

Grade 8 Narrative Writing Standard W.8.3

Grade 8 Narrative

W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. 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.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

The Reading/Thinking/Writing Task

Students wrote these independent narratives in the course of a unit studying the book, *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. They gathered notes on key actions revealing the identities of characters and on the factors influencing the choices made by characters in the book. Students chose an important moment in the plot based on a full-class discussion of turning points and character changes. After several craft lessons on exploding moments and using dialogue and description in effective narrative pieces through absolutes, appositives, metaphors and adjective clauses, students independently wrote to the Focusing Question “*Choose a key moment from the book in which a character changes. Rewrite the moment as a narrative story to reveal the character change by using a different point of view.*” Students drafted, utilized an editing checklist, and conferred with a partner but not a teacher between drafts.

Focus of the Writing Task

Choose a key moment from the book in which a character changes. Rewrite the moment as a narrative story to reveal the character change by using a different point of view.

The Writing Task in the Curriculum

How is it embedded in curriculum/content?

- ★ *Class: 8th grade ELA curriculum*
 - focus on the theme of identity
- ★ *Curriculum unit*
 - students investigated a classic work of literature for character change and plot elements
 - emphasis on the influences (family, environment, economics) that shape identity in growing individuals and how this is revealed in effective writing
- ★ *Standards*
 - Reading: RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.4, RL.8.6, RL.8.10
 - Writing: W.8.3, W.8.9, W.8.10

How did students build the knowledge they needed?

- ★ *Texts*
 - *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
 - supplementary poetry by Robert Frost
- ★ *Reading and re-reading*
 - teacher read texts aloud while students read along in their heads
 - students read and re-read texts independently
 - students took notes on texts independently using common graphic organizers

What instructional approaches were used to teach writing?

- ★ *Craft lessons*
 - students practiced mechanical techniques for sentence variety and description of actions and people
 - students worked with a model of effective narrative writing, analyzing it for narrative elements and writing techniques
- ★ *Writing approaches*
 - students were reminded of the elements that make up a strong narrative in the directions
 - once they had chosen a perspective and a key moment, they orally told the story to a partner
 - they wrote and peer conferred, then proofread independently

What was the timeframe?

Brief (3-4 class periods) within a longer unit

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Proficient

Just Like Dally

Man, those sundaes taste good. We had caught up with Dally and were hanging at Dairy Queen with those hot fudge sundaes, just relaxing. After a while, we drove off. We hadn't gone far when we saw a crowd and Dally could see the church was on fire. We got out and we hear some adults talking about a fire at the old church. They say it's burning fast and there are kids inside. We look at each other and Ponyboy's eyes say it all. *We've started the fire.*

"Hurry," I say, "Get moving!"

Pony and Dally don't say anything but I know they agree. Pony nods.

Legs pumping, Pony, Dally and I run to the church at record speed. My heart is pounding like a drum as we run. We have to get there. Whatever happens is our fault: we were smoking cigarettes in there and I'm sure one of our weeds started it.

I enter the church feeling like a hero because I'm renewing my reputation as a criminal. I saw the fat guy in the window, his pink, fleshy arms trying to help the children but I know he's not going to be able to help. We're the ones who can save them and we have to. If we caused this, at least we can get the kids out. I take on a new persona to become a hero just like Dally. The church that used to be sacred has become hell-like. It's so hot.

I blink in the smoky air but it's not long before I see the kids. They are in the back and we run through to them. They look little, probably younger than eight and I think there are five of them. The kids are helpless, like baby birds who have fallen from their nest. I try to take a deep breath but the air is thick with smoke.

"They're over here!" I yell, calling out to the others, "Come back here, to the back".

"Coming," Pony responds. He gets to me fast.

I think we can help. Arms flailing, I pick up the first kid and throw him out the window. He feels light in my arms. I heard the other kids crying and screaming for our help. We rescue as many kids as we can. We probably save all of them, I can't see any more. The billowing smoke fills my eyes, mouth and nose. The strong smell makes me feel sick and my eyes are watering.

