

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 1

- basic plot and point of view
- narrative fails to be engaging
- characters are superficial
- plot development and conclusion are superficial
- limited vocabulary

The prompt for the narrative story was to write a realistic narrative about a characters adventure.

The fishy Trip

When Dave and Joe were ready to go to the lake, they had everything except hooks. So they decide to buy the hooks in Blain Lake, so off dad and Joe were. Dave is about 5' 9" high, he's was about in the 185 pounds, and about 43 years old with dark hair, and Joe is a bout 5' 6" high, he's about 127 pounds and 13 years old with blond hair.

"You know what dave I had a dream that the boat got stolen on a fishing trip" said Joe. "I hope it doesn't happen."

It was a hot day in June when Joey and Dave went fishing. When they got to Blain Lake they stopped at the store.

"Let's go in this store" said Joey.

"Sure" said Dave.

So they went into the store and looked for hooks, there was one wall full of hooks. They pick out 10 hooks each. When they got to the clerk.

The clerk asked them" is that your boat there because someone stealing it."

"What "yelled Dave" that boat is bran new"!

So they quickly bought the hooks and went after the crooks, but first they went to the cops to help them. So off they went, the cops went to North battle ford and Dave and Joe went to Saskatoon. When the cops saw them going back to Blain Lake. Dave and Joe quickly went back. On the way there the crooks passed so we had to turn around. When Dave and Joe caught up to the crooks at the bridge.

Dave quickly called the cops and went after them, but when we got out of the truck they forced Dave and Joe in there car.

"Get in there, you are to snoopy" said one of the gang

There were three in the gang. The leader was huge, looked like a boxer with a double chin about 250 pounds and about 5'8" high. The other two were both about 200 pounds and 5' 5".

Luckily dad found a paper.

Dear Cops

Robbers forced us in there car and they are going to there hide out, it is somewhere around the river.

Dad and Joe

"Get in there" yelled the gang "what's taking you so long".

"Just give, up the cops will have you behind bars in no time" yelled dad

"No! They don't even know were hideout is" yelled the gang "get in the car"!

But it wasn't long when the "so called cops" found the letter and started going to there hideout. They found dad and Joe on the side of the road against the trees tide up. They untied Dad and Joe so other people would untie them and get the real cops.

"Thank you cops they went down to the river, they said some thing about a stream." explained dad.

You say we are cops, but we aren't we are part of the gang; good thing found you before any other people did. We also drove your car in to a bush so know one will find you" said the so called cops.

The one gang cop was about 6" 2'and about 220 pounds.

"What I thought you were on my side" said Dave

So they went to the river and saw the tracks going to the stream, when they got to the hide out, Dave and Joe were trying to escape, but gave in to the gang because they had a shot gun. After one week there family got worried so they phoned the cops. The cops hurried over to there home.

"Where did they go? What time should they be back?" Asked the cops.

"The one cop name was bob he was about 5' 5" and fat with dark hair. The other cop was skinny at 6' 3" with black hair."

They went to blain lake to buy hooks, then they went to the Cowin lake to go fishing for four nights explained there family.

So the cops went they looked all day. At the end of the day they asked the store owner that they were last stopped and asked

"Did you see this one man and with his son buying hooks here"

"Yes. That was about a week ago, they went after some crooks because there boat got stolen" said the clerk.

"Well we probably want to go after them said the cops." "Which way did they go?"

"They went out of town to Saskatoon" said the clerk.

"Thanks" said the cops while they went out the door.

So on they went along the road until they saw something shinny in the trees, and looked. It was there car and found the letter that the dumb crook didn't put away.

"This is a chunk of news you radio the chef to send a police up stream while we go look for them," said the cop.

"Okay" said the other cop.

It took a while but they found there hideout by the stream in a cave they passed a lot but, the crooks didn't notice until they got arrested.

Dad and Joe got there boat back and went fishing the next day. When morning came they were off fishing with there new boat and hooks. 3 hours later they got to Cowin dam. They lunch there boat and went out on the lake for the day. They brought in 2 packs of chips a frying pan, wood, matches, and paper.

"How many nights are we staying here dad" asked Joe.

"Four nights. Let's make a bet whoever gets the biggest fish gets \$20" said dad

So off they went.

