

North Smithfield Public Schools



Trimester Writing Assessments

Kindergarten- Grade 5

Developed January 2013

North Smithfield Public Schools

TRIMESTER WRITING ASSESSMENTS

With appreciation to the members of the K-5 Writing Prompt Team from Smithfield Public Schools and NYC.gov, from which these assessments were adapted.

Kindergarten Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Personal Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

Assessment Prompt:

Tell about a time you had fun outside. Before you begin writing, think about the fun you have had at different places outside. Maybe you were in a pool, on a play date, at recess, on vacation, at the beach, at a birthday party, or in the snow? Who were you with? What did you do? How did you feel?

Write about a time you had fun outside and how you felt.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Tell about a favorite gift you have received. Maybe it was a holiday gift, birthday gift, grandparent or parent gift, or a reward gift. How did you feel when you received this gift?

Write about a favorite gift you have received and how you felt when you received this gift.

Kindergarten Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2-->Informational (Can use science journals, charts/poster, informational books, science folders to support ideas).

Writing Standards CCSS

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

Assessment Prompt:

Think about something you know how to do really well. Maybe it is a sport, something in school, or something you do at home.

Write about something you know how to do really well. Make sure you use “how to” words like first, then, now, and last.

Optional Practice Prompt:

What is something about which your friends would say you are the “class expert”. Maybe you are an expert at knowing about dinosaurs, trucks, fashion, or animals.

Write about something about which you are an “expert”. Make sure you include details.

Kindergarten Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3--> Opinion Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

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...)

Assessment Prompt:

Think about your year in Kindergarten. In your opinion, what was the best part of Kindergarten. Maybe your best part of Kindergarten was a class trip, stations or centers, recess, snack, learning to read, learning to write, math or a special school event.

Write about what, in your opinion, was the best part of Kindergarten and tell why it was the best.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Think about recess. Sometimes at recess, you may play tag, jump rope, or even play kickball. In your opinion, what is the best thing to do at recess?

Write about what, in your opinion, is the best thing to do at recess and tell why it is best.

Grade One Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Personal Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

Sometimes we go to a party and we want to tell others about the party.

Write about a party. It could have been a party for your own birthday, or it could be a party that you went to. Remember to tell where it happened, who was there, and what you did at the party.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Sometimes something special happens to us and we want to tell others about it. It could be a special time with a friend, or a special time with someone in your family.

Write about a special time. Remember to tell where it happened, who was there, and what you did together that made it special.

Grade One Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2--> Opinion Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

Think about the four seasons of the year- fall, winter, spring, and summer.
Decide which season you like best.

In your opinion which season is the best one of the year? Write about that season and include ideas that clearly explain your opinion about why that season is the best one. Be sure that your writing has a beginning, middle and end and clearly explains your opinion of the season you chose as the best season of the year.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Think about the special classes we have each week at school- Physical Education, Art, Music, and Library.
Decide which special class you like best.

In your opinion, which class is the best special class? Write about that class and include ideas that clearly explain your opinion about why that class is the best one. Be sure that your writing has a beginning, middle, and end and clearly explains your opinion of the class you chose as the best special class.

Grade One Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3-->Informational (Can use trade books, charts/posters, other informational books and/or classroom materials to support ideas)

Writing Standards CCSS

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt (links to science unit):

We have read many nonfiction books about plants together in our classroom.

Choose a nonfiction book about plants that you remember.

Write about the book you read.

Tell what the book was about (its topic).

Tell some things you learned from the book (facts about your topic).

Be sure that your writing has a beginning, middle, and end.

Optional Practice Prompt:

We have read many nonfiction articles in Scholastic News.

Choose a nonfiction article that you remember.

Write about the article you read.

Tell what the article was about (its topic).

Tell some things you learned from the article (facts about your topic).

Be sure that your writing has a beginning, middle, and end.

Grade Two Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Personal Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

Families celebrate holidays in many different ways. Think about a holiday that your family celebrates. Where were you? Who were you with? What did you do? What did you see? How did you feel?

Write a narrative about your favorite holiday celebration.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Weather can be unpredictable. Think about the different kinds of weather you have experienced. Where were you? Who were you with? What did you do? What did you see? How did you feel?