Now, I know I have to get out of there. The smoke and heat are stronger than ever. Beams creaking, the church collapses onto me. This might be the end for me, but at least those

little kids got a chance to live. My eyes close in pain, the last thing I see is Dally rescuing Pony.
I knew he was that gallant.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Approaching

Soda and the rumble

It was the night of the Rumble, and I was excited. If I ever put my mind to something, I could do it. Ponyboy then walked in and I could tell he was pretty nervous. I knew he took a lot of Advil so that's probably why he doesn't look so good, pale as could be. He asked everyone if they like to fight, and I said yes because it's pretty great when you land a good punch.

We then started going to the rumble, doing flips and cool stuff because we were confident. We were tuff, brave and fearless. Me and the boys showed up in mostly muscle shirts and jeans. The socs showed in madras and all the fancy clothes. It was very tense before the fight, everyone just waiting for someone to start it. I was pretty nervous because I couldn't find someone my own size in the pile of socs. Then Darry says he will take on anyone. So a guy named Paul takes up for the challenge. The Rumble starts, and I finally found someone my own size, and start punching him. The punches were landing on his face and body. After a minute of fighting, I see Ponyboy getting kicked on the ground and then got kicked in the head. A wave of anger rushed through my body and I go over to the guy who kicked Ponyboy, and with a hard sweaty punch, knocked him out cold.

I then thanked the people for fighting. Even after the fight, we remained greasers. Everyone was now happy that we had won the rumble, knowing that now maybe the socs may treat us differently. But I remembered how Johnny was in the hospital and dying. I knew Ponyboy was upset about Johnny. I was a greaser as a greaser could be. I'm now certain that my life is a greaser.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Beginning

The Rumble

It is 6:30, Ponyboy just got back home. He has to eat something and take a shower before we leave. It is 6:45 We are leaving to go to the rumble. We are waiting for the Socs to arrive, finally they come 7:00 Sharp. There are two blue mustangs that pull into the lot. All of the greasers are in shock except me. I wait until all of them come out, There are 20 of us and then I counted 22 Socs. I go up and threaten to fight anyone, then that's when I see Paul. He come's up to me, I go up to him. I hear Ponyboy say something, I turn around, then Paul smacks me on my face, I look at him the rumble has started. I try to hit him back, but he avoids me. I grab on to him and then I punch him so hard that 2 Of his teeth had come out. Then he gets so mad that he tries to jump me. I look like I do not know what he is going to do, he comes right at me then I moved and he fell flat on his face. He landed So hard that there was a huge cut on his head, and he was bleeding alot. I left him, because I assumed that he will be dead soon, now I had to help Ponyboy and Soda. I found Ponyboy fighting two Socs, I came up from behind one and crushed him to the ground. Then I went over to Soda. I saw him crying on the ground but there were other Socs around him that I needed to take care of. I finally knocked out most of the socs and the ones that were left all ran away, we had won the rumble.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Exceeds

A Lamp's Perspective

The Slick-Hairs were fighting again. They milled about under the dim light being emitted from my bulb, flickering against the dark, moonless night, ready for a violent debate with tank tops that barely concealed their washboard abs. I heard footsteps approaching, and threw my light out for a moment to see the newcomers. More Slick-Hairs, hair dripping with freshly applied grease. Was this the group the others were planning on fighting? I knew it was not uncommon for Slick-Hairs to fight among themselves, and had seen such an occasion many a time. But no, as the second group approached, the first let out shouts and mumbled greetings. One of the boys from each group shook hands emitting a few words of strained acceptance of the other. Not friends, I assumed, but allies. Who was to be their opponent? Oh well, all I had to do was wait. They were sure to show up.

I looked around at the new party, checking for any familiar faces. I might not meet many people, but I have an excellent memory for them. To my surprise, I recognized many of the newcomers. The large boy who shook hands with the first group's leader was Darry, a young man with more muscles than an ox and eyes colder than the arctic. Standing ten feet away from him was Ponyboy, whose real name is still a mystery to me. Two-Bit, a real joker, was walking around to conversation to conversation, barging in with a bit of unhelpful insight. And there wa-
VROOM-tatatatata...