The End
The End

GRADE EIGHT

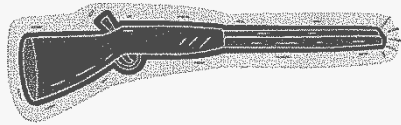
NARRATIVE – LEVEL 1

- introduction is one long sentence
- rarely uses a range of devices
- frequent incorrect spelling

The prompt for the poem was to write about a personal adventure they had been on.

7/12


My first buck



It was a cold spring morning, when my grandpa and I were standing along a long narrow winding frozen over slough bed when we heard a noise like a train



out of control and then all

of a sudden this buck  jumps out of the bush blasting its way across. I took look threw my scope he was a nice one and I was gunner shoot so I got him in the cross arrows and BANG once the

smoke had cleared we saw him laying down dead on the side of the slough bed. I had just shot my first buck ever and I was excited like the first time you realized you had a belly button or when you finally realize you have toes.

So after we had finished shaking hands we walked over too the buck I had just shot couples of minutes earlier we stared to gut it was really gross and it smelled like blood and fresh meat but I still loved every minute of it!!!

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 1

- verb tense issues
- frequent incorrect punctuation and spelling
- no quotation marks
- limited vocabulary
- use of paragraphs
- tone and voice not evident
- superficial plot
- good use of capitals

Final Copy

Michael is sitting in class and Judith was not there . So heis sitting there waiting for her. Then he finally asks “where is Judith”? The Teacher answers “I don’t know..her mom called and said that Judith is not going to be in school today”.

Michael sat up and said we got to find her its been a week. Okay just for today. Michael got up and left the class room and got onto his bike and he started ridibg his bike and he didn’t stop pedaling until he got there.

The old lady said that she always hears noises like yelling. Michael herd and got told that her mom was hitting her and she told her to stop but she kept going. Then an hour later she stopped hitting her.

The next morning she said I will call and say that you hurt yourself and fell down the stairs. Judith woke up and said you shouldn’t lie that’s not nice. You should just tell the school the truth. Then Connie got mad again and started to beat her up again.

Judith went to the bathroom and started to cry because she was in so much pain and she is bleeding from her nose to her mouth. After she came out and got ready to go to school. But Connie popped out in front of her and said your not going to school today. Judith asked “why”. Connie said “we are moving away from here”. Where are we moving to asked Judith and Connie said “we are moving to another town far away from here”.

The next day they were gone and moved away already. Michael found out where they moved to and hopped onto the train and went to her school and waited and waited till she got out of school when he seen her he started yelling Judith!!! Judith!!!... then she looked back and started running towards him.

Michael thought he had lost her then she asked why are you here? And Michael saidi found out that you moved and I found out where you moved to and I missed you so I needed to come and tell you that I brought some tickets for you to come back and you can come live with me and my family.

Judith said she will probably have to stay here. No your going to come with me I heard what your mom does to you she beats you up till your black and blue. That’s not what you call a good mother.

If you don’t want to take care of your own daughter and tell her its okay your not going to school yeah I think you desereve a lot better so will you please come live with me and my family? Judith your my only hope and I don’t want tou to get hurt or beat up anymore so please.

Judith said “let me think about this” Michael said “okay Judith”. Then Judith says “yes okay I will “

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 2

- point of view is established
- basic vocabulary
- beginning/middle/end to anecdote
- inconsistent use of punctuation
- sentence length varies

Maybe I'm A City Girl Now

“You can do it. Squeeze and pull.” That is the instructions he gave me. My mom, my little sister, Casey, and I were helping in the barn at my Uncle Randy’s dairy farm. We were doing things like feeding the calves who were hungrily and not so patiently waiting in their pens in the back of the barn, shoveling the poop into the gutters, and setting milk out for the untamed cats who were sitting up on the high up hay bales, watching us.

We were talking to Uncle Randy, trying to ignore the stench of fresh cow pies, as he was putting a milking machine on one of the cows. He asked us if we wanted to try. We thought about it for a while, then shyly agreed.

Casey went first. One big step over the gutter, careful not to fall in the poop, and she was there. She put her hands on the warm, pink udder and squeezed. She got it on the first try! A long stream of creamy white liquid flowing out of the swollen pink udder was the proof of that.

