- Some descriptive language is used to develop events, actions, thoughts, feelings. Precise language and phrasing enhance the response.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Use transitions more consistently to show how ideas are connected, and how one event leads to the next.
- Use more descriptive details and sensory language to develop events and characters, so that the reader is able to see the setting and various events more vividly, thereby more fully sharing the experiences of the characters.
- Use dialogue to develop events and characters.

Sample 4 Student Response – Score Point 3

The next morning Little Pine woke before the others once again he reached his branches to the sun.

“Humph,” he mumbled waking Old Oak.

“Well” Old Oak said “You really don’t give up quickly.”

“So will you help me?” Little Pine asked excitedly.

“Well. . . there’s not really anything I can do to help,” Old Oak answered.

“Maybe you could stretch to the right while I bend to the left?” Little Pine suggested.

“That might work!” Old Oak said, so they tried and Little Pine liked it, so whenever he got grumpy Old Oak would shift out of the sun’s rays.

Sample 4 Annotation – Score Point 3

Score Point 3 – Meets Expectations: A complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE

Establishes a setting, as the entire response is a short scene confined to a specific time and place:

- While the dialogue establishes the general circumstances of the characters, there are few descriptive details to help the reader understand where the scene takes place.

Introduces a narrator and/or characters:

- Little Pine and Old Oak are introduced to the reader, and the relationship between them is revealed using dialogue:
 - “. . . Little Pine woke before the others. . .”
 - “‘Humph,’ he mumbled waking Old Oak.”
 - “So will you help me?”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

Organizes a logical plot structure:

- The response begins with Little Pine encountering a problem and asking for help from Old Oak. Old Oak at first refuses.
- The problem is resolved when Little Pine offers a solution to the conflict and Old Oak agrees.

Uses a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to sequence events:

- “The next morning,” “Humph.” “Well,” “So,” “Maybe,” “whenever”

Provides a logical ending which follows from the preceding events:

- “. . . Little Pine liked it, so whenever he got grumpy Old Oak would shift out of the sun’s rays.”

DEVELOPMENT

Integrates ideas and details from the text as the characters try to solve Little Pine’s problem of not getting enough sun.

Uses descriptive language and sensory details to develop events:

- The response uses some descriptive language but lacks sensory details to help the reader see exactly what the characters are doing, like movements, body language, or facial expressions, during the events that take place in the story:
 - “. . . reached his branches to the sun.”
 - “. . . stretch to the right. . . bend to the left?”
 - “. . . Old Oak would shift out of the sun’s rays.”

Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, and/or feelings to develop a narrator and/or characters, with some dialogue tags to describe Little Pine’s frame of mind:

- “. . .woke before the others. . .waking Old Oak.”
- “grumpy”
- “mumbled,” “exitedly,” “suggested”

Uses dialogue to develop events and/or characters:

- In this response, dialogue is used to set up the context of the original problem, and then takes the reader through the conflict between the characters to the final resolution.
- Dialogue is also used to reveal something about each character, as well as the relationship between them:
 - “‘Humph,’ he mumbled waking Old Oak.”
 - “You really don’t give up quickly.”
 - “‘So will you help me?’ Little Pine asked exitedly.”
 - “‘That might work!’ Old Oak said, so they tried and Little Pine liked it. . .”
- **Note:** While dialogue is not a requirement for third-grade student responses on the rubric, the student’s thoughtful and well-executed inclusion of dialogue was able to elevate the overall quality of the response.

LANGUAGE

Uses precise language and vocabulary to develop the narrative:

- The writer’s word choice helps the reader hear the tone of the conversation between the characters:
 - “mumbled,” “exitedly,” “suggested,” “grumpy”
- The reader can also picture how the characters move, since “stretch,” “bend,” and “shift” are more precise words than “move”:
 - “stretch to the right,” “bend to the left,” “shift”

Uses varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative:

- “You really don’t give up quickly.”
- “Maybe you could stretch to the right while I bend to the left?”