My thoughts were interrupted by the sound of a powerful V8 engine coming from the edge of the barren, abandoned lot. No one in this town had that kind of car. Their opponents were here, it seemed. Their arrival marked by four brightly colored Mustangs. Nearly two dozen boys piled out, walking out into the blinding headlights of the cars. They stalked towards the Slick-Hairs, who were dead silent as they waited for their rival gang. As the group neared I could see madras and ski jackets. The Madras Men, a gang from the West Side, approached, their faces betraying none of their thoughts or emotions. Both sides were staring at each other now, encircled in the glow from my dimly lit bulb. The groups gradually formed into a circle under me, light flickering off the Slick-Hairs' slimy mops.

“Who’s gonna to start it?” A voice calls out, his words cutting through the bellicose atmosphere of cologne and hair grease before echoing off the nearby buildings.

Darry steps out, his white tank top groaning as he flexes his muscles, rippling beneath my lamp light. “I’ll take on anyone here.” His voice rings out into the quiet lot. No one moves. Then a husky blonde in a madras ski jacket steps out into the natural gap between the two gangs.

“Hello, Darrel.” He says.

Darry’s face shows a brief flicker of surprise before returning to its icy state. “Hello, Paul.” Darry replies. There’s some visible surprise among the faces of both the Slick-Hairs and the Madras Men. It obviously was not common for these two social classes to interact with each other, although judging from the looks on Darry and Paul’s faces, their previous knowledge of each other’s existence obviously had only increased their hatred. And apparently they were ready to act on that hatred, because they began to circle each other, slowly, cautiously, each looking for an opportunity to strike. Everyone immediately went completely silent, and only the shuffling of the two boys’ feet was audible. Violence bristled in the air, both gangs ready to strike as soon as the first punch was thrown.

“Hold up!” A voice calls out from behind me. “Hold it!”

Darry looks up from his precarious position, wondering who could be interrupting this sort of meeting. Paul had no such intention, and his fist darts into Darry’s exposed face with a horrible *smack!*

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Proficient

Just Like Dally

Man, those sundaes taste good. We had caught up with Dally and were hanging at Dairy Queen with those hot fudge sundaes, just relaxing. After a while, we drove off. We hadn't gone far when we saw a crowd and Dally could see the church was on fire. We got out and we hear some adults talking about a fire at the old church. They say it's burning fast and there are kids inside. We look at each other and Ponyboy's eyes say it all. *We've started the fire.*

"Hurry," I say, "Get moving!"

Pony and Dally don't say anything but I know they agree. Pony nods.

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I enter the church feeling like a hero because I'm renewing my reputation as a criminal. I saw the fat guy in the window, his pink, fleshy arms trying to help the children but I know he's not going to be able to help. We're the ones who can save them and we have to. If we caused this, at least we can get the kids out. I take on a new persona to become a hero just like Dally. The church that used to be sacred has become hell-like. It's so hot.

I blink in the smoky air but it's not long before I see the kids. They are in the back and we run through to them. They look little, probably younger than eight and I think there are five of them. The kids are helpless, like baby birds who have fallen from their nest. I try to take a deep breath but the air is thick with smoke.

Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context and point of view, and introduces a narrator and characters: the title helps readers identify the narrator as Johnny, since he wants to be like Dally in the novel. The focus of the narrative is quickly established as the church fire and taking responsibility for perhaps starting it.

Uses narrative techniques of description and dialogue to develop events and characters

Event sequence to follow unfolds naturally and logically

Uses transitional phrases to convey sequence: the writer keeps the focus on the narrator's experience of the events by managing the **pacing** through word choice.

Uses precise words and phrases to convey experiences

Uses sensory language to capture the action

“They’re over here!” I yell, calling out to the others, “Come back here, to the back”.

“Coming,” Pony responds. He gets to me fast.

I think we can help. Arms flailing, I pick up the first kid and throw him out the window. He feels light in my arms. I heard the other kids crying and screaming for our help. We rescue as many kids as we can. We probably save all of them, I can’t see any more. The billowing smoke fills my eyes, mouth and nose. The strong smell makes me feel sick and my eyes are watering.