Next it was my turn, I put my hands in the exact same spots as Casey and I squeezed! And I pulled! And I squeezed and I pulled at the same time! Still, nothing! Uncle Randy tried explaining it to me. I tried again, red faced and kind of embarrassed. A few drops, then nothing! I felt so discouraged! My nine year old sister could do it, and I, an eleven year old girl who had lived on that farm for three years couldn't! I knew I wasn't going to live this down! I went back to the

house. Head hanging and poop sticking to my shoes. Maybe I'm not so good at squeezing and pulling... Maybe I really have turned into a city girl...

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 2

- punctuation/capitalization errors
- paragraph divisions required
- more than one narrative from multiple view points
- many run-on sentences
- inconsistent/incorrect paragraphing
- point of view is established
- varies vocabulary
- some run-ons
- basic variety of sentence lengths
- incorrect ends/use of some words
- engaging tone
- homonym issues

Judith's point of view:

I woke up I felt dizzy; I was in a white room with a tube hooked on to me. When I finally got my vision straight I noticed that I was in the hospital. I saw mommy across the room from me. I looked at my legs and arms they were covered with stitches and bruises.

Then the door opened. "Hello Judith" Doctor John said. "Hi" I weakly said. "How are you feeling?" Asked the doctor. I'm doing fine, just got a head ache. Why am I here anyways? "You and your mother came in yesterday, you got in a car accident." The doctor tried to explain. "You also got some bruises that the hospital knows that weren't from the car accident." My cheeks started to burn up I thought to myself, do they know that my mother beats me? What are they going to do? All sorts of questions were running through my head. "Your mother was drunk last night, and she kept blabbing about how much she beats you, is that true?" Doctor John asked. I knew mother wouldn't want me to tell them, but I couldn't bear it anymore. I'm missing too much school and I can't even join my class in gym. I quickly glanced over to mommy. I Nodded. I asked impatiently "What are you going to do? About me and Dennis? Are we going to be separated?" "You and Dennis will be living with one of your relatives" Doctor John said. "As soon as we can contact one of them." I was going to say something about my Aunt Ria, ~~We~~ could probably go live with her, but he already went out the door.

I just layed on the hospital bed, It wasn't really comfy, but I finally fell asleep again. After a few hours of sleeping I was awoken by a soft voice. I opened my eyes and saw Dr. John, Aunt Ria and Dennis. "You will be living with you Aunt right after you get out of the hospital." Doctor John said. I smiled and nodded. I was happy I would be going with my Aunt Ria. She's super nice and well she doesn't beat me. Dennis walked up to me and gave me a big hug. It did hurt a bit, but I missed him and his hugs. "What about mommy?" I asked nervously. "She will be put in a help service for a few months." Dr. John Replied.

Michael's Point of view:

What about Michael

I was looking at Judith's empty desk. I thought to my self. Where could she be? Was she beaten by her mother again she needed to stay home? Class ended and I was just about to leave, but Mr. Beekman called me over to his desk.

Michael... If your wondering where Judith is... you might want to know that she got in a car accident last night. "Wh-wha- what?" I said in a weak voice. Judith and her mother were driving home when another car went through the red light and hit another car. I felt tears forming in my eyes, but I quickly wiped them away. I took a deep breath. "Is she alright?" I asked impatiently. Yes she is. They found bruises on her back, her legs and arms. They said that Judith's mother was drunk and she told the doctors and nurses that she beats Judith. "I believe them too." Said Mr. Beekman. "Why would you say that?" I asked curious. I believe that Judith's mother does beat her. That would explain how Judith is always missing gym, how Judith's mother won't come in to talk and that one day when I found bruises on her arms and legs. I just nodded. "Well I'm going to go see if I could go visit her and see what's going too happen." I said then left the classroom.

I ran across the field towards the bike racks. I quickly got on my bike and pedaled as fast as I could to my house. I finally got there. "Aunt Elli! We gotta go to the hospital right away!" I yelled out of breath. She didn't put up a fight and ran to go get her car keys. I explained to her of what happened to Judith and her mom.

Judith's Point of view:

Aunt Ria and Dennis were still in the hospital room with me when the door whipped open. It was Michael he was so out of breath. His face was all red and his hair was a mess. Then Aunt Elli followed after Michael. "Hi-Hi Judith, Are you okay?" Michael asked. I'm fine, I just have a headache. "I was so worried about you; I didn't want you to get hurt even more." Michael said in a soft voice. I just reached of my arms and hugged Michael. I'm going to be living with Aunt Ria... I said in a low voice. "What?!" Michael yelled. I nodded. "I'm going to miss you Michael, and Aunt Eli and your cousins. He didn't want to put up a fight so he just hugged Judith one last time and left, Aunt Eli Followed.

