

Grade 3

Writing Prompt:

Write a true story about yourself.

Rubric Score 4

The Surprising Snowman

I yawned and got up from my cozy bed, and I pressed my nose against the cold glass. It was the first day of winter at last. The snowflakes flutted to the ground like a dove gliding to it's nest. I dressed quickly, drank a cup of hot chocolate, and rushed outside. I asked myself, What should I do?" I decied to build a snowman. I rolled three stout balls, one smaller than the last. I found a ripe tomato for the nose, a banana for the mouth, eggs with olives pinned on the top for eyes, colored straws for the hair, pine cones with metal hooks for earrings, a blue knitted cap, a blue and purple scarf, toffe for buttons, and long sticks for each arm. It was getting dark so I took one woolon blanket and made a cloak. Then I whispered, Good Night" to my snowman. The next morning I walked downstairs humming a happy tune. My eyes were closed so when I went out I bumped into my snowman. Suddenly, my eyes snapped open and my hand flew over my mouth. I gasped and yelled, "OH NO!" My tomato was squished, the banana fruit was getting out, her eye was cracked, she had red stains around her mouth, an arm was chewed, the other arm was holding a book and a sheet, and all that was left of my buttons were wrappers. That made me wonder, what do snowmen do at night?

Maybe they go to the local park with their snowdogs and throw their arms for the dogs. Maybe that's why my snowman's arm was chewed up. Hold on a sec, maybe she went to a friend's house and turned on the ice cream machine and that's why she had red stains on her mouth. She probobly had a cherry popsicle. Wait! She was holding a poetry book and a math sheet so maybe she went to snow school. I guess I'll never know what snowmen do at night but at least I've got some ideas.

Teacher Commentary Score Point 4:

This essay demonstrates a clear context within which the action takes place. The writer thoroughly develops a sequence of events and provides vivid descriptive language and sensory details to describe the narrator's experience building a snowman and naturally progressing to wondering what the snowman does at night.

The author establishes the central idea of the narrative at the beginning of the story by stating, "I decided to build a snowman." and expanding the central theme by wondering what snowmen do at night after the author discovers the following day that the snowman has been altered during the evening.

Events are developed with vivid language ("snowflakes fluttered to the ground like a dove gliding to its nest.", "ripe tomato", and "Maybe they go to the local park with their snowdogs and throw their arms for the dogs."). Vivid description and sensory detail enable the reader to visualize the snowman when it was first built and in its altered state the following day. The writer further supports these descriptions through the vehicle of similes and dialogue sprinkled in a well-balanced manner throughout the narrative.

The author uses a variety of sentence types, including compound sentences ("I yawned and got up from my cozy bed, and I pressed my nose against the cold glass."), and simple sentences ("I walked downstairs humming a happy tune."). The author also weaves a combination of exclamatory, interrogative, and imperative sentences throughout the story.

The story contains few errors in the conventions of the English language. Some words such as "fluttered", "decided" and "metal" were misspelled. These errors are to be expected at this grade level and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.