Now, I know I have to get out of there. The smoke and heat are stronger than ever. Beams creaking, the church collapses onto me. This might be the end for me, but at least those little kids got a chance to live. My eyes close in pain, the last thing I see is Dally rescuing Pony. I knew he was that gallant.

Uses narrative techniques of reflection, description and dialogue to develop events and characters

Controls pacing with transition phrases to signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another

Provides a conclusion which follows from and reflects on the events of the narrative: the writer returns to the title to keep the focus of the narrative and remind us of the relationships in the story, which is central to the moment described.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 8 Narrative: Proficient)

Overall, this eighth grade narrative shows an understanding of the topic (*retelling a key turning point in the novel that reveals character change*) and task of the writing assignment, namely revealing a character (*Johnny*) through exploding a moment from a different perspective. The writer uses precise language (*legs pumping, new persona, beams creaking*) to illustrate the action and characters, and she skillfully balances narrating events and reflecting to move the story forward thoughtfully. The central motivation/dramatic tension of the narrator is returned to in multiple places and shown in the dialogue and description included. It is clear from the narrative elements included that the main character is doing something out of the ordinary and becoming someone new. The conclusion flows naturally from the earlier events and reflects on their importance in relation to how this event impacts the story and characters.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 8 Narrative: Proficient)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Approaching

Soda and the rumble

It was the night of the Rumble, and I was excited. If I ever put my mind to something, I could do it. Ponyboy then walked in and I could tell he was pretty nervous. I knew he took a lot of Advil so that's probably why he doesn't look so good, pale as could be. He asked everyone if they like to fight, and I said yes because it's pretty great when you land a good punch.

We then started going to the rumble, doing flips and cool stuff because we were confident. We were tuff, brave and fearless. Me and the boys showed up in mostly muscle shirts and jeans. The socs showed in madras and all the fancy clothes. It was very tense before the fight, everyone just waiting for someone to start it. I was pretty nervous because I couldn't find someone my own size in the pile of socs. Then Darry says he will take on anyone. So a guy named Paul takes up for the challenge. The Rumble starts, and I finally found someone my own size, and start punching him. The punches were landing on his face and body. After a minute of fighting, I see Ponyboy getting kicked on the ground and then got kicked in the head. A wave of anger rushed through my body and I go over to the guy who kicked Ponyboy, and with a hard sweaty punch, knocked him out cold.

I then thanked the people for fighting. Even after the fight, we remained greasers. Everyone was now happy that we had won the rumble, knowing that now maybe the socs may treat us differently. But I remembered how Johnny was in the hospital and dying. I knew Ponyboy was upset about Johnny. I was a greaser as a greaser could be. I'm now certain that my life is a greaser.

Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context and introduces a narrator, point of view and characters:

however, readers must rely on the title to define the narrator, as few details are included that reveal the perspective of the main character.

Attempts to **use precise words to capture the action** (*rumble, tuff, madras*), but much of the language is general

Uses some transitional phrases to convey sequence and shifts in time frame

Uses the narrative technique of interior **dialogue to develop events and characters:** however, the **pacing** is choppy and the story does not **unfold naturally** due to missed opportunities for narrative techniques.

Attempts to **provide a concluding statement** but the **reflection** seems disconnected from the action and events

Final Thoughts
(Gr 8 Narrative: Approaching)

Overall, this eighth grade narrative shows understanding of the topic (*a key moment of action in the book that reveals character changes*) and the task of writing from a new perspective to develop experiences and characters. The writer uses some internal dialogue to tell events and structures the story around a well-chosen action sequence (*the rumble*) using some transitional phrases. However, the perspective is not made specific through actions or narrative techniques and the reflection seems unrelated to the events being told, leaving the reader with few impressions of the main character as distinct or changing. The conclusion attempts to reflect on this key part of the story, but the writer has glossed over too much in the plot and so the reflection does not follow naturally from the experiences told.