1 week later---

"Judith are you already to leave?" Aunt Ria asked. "Yes, but just one second" I Replied. I walked over to mommy who was still unconscious and gave her a kiss on her forehead.

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 3

- capitals within dialogue
- suspense...foreshadowing
- punctuation
- effective use of dialogue – emphasis technique
- homonyms
- run-on sentences
- emotions apparent
- unexpected ending
- language choice
- content: physical abuse, alcohol
- plot is basic
- point of view is consistent
- narrative could be more engaging
- limited vocabulary
- inconsistent use of capitals
- basic simple sentences, some variety

bruises Alternate Ending

As Michael walked into the classroom, something seemed wrong, "Where's Judith?" He asked Mr. Beekman. "I'm not too sure, I haven't heard from her." Mr. Beekman answered. The day went by slowly. Michael had planned to stop by Judith's after school and tell her all about his trip to America and give her a bear he had bought for her.

He hustled to her house, he was anxious to see her. Michael arrived there in no-time, all the green lights helped. It was a dark cloudy day, the kind when something is bound to go wrong. Michael turned sharply onto Judith's street. He heard sirens in the distance becoming louder and louder. The sirens rang in his ear as they rushed past him. There was an ambulance and two police cars. Michael's heart stopped when he saw the emergency vehicles stop in front of Judith's house. The police officers stormed into the house. The scene Michael saw was sickening. Judith came out in handcuffs. "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!" Michael screamed. The next thing Michael saw would scar him for life. Michael froze as the E.M.Ts came out zipping up a body-bag. Michael looked into the eyes of the dead body, it must of only been a couple of seconds but it felt like hours. It was Connie.

Michael raced to his bike and pedaled him as fast as he could, crying. He arrived home and ran straight up to his room, slamming his door. He sunk into his pillow and thought of every thing that had happened. With in a couple minutes Aunt Elly came and asked concerned, " Michael what's wrong?" Michael stuttered, "Judith...jail... Judith's mom is dead!" "Oh my god." Aunt Elly replied, shocked. She left the room. Michael cried in his room for a few hours. Aunt Elly came up and hugged Michael. She didn't say anything, they just layed there and drifted off into a sleep.

One month later. Aunt Elly never did tell Michael what happened with Judith. Every time he asked she would just say, "When the time is right, I will tell you." The last few months of school were tough. Michael took counseling, all the boys made fun of him and he was getting in trouble frequently.

Michael took up alcohol, he figured it helped him cope that everything that went on in his life. He would sneak hard liquor from Aunt Elly's liquor cabinet.

Eight months later. Michael gripped the knife, he had been drinking a lot this night. There was an empty bottle of vodka right beside the teddy-bear he had planned to give Judith as a present. He put the knife to his throat, looked at the teddy-bear and there was a flash of the day he had met Judith and all the good times they had. He clenched the knife one last time, dropped it to the ground and started sobbing.

One year later. Aunt Elly thought this was all too much for Michael, she figured it was time for him to start a new life, he would move to America to live with his father. One week before Michael would move he asked Aunt Elly one last time, "Aunt Elly, what happened to Judith?" She replied, " I knew you would ask that." There was a silence. "Well?" Michael asked impatiently. "Come with me." She said hesitantly. They hopped into the car and drove over to the Hag Hospital. There was silence the whole drive up. They got the and went into the elevator. Aunt Elly pushed a button labeled M.H. The elevator descended and when the doors open there was a sign the said Hag Mental Hospital. That creeped Michael out. They walked down the hall and stopped at room 7. He looked in the window, it was Judith. She was strapped to a bed just staring at the ceiling. It was clear to Michael now, Judith killed her mother and was in an insane asylum for it. The sad thing is no one knew why she killed her own mother she never told anyone about the abuse. A tear dropped from Michael's eye as he walked towards the elevator.

Three years later. Michael had started a new life now living in America. He had new friends and had quit drinking. One Sunday morning while eating breakfast, Michael's father called, " Michael, there's a letter here from you. Michael claimed the letter and ripped it apart. It said to Michael, from Judith. Michael thought twice about reading the letter. He walked over to the garbage can and threw it out.