Has a few minor errors in grammar usage and conventions with no significant effect on readability:

- The response begins with a run-together sentence with a missing period between “others” and “once.”
- There is missing punctuation (commas) in the dialogue, and there are some spelling errors:
 - “‘Well’ Old Oak said ‘You really don’t give up quickly.’”
 - “exitedly,” “ansered,” “suggested”

Score Justification

- Setting and characters are established.
- There is a logical plot structure, as dialogue is used to sequence events.
- Text ideas are integrated into the narrative.
- Some descriptive language is used to develop events, actions, thoughts, feelings.
- Precise language and phrasing enhance the response.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Use transitions more consistently to show how ideas are connected, and how one event leads to the next.
- Use more descriptive details and sensory language to develop characters and events.

Sample 5 Student Response – Score Point 2

Little Pine would still complan but he will get uste to it! Then Old Oak and the bushes and Little Pine will be good frinds! Old Oak and the bushes will shar with Little Pine. Little Pine will gro and grow and grow and grow and Little Pine will be BIG Pine, the bushes will be big and Old Oak will be bigger! Elm is Old Oak's long lost sibling so Elm moved in. so thay all sang happily ever after the end

Sample 5 Annotation – Score Point 2

Score Point 2 – Approaches Expectations: An incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE

Introduces a setting with little to no detail. The setting is a vague place where many of the characters are living together.

Introduces a narrator and/or characters with little to no detail:

- The reader is told that Little Pine is complaining, and that the characters will all be friends.
- There are no other details to help the reader understand why Little Pine is complaining or why the characters will end up being friends:
 - “Little Pine would still complan but he will get uste to it!”
 - “Then Old Oak and the bushes and Little Pine will be good frinds!”

Plot structure is unclear or disorganized:

- The response is a list of events as the writer tells what happens next, but these events are not developed into an adequate plot, where one event logically leads to or causes the next event:
 - “will be good frinds,” “will shar,” “will gro,” “bushes will be big,” “Old Oak will be biger,” “Elm moved in,” “thay all sang”

Uses some transitional words and/or phrases that partially sequence events:

- “Then,” “so”

Provides a weak ending:

- “so thay all sang happily ever after. . .”

DEVELOPMENT

Minimally integrates ideas and details from the text. Some ideas related to the text are:

- “Little Pine would still complan. . .will be good frinds. . .will shar. . .Elm moved in.”

Minimally uses descriptive language or sensory details to develop events.

Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, or feelings to minimally develop a character:

- The writer makes some vague statements about the characters, but the response lacks details to show the reader why these statements are true:
 - “. . .Old Oak and the bushes and Little Pine will be good frinds. . .Old Oak and the bushes will shar with Little Pine.”
 - “. . .Little Pine will be BIG Pine, the bushes will be big and Old Oak will be biger!”

LANGUAGE

Uses basic language and vocabulary to develop the narrative. There is some precise language:

- “complan,” “get uste to it,” “long lost sibling”

Uses some varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative. There is little variety in sentence structure.

Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with readability:

- The response ends with a run-together sentence which is missing a period before “the end.”
- There are also spelling errors:
 - “complan,” “uste,” “frinds,” “gro,” “biger,” “thay”

Score Justification

- Introduces a setting and characters with little detail.
- The writer attempts to create a sequence of events by telling the reader what will happen next.
- Ideas are connected to text information.
- Minimally uses descriptive language.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Introduce the characters by showing how they are connected to each other.
- Introduce the setting so that the reader can “see” some of the details and understand the context of the response.
- Use a connected sequence of events to create a plot that sets up the problem, rises to a climax, and then offers resolution to the problem.
- Include some details from the text to support the vague statements about the characters to clarify why they are “being friends” or “sharing.”
- Use more precise language to describe characters and events.

Sample 6 Student Response – Score Point 2

He wanted them to leave because they would not let little pine have any more water than he had. Then he wants old oak back for shade. He also wanted him back to tell him how much water he could drink. Then he wants them to come back because he got sad when old oak was not there to sing a song. he really wish they could come back because he was so lonley. But sometimes he was so happy in his new forest he loves his new home so much but not all the time.