This student could benefit from support in developing narrative techniques more fully in order to have more options ready in relaying events and characters through dialogue, description, pacing and reflection. Further, they would benefit from prioritizing the key actions in a sequence and support in planning the key details related to these and the characters before writing.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 8 Narrative: Approaching)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Beginning

The Rumble

It is 6:30, Ponyboy just got back home. He has to eat something and take a shower before we leave. It is 6:45 We are leaving to go to the rumble. We are waiting for the Socs to arrive, finally they come 7:00 Sharp. There are two blue mustangs that pull into the lot. All of the greasers are in shock except me. I wait until all of them come out, There are 20 of us and then I counted 22 Socs. I go up and threaten to fight anyone, then that's when I see Paul. He come's up to me, I go up to him. I hear Ponyboy say something, I turn around, then Paul smacks me on my face, I look at him the rumble has started. I try to hit him back, but he avoids me. I grab on to him and then I punch him so hard that 2 Of his teeth had come out. Then he gets so mad that he tries to jump me. I look like I do not know what he is going to do, he comes right at me then I moved and he fell flat on his face. He landed So hard that there was a huge cut on his head, and he was bleeding alot. I left him, because I assumed that he will be dead soon, now I had to help Ponyboy and Soda. I found Ponyboy fighting two Socs, I came up from behind one and crushed him to the ground. Then I went over to Soda. I saw him crying on the ground but there were other Socs around him that I needed to take care of. I finally knocked out most of the socs and the ones that were left all ran away, we had won the rumble.

The writer attempts to **engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view** and tries to **introduce a narrator and characters.**

However, we are unsure of who is telling the story beyond them having some relationship to Ponyboy.

There is a basic **sequence of events** here but it is told as a summary rather than a story. It lacks narrative coherence and techniques such as **dialogue, pacing** and **precise language to capture the action.**

The writer attempts to **use description and sensory language to develop events.**

Uses very few **transitional phrases to convey sequence and shifts in time frame and show relationships**

The writer attempts a **conclusion** by revealing the narrator's thoughts, but the action ends abruptly and is unexplained though reflection.

Final Thoughts
(Gr 8 Narrative: Beginning)

This eighth grade narrative is not yet proficient. It does show a basic understanding of the topic (*a key moment of action in the book that reveals character changes*) and the task of writing from a new perspective to develop experiences and characters. However, the writer is mostly summarizing the scene instead of using narrative writing elements to explore the action and characters in a story; we are left to wonder who the narrator is until well into the piece. The moments are sequenced accurately but are unelaborated by details or dialogue to serve a central focus or message. The writer is beginning to manage pacing through sensory details and slowing a few key moments with more developed description, but this is unevenly done in the piece and there are jumps in the story that are confusing. The narrative does use some transitional words, but these are limited and repetitive and are not used to reveal relationships among characters or events. The piece ends abruptly without any exploration of the impact of this event on the characters through reflection.

The writer would benefit from a conference on choosing key actions and characters, with the goal of helping the student record details and then match these with narrative techniques for best developing the experiences and perspective (such as precise words, varied transitions, dialogue and descriptive details). Oral telling of this scene from the new point of view would be helpful before writing for consistency, depth/reflection and in creating dialogue.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 8 Narrative: Beginning)

Minimal Control of Conventions: The writer shows little control over language and conventions. The lack of control of conventions and language interferes with the reader's understanding of the piece.

Standard W.8.3
Grade 8
Exceeds

A Lamp's Perspective

The Slick-Hairs were fighting again. They milled about under the dim light being emitted from my bulb, flickering against the dark, moonless night, ready for a violent debate with tank tops that barely concealed their washboard abs. I heard footsteps approaching, and threw my light out for a moment to see the newcomers. More Slick-Hairs, hair dripping with freshly applied grease. Was this the group the others were planning on fighting? I knew it was not uncommon for Slick-Hairs to fight among themselves, and had seen such an occasion many a time. But no, as the second group approached, the first let out shouts and mumbled greetings. One of the boys from each group shook hands emitting a few words of strained acceptance of the other. Not friends, I assumed, but allies. Who was to be their opponent? Oh well, all I had to do was wait. They were sure to show up.