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 3

- engaging
- builds plot succinctly with interesting detail
- sentence variety
- introduction and conclusion
- coherent
- good spelling
- develops character and plot

New Huffy Bike

It was just another evening at my house in Torquay, and the most surprising thing happened to me. My dad asked me to walk to the Post Office to get the mail with him. I walked out the door, in my green pajamas, and there was an old, white huffy bike with colourful clips on the tires. I was speechless! I was so excited to have my first 2-wheel bike and to ride to the Post Office, which usually wasn't very exciting. Once we got the mail my dad challenged me to a race, him running and me riding my new huffy! We started off, I started to gain speed, the wind blowing in my face, the jingling of the colourful clips on the tires, and my dad huffing and puffing beside me. I was pedaling as fast as I could and my dad was sprinting with the mail in his hand. We reached home at about the same time and all my dad could say was, "You almost gave me a heart attack, making me run so fast!" I was a little worried he was actually going to have a heart attack but, he started laughing so I did too. That'll teach him to challenge me to a race!

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 3

- Context: Effective, well-developed narrative. Engaging tone.
- Message: Uses a variety of techniques to enhance details.
- Strategies: Thoughtfully organizes ideas in an appropriate manner. Details.
- Pragmatic Cues: Language appropriate. Great voice.
- Textual Cues: Point of view is clear. Text/paragraphs link.
- Syntactic: Effective use of punctuation – at times is creative and strategic. Varies sentence length for effect.
- Semantic/Lexical/Morphological/Graphophonical: Spelling is usually correct. Basic vocabulary. Uses literary devices. Uses precise words clearly and correctly.

There are many reasons to be late for class. Kids make up stories about missing the bus and couldn't get to school or their dog ate their homework, or their alarm clock didn't go off, these are all lies but this one this one is real.

Through this storey I am going to tell you about my little , big journey. It all started the night before when I saw a bright light outside my house, then the power went off, and that is why my alarm did not go off in the morning. After the bright light I went downstairs and I saw something really scary.

It all started at 9:45pm the night before, I couldn't fall asleep so I turned on the T.V. in my room and started watching Two and a Half Men. I then began doing some homework but that put me out. I awoke at 2:07am because I heard something down in the kitchen, I slowly made my way down to the kitchen, I heard something hit something off the kitchen counter and then it went downstairs. I ran up to my parents room and I saw that the window was wide open and my parents were gone so I went looking for them and I couldn't find them, so I went back to my room and safely crawled back into bed.

The next morning I woke up and I soon realized that my alarm clock didn't wake me up. I went down stairs and my parents weren't home and neither were my brothers. I didn't know where they had went to. I went to turn on the light and T.V. but neither of them would turn on, so I went down to the basement and I saw that there before me... was... an... alien. It had green tentacles, a big head and sharp large teeth. It was draining the electricity from my house, that is why there was no electricity for the lights and stuff. I yelled at it and took me in its tentacles and beamed me up to it's mother ship. I was captured.

Once in the mother ship I saw my family except for one thing, Carter (my little brother) was missing. My mom said that they took Carter to their testing center. So me and Kayden snooped around, we eventually found an exit, we went back to the cells and got mom and dad. We got them to the exits and they parachuted down to the house.

Kayden and I finally got to the testing centers, we saw them testing on Carter. We were going to rush in and grab our little brother but then we decided that we needed to have some weapons. We searched around some more and finally found some. We grabbed a couple of plasma type guns and we went flying into the testing center, but neither of us how to shoot the darn things. Good thing because the aliens spoke to us and showed us how to shoot the weapons and that is how we knew they were good and meant no harm. After that they gave us back Carter, we said goodbye and then parachuted back down to our house. We rushed about trying to get ready but we missed the bus. We then started jogging and walking to school, that is why I was late.

So this is why I am late for scholl, really I am just lucky to be here at all. So I hope you can forgive me for being late. So you see in my little big journey I fought aliens, became friends with them, got my family back, had a good run, got to parachute, and got some sweet alien galactic weapons. As you can see I had a rough night, so if you could take it easy on me for being late for class today.:)

P.S. I'll just be sleeping on my desk!!