Write a narrative about a day with interesting weather that you have experienced.

Grade Two Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2--> Opinion Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because*, *and*, *also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment prompt:

Many kids have different bedtimes. Some parents make their kids go to bed early and some let their kids stay up later. Think about your current bedtime at home.

Write about what time, in your opinion, should be your bedtime. Write about how would you convince your parents that your bedtime should be changed to either earlier or later? What reasons would you share with them to support your opinion?

Optional Practice Prompt:

Many families take vacations in different places. Think about a special trip you would like your family to take this summer. How would you convince your parents that you should take this trip? What reasons would you share with them to support your opinion?

Write about what your family trip, in your opinion, should include. Write about how would you convince your parents that you should take this trip? What reasons would you share with them to support your opinion?

Grade Two Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3-->Informational (Can use Science journals, charts/poster, informational books, Science folders to support ideas)

Writing Standards CCSS

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt:

We just read *African American Inventors* by Jim Haskins and learned about four different inventors. Think about one inventor within the text. Who was the inventor? What did he or she invent? How did the invention change the world?

Write about one of the inventors in the text and describe how his or her invention changed the world. Remember to give specific details to support your thinking.

Optional Practice Prompt:

We recently read *Our Moon* by Seymour Simon and learned many facts about the moon. Where is the moon? What is the moon made of? Who has explored the moon?

Write about the moon providing facts and details that you have learned from the text. Remember to include specific details from the text.

Grade Three Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Personal Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Write narratives in which they establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally; use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations; use temporal words and phrases to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

Think about a fantastic time you enjoyed spending with a good friend or relative.

Write a personal narrative describing what it was about the time that has created a good memory for you? Be sure to include the wonderful feelings and things you did together. Include your personal thoughts, feelings, and details that help the reader feel that he or she was there!

Optional Practice Prompt:

Think about the most exciting thing that's happened to you this past year. Maybe it was a celebration, family trip, field trip or any other special event.

Write a personal narrative describing the most exciting thing that has happened to you this year. Be sure to include where you went and what you did that made this the most exciting thing that has happened to you this year. Also, include your personal thoughts, feelings, and details that help the reader feel that he or she was there!

Grade Three Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2-->Informational Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, and include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension; develop the topic with facts, definitions and details; use linking words and phrases (e.g., *also*, *another*, *and*, *more*, *but*) to connect ideas within categories of information; and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt (Use fact sheet):

Think about the weather in Rhode Island during the winter. It is different from the winter months in a southern state such as Florida.

Write 2-3 paragraphs comparing and contrasting Rhode Island and Florida in the winter months.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Choose *two* animals that live in the *same* habitat. Make a list of facts about each animal, including habitat, food, predators/prey, and what the animals look like.

Write 2-3 paragraphs comparing and contrasting the two animals.

Grade Three Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2 Informational Writing

Grade 3

Think about the weather in Rhode Island during the winter. It is different from the winter months in a southern state such as Florida. Write 2-3 paragraphs comparing and contrasting the weather, clothing that is worn and activities that are enjoyed.

Fact Sheet

Weather Fact	Rhode Island	Florida
Average Temperature - high	30-40 degrees F	60-75 degrees F
Average Temperature - low	17-25 degrees F	42-63 degrees F
Record Low	13 degrees F (1966)	24 degrees F (1976)
Number of Sunny Days	17 Days	22 Days
Average Precipitation - rain	4 inches	2.4 inches
Average Precipitation - snow	10 inches	0 inches
Average Water Temperature	37 degrees F	55 degrees F

Grade Three Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3--> Opinion Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons; provide reasons that support the opinion; use linking words and phrases (e.g., *because, therefore, since, for example*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt:

Scientists like to study animals in their natural habitat. That means that a shark scientist has to study sharks in the oceans where they live. Shark scientists are scuba divers who go deep into the ocean to learn more about sharks.

Read and discuss “Facts about Sharks” by Susanna Batchelor. Think about how these two types of sharks are the same and also how they are different. Which shark would you study if you were a shark scientist and why?