Sample 6 Annotation – Score Point 2

Score Point 2 – Approaches Expectations: An incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE**Introduces a setting with little to no detail:**

- The reader is told, at the end of the story, that Little Pine is:
 - “. . .in his new forest. . .new home. . .”

Introduces a narrator and/or characters with little to no detail:

- Old Oak is identified by name, but the identity of the other characters “he” and “they,” is uncertain, although the reader might assume that “little pine” is “he”:
 - “He wanted them to leave because they would not let little pine have any more water than he had.”

Plot structure is unclear or disorganized:

- The response begins by saying Little Pine wanted them (the other plants) to leave, and then gives reasons for wanting them back:
 - “. . .he wants old oak back for shade. . .wants them to come back because he got sad. . .because he was so lonley.”
- There is some reasoning, but there is not a logical sequence of events.

Uses some transitional words and/or phrases that partially sequence events:

- “Then,” “also,” “But”
- **Provides a weak ending:**
 - “. . .he loves his new home so much but not all the time.”

DEVELOPMENT**Minimally integrates ideas and details from the text:**

- The response uses text details as support for the writer’s reasons as to why Little Pine wants Old Oak and the bushes to come back:
 - “. . .he wants old oak back for shade. . .to tell him how much water he could drink. . .got sad when old oak was not there to sing a song.”

Minimally uses descriptive language or sensory details to develop events.**Uses descriptions of actions, thoughts, or feelings to minimally develop a character:**

- “. . .he got sad when old oak was not there to sing a song.”
- “he really wish they could come back because he was so lonley.”
- “. . .he was so happy in his new forest. . .loves his new home so much. . .”

LANGUAGE**Uses basic language and vocabulary to develop the narrative:**

- “wanted him back,” “he got sad,” “he was so lonley,” “he loves his new home”

Uses some varied sentence types and phrases to develop the narrative:

- Most of the sentences have the same structure, but there is some variety:
 - “He also wanted him back to tell him how much water he could drink.”
 - “But sometimes he was so happy in his new forest. . .”

Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with readability:

- The response ends with a run-on sentence which is missing a period between “new forest” and “he loves.”
- There are capitalization errors (proper names and the beginning of a sentence).
- There are also minor spelling and usage errors:
 - “lonley”
 - “wish” for wished

Score Justification

- Introduces a setting and characters with little detail.
- Lacks a sequence of events.
- Explains why the main character has regrets about the change that occurs.
- Supports ideas with text details.
- Minimally uses descriptive language.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Introduce the characters by showing how they are connected to each other.
- Introduce the setting so that the reader can “see” some of the details and understand the context of the response.
- Use a connected sequence of events to create a plot that sets up the context, rises to a climax, and then offers resolution to the problem.
- Include some details from the text to clarify what has taken place and where it has happened.
- Add descriptive language and sensory details to help the reader connect to the experiences of the characters.

Sample 7 Student Response – Score Point 1

he live in the forest in he was happy in he lets has friends come in to see the new home in his frends
loved the hom

Sample 7 Annotation – Score Point 1

Score Point 1 – Does Not Meet Expectations: A weak attempt to write a narrative based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE**Attempts to introduce a setting and characters:**

- “. . .live in the forest. . .new home. . .”
- “he,” “friends”

Response is too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events:

- The writer does attempt to show the reader what happens after the friends come into the new home:
 - “. . .he lets has friends come in to see the new home in his frends loved the hom”

Makes little attempt to provide an ending:

- “. . .his frends loved the hom”

DEVELOPMENT**May use few, if any, ideas or details from the text:**

- There are some details from the last sentences of the passage:
 - “forest,” “friends,” “new home”

Shows little attempt to use descriptive language or sensory details:

- The response lacks sensory details or description to show the reader why the characters felt the way they did:
 - “he was happy,” “his frends loved”

Shows little or no attempt to develop a character. Response is mostly a list of vague details about the character.