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 3

- Context: Well developed but not impactful.
- Message: Engaging start. Characters not developed. Plot led to climax.
- Strategies: Better attention needed for corrections.
- Pragmatic Cues: Tone and voice imaginative but not sophisticated.
- Textual Cues: Consistency in coherence.
- Syntactic: Some interesting sentences for effect. A variety of sentence lengths. More attention needed for punctuation.

The Storm

It was a warm spring day, in Kindersley Saskatchewan. The temperature was touching 20 degrees, and I was in the backyard chipping golf balls into a garbage can. I was have a splendid time, when out of nowhere, a huge gust of wind just about knocked me to the ground! Then came the clouds. The air chilled and gave my skin goose bumps. I had no idea of what was to come.

I thought it would be very logical to go inside; so I did. I was watching the television, and the satellite shut off. I peered outside, and snow was coming down. How strange I thought. I was exhausted, so I moseyed up the stairs to have a nap. I was awoken by my father. He had some interesting news for me.

My father told me we were trapped, as our home was covered with snow! I looked at the clock, and I was only asleep for 2 hours! How could this happen! Then suddenly, the heat and electricity went out. Oh great I thought, this just keeps getting better and better!

It was a full day till the heat and power kicked back to life. It was a long 24 hours. My entire family became sick with colds. I scanned the room, and I noticed something.

There was a burst of sunlight, shooting into the room. I reacted quickly. I sped down the stairs and grabbed a hose. Next, I hastily ran back up the stairs to the window. Once there, I shattered the window, and ran down the snow bank to the fire hydrant. I then attached the hose, and warm water shot out all over the house. All of the snow melted, and my family was free! We rescued our neighbours, and then a cycle occurred. Everybody was rescuing a house, and soon enough everyone was free!

This will go down as one of the worst blizzards in Canadian history! It will also go down as one of the greatest rescues of all time, because it was accomplished by a group; a team! That's what made it great!

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 3

- Context: Well organized. Interesting style. Consistent throughout.
- Message: Range of narrative devices. Engaging plot development.
- Pragmatic Cues: Appropriate voice.
- Textual Cues: Consistent point of view. Interesting lead.
- Syntactic: Good sentence variety. Appropriate punctuation.
- Semantic/Lexical/Morphological/Graphophonical: Varied vocabulary.

Prompt: You are a grade 8 student. Write a multi-paragraph story about the extraordinary events and adventures which resulted in your late arrival for class.

Why I'm Late for School

As I walk into the classroom everybody turns to stare at me.

Ms. Malificent asks "Why are you late?"

There's no point in lying. Truthfully, the truth is not best way to go either. It doesn't matter. I was going to get in trouble anyway. So, I told my story.

"It was late last night. I had just finished my homework after eight hours of work. Literally. I turned to go get ready for bed when my brother passed me. Almost a minute later, I heard the splinter of breaking glass. I turned and sprinted back to the kitchen.

"My homework was dyed a bruise like purple with bits of glass. The coward that is my brother had taken refuge in his room. I plopped down on a chair, flabbergasted. All those hours of hard work, down the drain. I got up and grabbed more lined paper.

"I finished a few hours later. I looked up at the clock. The time was one in the morning. Trudging upstairs, I flopped down face first on my bed.

"When I woke up it was seven thirty-seven. Scrambling out of bed, I pulled on new clothes. I practically flew down the stairs and out the door. That effort was wasted though. The reason it was wasted, was the bus had just started to turn the corner. I'd never reach it in time. Sighing, I started the long trek to the school.

"It just so happened though, I forgot my homework on the kitchen table. Just my luck. I could see the school and no one was going to be at home to bring it to me. I thought, oh joy, and turned around to go back to the house. By the time I got back, first period was half over.

“Opening the door, I limped to the kitchen. What I saw was horrifying. My precious homework...Gone! My mother had stolen it from the table! I was so dead. At least the bail bonds office was closer to the school.

“The nine forty-five bus to down town had just left when I arrived at the station. Yet again, just my luck. I started my stroll to the office.

“As I turned the corner, I heard a dog growl. At least I thought it was a dog. When I looked back, a twelve foot alligator with a collar around his or her neck lunged at me.

“Shrieking, I jumped back. The alligator growled at me again. I was dumbfounded. I mean, seriously? Who keeps a freaking alligator as a pet? It’s a hazard. An alligator that large could swallow a five-year-old.