I looked around at the new party, checking for any familiar faces. I might not meet many people, but I have an excellent memory for them. To my surprise, I recognized many of the newcomers. The large boy who shook hands with the first group's leader was Darry, a young man with more muscles than an ox and eyes colder than the arctic. Standing ten feet away from him was Ponyboy, whose real name is still a mystery to me. Two-Bit, a real joker, was walking around to conversation to conversation, barging in with a bit of unhelpful insight. And there wa-

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Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context and point of view, and introduces a narrator and characters: the title helps readers identify the narrator as the street lamp witnessing the rumble, a perspective skillfully and creatively maintained throughout the piece.

Uses exceptionally precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey events and develop characters: the writer uses **reflection** to keep the focus on narrator's experience as a witness and to introduce the characters in a creative way.

Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action

stalked towards the Slick-Hairs, who were dead silent as they waited for their rival gang. As the group neared I could see madras and ski jackets. The Madras Men, a gang from the West Side, approached, their faces betraying none of their thoughts or emotions. Both sides were staring at each other now, encircled in the glow from my dimly lit bulb. The groups gradually formed into a circle under me, light flickering off the Slick-Hairs' slimy mops.

Uses varied transitional phrases and clauses to convey sequence and show relationships among experiences and events

“Who’s gonna to start it?” A voice calls out, his words cutting through the bellicose atmosphere of cologne and hair grease before echoing off the nearby buildings.

Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, dialogue and sensory language to convey experiences

Darry steps out, his white tank top groaning as he flexes his muscles, rippling beneath my lamp light. “I’ll take on anyone here.” His voice rings out into the quiet lot. No one moves. Then a husky blonde in a madras ski jacket steps out into the natural gap between the two gangs.

“Hello, Darrel.” He says.

Darry’s face shows a brief flicker of surprise before returning to its icy state. “Hello, Paul.” Darry replies. There’s some visible surprise among the faces of both the Slick-Hairs and the Madras Men. It obviously was not common for these two social classes to interact with each other, although judging from the looks on Darry and Paul’s faces, their previous knowledge of each other’s existence obviously had only increased their hatred. And apparently they were ready to act on that hatred, because they began to circle each other, slowly, cautiously, each looking for an opportunity to strike. Everyone immediately went completely silent, and only the shuffling of the two boys’ feet was audible. Violence bristled in the air, both gangs ready to strike as soon as the first punch was thrown.

The writer skillfully reminds the reader of the point of view of the story, using it to **reflect** omnisciently on the action and reveal deeper meaning to the events.

“Hold up!” A voice calls out from behind me. “Hold it!”

Darry looks up from his precarious position, wondering who could be interrupting this sort of meeting. Paul had no such intention, and his fist darts into Darry’s exposed face with a horrible *smack!*

Uses pacing to develop events and characters: the writer builds suspense even as **events unfold naturally.**

Provides a conclusion which follows from the events and focus **of the narrative**, choosing a cliff-hanger ending that effectively grows from the rest of the story

Final Thoughts
(Gr 8 Narrative: Exceeds)

This eighth grade narrative exceeds proficiency in several ways. It shows a deep understanding of the topic (*a key moment of action in the book that reveals character changes*) and the task (*writing from a new perspective to develop experiences*), managing both while also exploring the scene from a creative point of view. The writer exploits the unusual perspective (*a street light*), using the impartiality of the inanimate object as witness/storyteller to reflect on events evenly and with a level of detail that describes the scene without unsupported leaps of emotion. The result is much like a movie, and the writer purposefully builds this effect with the choices in pacing and sequence of events. The events of the narrative unfold naturally and logically, leaving the reader at a peak of conflict, showing the writer's control over the story and author's craft. The writer also uses incredibly precise and varied language to manage the story and describe the characters. Events and characters are reflected upon naturally and relationships are clearly conveyed through the sentence forms and vocabulary chosen by the writer. The use of narrative techniques shows awareness of audience, language and effective narrative craft that exceeds the level of proficiency for eighth grade.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr 8 Narrative: Exceeds)

Control of Conventions: Although there are some errors, the writer shows *overall control* over grade-level language and conventions.