

Grade K Opinion Writing Standard W.K.1

Grade K Opinion

W.K.1 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., *My favorite book is . . .*).

The Reading/Thinking/Writing Task

After building background knowledge about Pale Male, the hawk that built a nest in NYC, students were read the text, *The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story* by Jeanette Winter, stopping at the part of the protest (the public protested the removal of the nest). As a class, the children discussed the reasons for both sides of the argument, collected evidence, and sorted evidence on T-charts with pictures and words from the text. Students orally practiced both possible opinions by making a protest sign. Each side of the sign represented a different opinion: to put the nest back up or to keep it down. Students practiced each opinion as a class protest, and then repeated the side they chose with partners before writing independently. Large paper was provided for students to write, draw, and dictate (as necessary) their responses to the focusing question.

Note: Some of the pieces in this set did not originally have titles. Each was given a basic title for ease of reference.

Focus of the Writing Task

Should Pale Male's nest stay down or go back up?

The Writing Task in the Curriculum

How is it embedded in curriculum/content?

★ *Class: Kindergarten ELA and Science in a unit on Human Impacts on Earth Systems*

★ *Curriculum unit*

- students built background knowledge about the hawks that nested atop a building in New York City through books, videos, pictures, and discussion
- emphasis on exploring multiple perspectives before forming an opinion

★ *Standards*

- Reading: RI.K.3
- Writing: W.K.1
- Science: ESS3.C

How did students build the knowledge they needed?

★ *Main Text:*

- *The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story* by Jeanette Winter

Secondary Texts:

- *Pale Male Citizen Hawk of New York City* by Janet Schulman
- <http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2014/05/27-brooklyn-residents-say-red-tailed-hawks-terrorizing-neighborhood>
- <http://www.palemale.com/may23201video>

★ *Reading and re-reading*

- students heard the text read aloud multiple times, always stopping at the protest page
- students discussed and evaluated both sides of the argument
- students acted out the protest scene and practiced sorting evidence into pros/cons after note-taking
- students orally rehearsed their piece with a partner before writing independently

What instructional approaches were used to teach writing?

★ *Craft lessons*

- students were introduced to basic expository structures (naming the topic, stating an opinion, citing evidence)
- students had access to a word wall and public notes created together in the classroom

★ *Writing approaches*

- students wrote on two pages (template with places for words and pictures provided if necessary) and proofread independently

What was the timeframe?

Brief (4-6 class periods)

Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Proficient

The Nest Is A Home

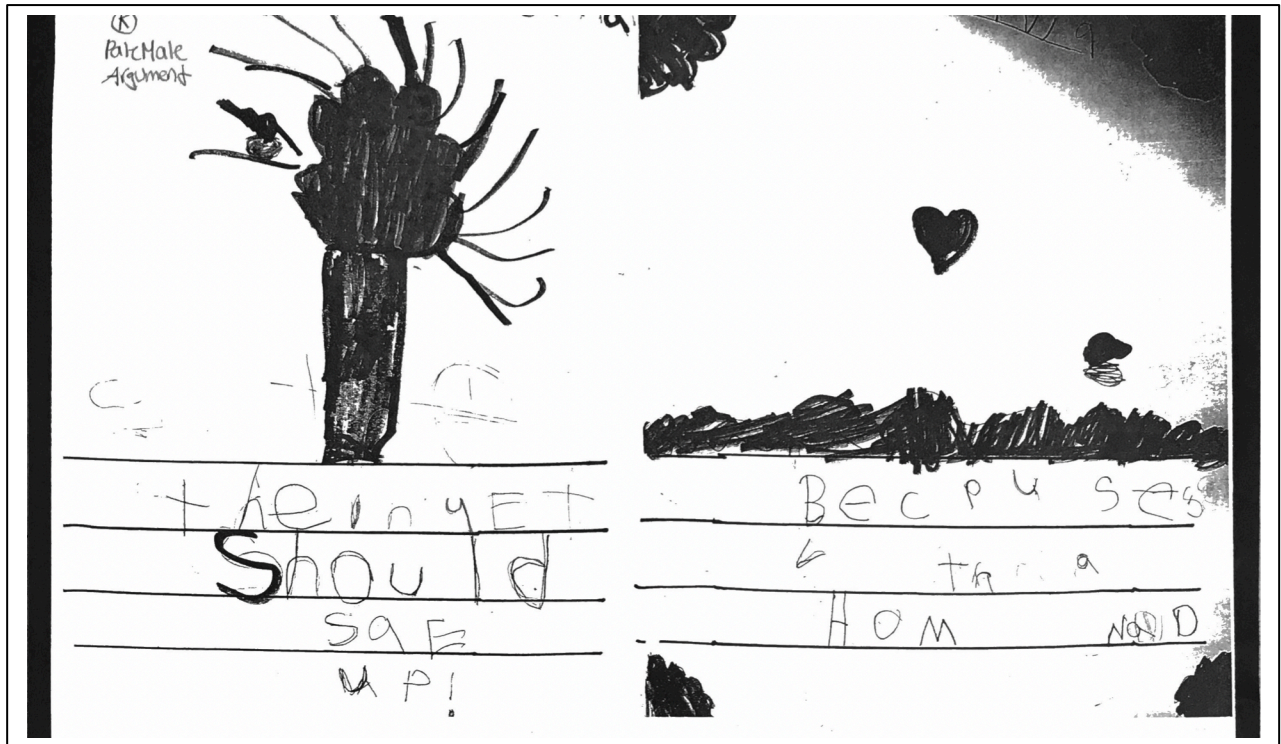
We should cep The nast up because the nest is bar hom