LANGUAGE**Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing:**

- The vocabulary is basic, so the reader is given only a vague idea of who the characters are and what happens in the story:
 - “he live in the forest in he was happy. . .”

Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that significantly interfere with readability:

- The response is a run-on sentence with several thoughts connected with “and” (spelled “in”) that needs punctuation for clarity.
- There are some spelling and usage errors:
 - “frends,” “hom”
 - “live” for lived, “in” for and, “has” for his

Score Justification

- The response attempts to identify characters and a setting.
- The writer attempts to show the result of a character's decision.
- The response lacks a sequence of events.
- The response lacks description and details to make the characters and setting come alive for the reader.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Introduce the characters by showing how they are connected to each other.
- Use a connected sequence of events to create a plot.
- Include some details from the text to clarify what has taken place and where it has happened.
- Add descriptive language and sensory details to help the reader connect to the experiences of the characters.

Sample 8 Student Response – Score Point 1

The little pine will not be the same befor because he will not see how it is without Old Oak and bushes so if the bushes and Old Oak would not have bin cut then he would not have been like this then little pine would still be like he was then and now little pine has a new neighbor and he is not all alone and he is not hot like he was then

Sample 8 Annotation – Score Point 1

Score Point 1 – Does Not Meet Expectations: A weak attempt to write a narrative based on the text provided.

STRUCTURE

Attempts to introduce some characters, but a setting is not introduced:

- “little pine,” “Old Oak and bushes,” “new neighbor”

Response is too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events, and instead, attempts to summarize what has happened to Little Pine:

- “. . . little pine would still be like he was then. . . now little pine has a new neighbor. . . not all alone. . . not hot. . .”

Makes little attempt to provide an ending:

- “. . . he is not all alone and he is not hot like he was then”

DEVELOPMENT

May use few, if any, ideas or details from the text:

- “. . . has a new neighbor. . .”
- “. . . he is not hot like he was then”

Shows little or no attempt to use descriptive language or sensory details:

- The response lacks language that would help the reader to see, hear, and feel along with the characters in order to share in their experiences.

Shows little or no attempt to develop a character. There are few details to help the reader know and understand Little Pine.

Response is mostly a summary of the story.

LANGUAGE

Vocabulary and word choice may be unclear or confusing:

- The vocabulary is basic and some statements are vague:
 - “. . . because he will not see how it is. . .”
 - “. . . he would not have been like this. . .”

Has frequent errors in grammar usage and conventions that significantly interfere with readability:

- The response is a run-together sentence that needs punctuation for clarity.
- There are some minor spelling errors:
 - “befor,” “bin”

Score Justification

- The writer introduces some characters and attempts to explain how the life of one of the characters might have changed.
- The response lacks a sequence of events.
- Passage information is summarized to describe what has happened to Little Pine.
- The writer has included some details related to the text.
- The response lacks descriptive language and sensory details.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Introduce the characters by showing how they are connected to each other.
- Introduce a setting to help the reader understand the context of the response.
- Use a connected sequence of events to create the outline of a plot and then develop these events to show the purpose of the narrative.
- Include more details from the text to clarify what has taken place.
- Add descriptive language and sensory details to help the reader connect to the experiences of the characters

Sample 9 Student Response – Score Point 0

He had appreciated who he is.

Score Justification

The response is too limited to score. The writer attempts to introduce a character “he” and offers a vague supporting detail “appreciated who he is.” The response lacks a sequence of events, and there are no details from the passage to help the reader understand the context of the response. To achieve a score of 1, the response needs to provide more information about the character, setting, or events, such as who “he” is, and why he has a sense of appreciation.

Sample 10 Student Response – Score Point 0

You have to add thir thouhts and actions

Score Justification

The response is too limited to score. The writer is paraphrasing information from the narrative rubric. The response is too brief and too vague to determine the writer's purpose.