“Unfortunately, at that moment, curiosity killed the cat. I had been curious to see what the growling was coming from and now the alligator blocked my path. It didn’t help that the alligator could run thirty miles an hour on land. The only other option was to go around the mansion. Wonderful.

“The mansion is owed by Bob and Laura Hoffman, the richest people in the city. The people with designer clothes, the latest fashions and the flashiest cars. That wasn’t even the worst part. Their kids, John and Monica, are the most selfish, bratty, annoying, self-centered people in the world. I know this because they are in this class and act like royalty. Fortunately, John and Monica were at school. Bob would be at the firm and Laura would be in Hollywood. It was pure coincidence that when I reached the back of the mansion, a burglar smacked into me.

“Dumbfounded, both of us stood there. Not moving, not speaking. I blinked and the burglar ran down the sidewalk.”

“How’d you know it was a burglar? It could have been anyone.” A voice from the back piped up.

“This man was wearing a ski mask. Who else would wear a ski mask in the spring? Now, back to the burglar.

“He sprinted down the sidewalk, heading for the corner. Before I registered it, I was sprinting down the walk after him.

“We weaved in and out through the crowds of people on Main Street. There were twelve people who pulled out their phones and called someone. There was not time to stop and wait for whoever was coming. I picked up the past. I was closing in, almost able to tackle him. Then I tripped and hit the man’s legs. He went down, smacking his head on the sidewalk.

“Seconds later, the police showed up. It was a little insulting though. The look on their faces was pure surprise. Seriously though, it wasn’t rocket science to take down a criminal. It took me a minute for me to answer their questions. The flashing lights and cameras from the news channels didn’t help.

“Two minutes and thirty seconds later, I had my homework and was at school. That pretty much sums it up.”

GRADE EIGHT

NARRATIVE – LEVEL 4

- point of view is established and purposeful
- spelling consistently correct
- employs creative and strategic use of capitalization and punctuation

- variety of sentence openers for effect
- engaging context
- broad range of narrative devices

I could feel the loneliness seeping in as he walked down the drive way. This was it. I had never experienced this kind of hurt; it was the most excruciating pain anyone could feel. I stood on the porch, speechless and still. He was just about to board the jeep when I ran to him and cried, “Oh Nick, you’re going to be a father!” I watched as the sad expression on his face turned to a wide smile, and now tears of joy trickled down his face.

“Lillian, I promise I will be back in time for our baby’s birth.” I kissed him gently on the lips; the driver called for him, but I held my grip around him.

“Don’t go Nick, please.”

He dabbed at his eyes with his sleeve, sniffled, and proudly said, “When I am out there in those trenches, I will remind myself that I am risking my life for my beloved country and my beautiful family’s peace.”

I started to tear up again; he wiped my tears away with his hand. He opened his mouth to say something but no words came out. He hesitated, and then started again, “I love you, and my child.”

I hugged him again, “I love you too.”

As he boarded the jeep he turned to me, smiled, and waved. As he closed the door, I cried furiously. I was now a soldier’s wife. From now on I would spend my days sitting at home, crying, frightened, and waiting for a letter to arrive from their present base camp.

It was two months before I received a letter, it read:

I am so sorry that I couldn’t write you for a while. War is all but what I expected it to be.

You can’t imagine how hard it is to take in the fact that you have taken somebody else’s life, even

if it is the foe. The Nazis run near our trench, and every time I hear footsteps from above I cringe. I have never experienced anything so terrifying in my life. Don’t worry, I am fine, I only have a couple of blisters from my boots. Enough about me, how are you feeling? Has the baby moved yet? Don’t be worried if I don’t write back for a while; we are moving forward to another base camp. I love you, take care of yourself.

Love, Nick.

And that was it. That was the only letter I received in a year and a half, until one day I heard a knock at the door. I pinned Elisha’s diaper tightly.

“Come in!”

I heard another knock. I yelled louder,

“COME IN!”

Then I heard a voice.

“Ma’am, I have a telegram for you.”

My stomach dropped. I hoisted Elisha out of her cradle and held her in my arms. I opened the door. He held up the paper and read:

“Mrs. Anderson, your husband Nicholas Anderson passed away on August 23, 1940. He passed away painlessly, in a bed on a hospital boat. He was shot in the leg two times, and lost a lot of blood. Surgery was performed, yet it failed...”

I closed the door.