The image shows two columns of handwritten student work. Each column features a drawing of a nest at the top, followed by a sentence written on lined paper. The left column has the text: 'We shoud cep the nest up because the nest is bar hom'. The right column has the text: 'BECAUSE THE NEST IS BAR HOM'. There are some additional markings and scribbles in the drawings and text.

Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Approaching

A Home

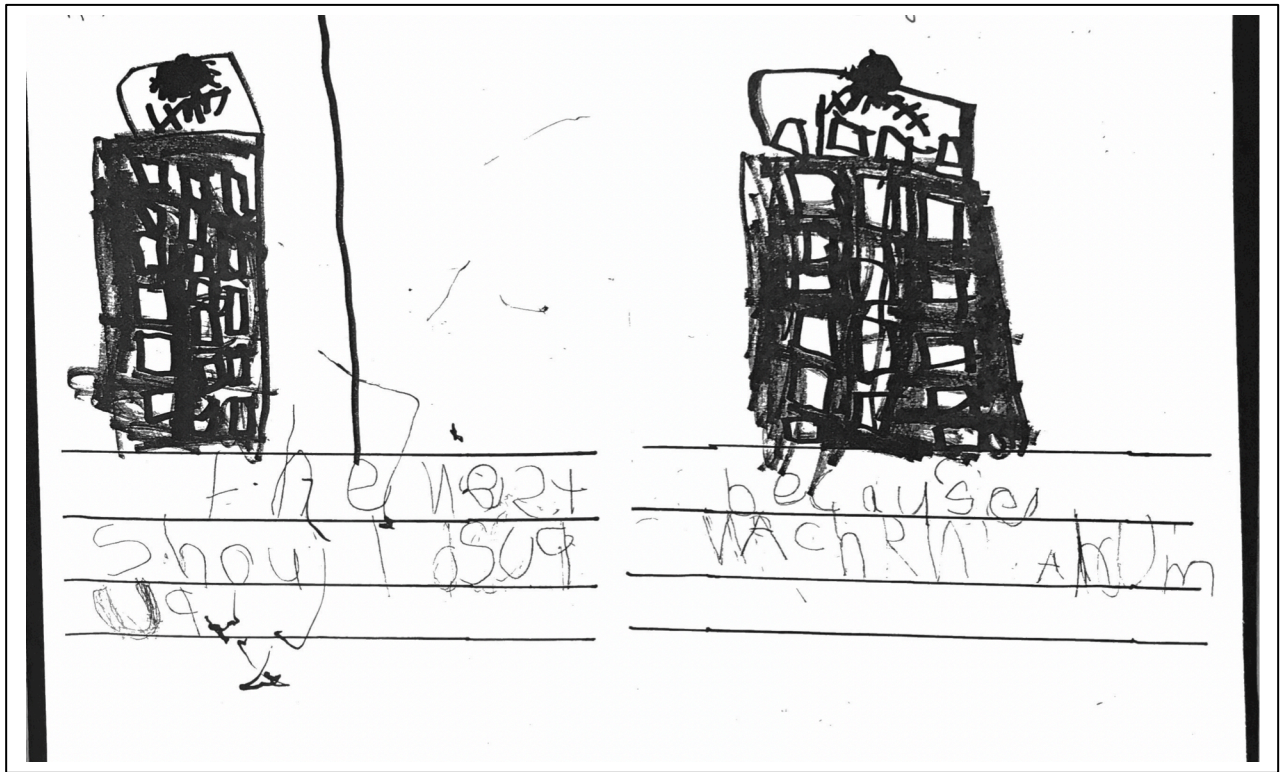
the naet should sae up! Because th a Hom NaD



Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Beginning

Nature

the nest shouj l dsup up because nachrn a houm



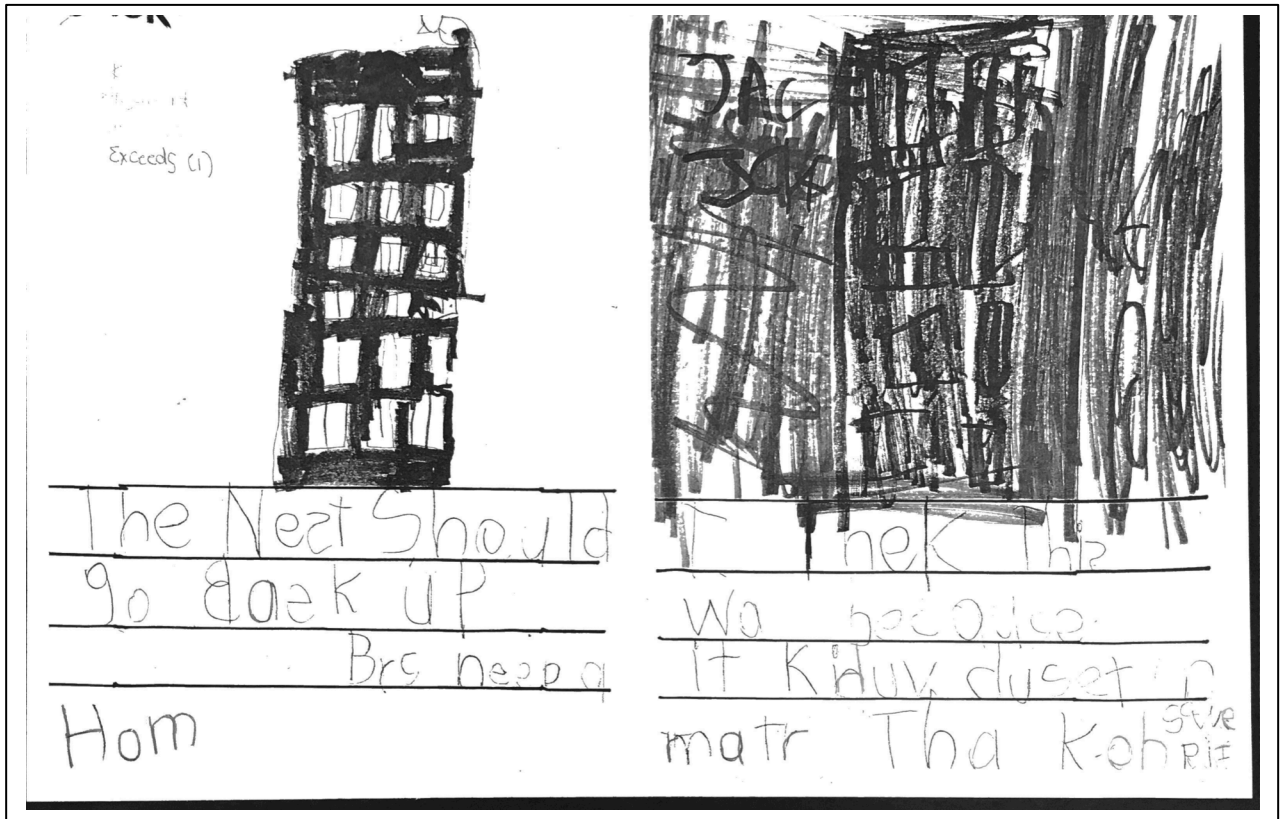
Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Exceeds

Birds Need A Home

The Nest shouLd go Baek up

Brs need a Hom

I thek This wa because it kiduv duset matr Tha Kon swep it.



Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Proficient

The Nest Is a Home

We should cep The nast up because the nest is bar hom

The student **tells the topic and states an opinion** (*We should keep the nest up*).

Student gives a reason that supports the **opinion** (*because the nest is their home*). This reason is evidence from the text.

The **illustrations** support the **opinion**.

Final Thoughts **(Gr K Opinion: Proficient)**

This piece shows a solid understanding of the topic, and meets the standard for proficient for Kindergarten. This writer names a topic and clearly expresses an opinion. Although not required by the standards, this writer also gives a reason for their opinion (*because the nest is bar hom*) using evidence from the text. This writer shows a growing understanding of the sounds in words and the letters that represent those sounds as well as the use of the classroom word wall for sight words. Although the illustration lacks detail, in context, the intent is clear and matches the text.

This student could benefit from continued instruction in letter/sound relationships, punctuation and spelling, and writing in a variety of genres in the classroom.

A Word About Language and Conventions **(Gr K Opinion: Proficient)**

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

Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Approaching

A Home

the naet should sae up! Because th a Hom NaD

The student **tells the topic and states an opinion** (*The nest should stay up*).

The writer gives a reason to support the **opinion** (*because they need a home*).

The writing is difficult to read because of the order of some of the words and the spelling.

The **illustrations** do not support the opinion.

Final Thoughts **(Gr K Opinion: Approaching)**

This piece shows understanding of the topic in the writing, but misunderstanding of the text in the illustrations. The evidence used (*because they need a home*) was inferred from the text, and shows the student understands that the nest was the hawk's home. The illustrations do not show an understanding of the text, and do not match this student's writing, causing confusion for the reader. The first illustration shows a picture of a nest in a tree, and the second page has a heart face in the middle of the page above what looks like grass or mountains. Neither illustration relates directly to the focus question and the text. The piece shows a beginning understanding of punctuation (exclamation point on page 1 of illustration), the use of a word wall for sight words, and a beginning understanding of letter/sound relationships.

This student could benefit from a conference with the teacher that instructs the student on how to match illustrations with the writing content so the text and the illustration both show understanding of the topic.

A Word About Language and Conventions **(Gr K Opinion: Approaching)**

Minimal Control of Conventions: The writer shows little control over language and conventions. The student would benefit from instruction in the following skills:

- spelling and punctuation
- writing a complete sentence

Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Beginning

Nature

The nest shouj ldsup because nachrn a hum

The student **tells the topic and states an opinion** (*The nest should stay up*).

The piece states a reason to support the **opinion** (*because nature needs a home*); however, the reason does not address the focusing question and shows a misunderstanding of the text.

The **illustrations** support the opinion.

Final Thoughts
(Gr K Opinion: Beginning)

This piece shows a limited understanding of the text. The writer states an opinion (*the nest should stay up*) but uses evidence (*because nature needs a home*) that does not match the focusing question and the content of the text. The illustrations match the writing on page one, showing an understanding of the opinion. The illustration on the second page is the same one as on the first page and does not match the writing. The piece as a whole shows a possible misunderstanding of the text and the task.

The first page of the piece is readable, but the second page is more difficult to decipher due to a lack of spacing and misspelled words.

This writer could benefit from oral practice answering a focusing question with evidence from the text. Before the illustrations are drawn, the student might try telling the teacher what they plan to draw and why.

A Word About Language and Conventions
(Gr K Opinion: Beginning)

Minimal Control of Conventions: The writer shows little control over language and conventions. The student would benefit from instruction in the following skills:

- spelling and punctuation
- writing a complete sentence

Standard W.K.1
Grade K
Exceeds

Birds Need A Home

The Nest should go Back up

Birds need a Home

I think This was because it kind of messed up. The kids swept it.

The student **tells the topic and states an opinion** (*The nest should go back up*).

The student then provides a reason to support the **opinion** (*birds need a home*). The writer elaborates using reasoning from the pros and cons of the argument. One of the cons for having the nest go back up is that the residents don't want the mess. This writer provides a counterargument (*it kind of doesn't matter because they can sweep it*).

The last sentence of the piece shows a sophisticated use of language to elaborate an **opinion** (*I think this way because*).

Final Thoughts **(Gr K Opinion: Exceeds)**

This Kindergarten piece shows a deep understanding of the text *The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story*. This understanding is reflected in not only the writing, but in the illustrations as well. In the writing, the student names the topic, states an opinion (*the nest should go back up*) and then supports that opinion with a reason (*birds need a home*). Next, the student considers the counterargument by providing a solution to the problem of hawk waste floating by windows and landing on balconies (*it kind of doesn't matter, they can sweep it*), a reason residents used to justify taking the nest down in the first place. The last sentence not only shows the student's reasoning and deep understanding of the text, but also their command of written language structures (*I think this because*) to convey that understanding.

The illustrations match the writing and if you look closely, the first picture shows waste falling down and a curtain open (before the nest was taken down), and the second picture shows nightfall and all is quiet in the city. These images reveal the writer's deep understanding of the topic and opinion.

A Word About Language and Conventions **(Gr K Opinion: Exceeds)**

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