1. Decide which shark you would want to study.
2. Find the best shark facts to support your reasons.
3. Explain your reasons. Be sure to use facts about hammerhead sharks and whale sharks to explain why you would study the shark you chose and not the other shark.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Your newspaper is offering a prize for the “Best Relative of the Year!” Think about which one of your relatives should win this prize. This relative might be a parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt, uncle or cousin. Think about the reasons your relative could win the prize and why he or she is the best.

Write about which relative, in your opinion, should receive the “Best Relative of the Year!” prize. What reasons would you share to support your opinion that this relative is qualified to be the winner?

Grade Three Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3 Opinion Writing

Grade 3

Facts about Sharks by Susanna Batchelor



My name is Susanna Batchelor and I am a veterinarian from England. I dive with sharks to learn more about them. I have dived with many different types of sharks all over the world.

There are about 400 different types of sharks. Many of them are named after the way they look or where they live. For example, the hammerhead shark has a head shaped like a hammer; the whale shark is as big as a whale; and the reef shark lives on coral reefs. Sharks range from a few centimeters to many meters in length. And they eat all sorts of different foods - from tiny plankton, to fish, to larger mammals like seals.

I have collected some interesting facts about two different kinds of sharks – hammerhead sharks and whale sharks.

Interesting Facts about Hammerhead Sharks:



- have a head shaped like a hammer to help it detect electrical signals given off by its prey
- swing their heads from side to side like a metal detector
- their eyes and nostrils are at each end of the "hammer"
- the position of the eyes allows it to look 360° - in a full circle
- feed mainly on fish and squid
- grow up to 4 meters long
- get scared by the sound of divers' bubbles
- have been known to eat other sharks

Interesting Facts about Whale Sharks:



- can grow to 18 meters long
- are the largest fish in the world
- feed on plankton that comes through their massive gills

- have 3,000 tiny teeth but they
- don't use them for chewing
- are very curious and will often
- slow down to inspect divers and
- even follow their bubbles
- make long migrations across the
- oceans to find food
- can live a long time
- have a pattern of spots on their sides (just behind the gills) like a fingerprint that is unique to each individual and can be used for identification

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Batchelor [available online] <http://www.childrenoftheearth.org/shark-information-kids/>.

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Grade Four Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Personal Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events, use concrete experiences and phrases and sensory details to convey experience and provide a sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

We all have stories to tell. Think about a memorable time in your life. It could be a sad, happy, or a time you learned something important. Where were you? Who were you with? What did you do? What did you see? How did you feel?

Write about a memorable time in your life.

Optional Practice Prompt:

New England weather can be very unpredictable. Think about a weather storm that you lived through. Where were you? Who were you with? What did you do? What did you see? How did you feel?

Write a narrative about a time you lived through a weather storm.

Grade Four Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2-->Informational (Can use science journals, charts/poster, informational books, science folders to support ideas)

Writing Standards CCSS

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts, definitions, concrete examples, quotations, to develop points, link ideas with transition words, use precise language to inform about or explain the topic, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt:

There are many different kinds of amphibians. Read the informational text about frogs and toads. What do you know about these animals?

Write a report comparing frogs and toads. Use information from the fact sheet and what you know in your report.

Optional Practice Prompt:

The United States is made up of many beautiful places. Read the informational about Hawaii and Alaska. What do you know about these states?

Write a report comparing Hawaii and Alaska. Use information from the fact sheet and what you know in your report.

Grade Four Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2 Informational Writing

Grade 4

Fact Sheet

Frogs	Toads
Amphibians: animals that spend the first part of their lives in the water and the second part on land	Amphibians
More than 400 species	More than 300 species
Strong legs, lungs, webbed feet, and no tail	Can be found in most parts of the world
Powerful hind legs that help them leap long distances	Short hind legs
Slender bodies and smooth skin	Breathe with lungs as adults
Tend to like moister climates	Tend to like drier climates
Cold blooded so their bodies change temperature around them	Poison gland located behind the eyes for protection from enemies
Take in water through their skin like a sponge	Tend to walk instead of hop
Eat insects which they catch with their long sticky tongues	Bumpy dry skin
Usually lay eggs in clusters	Usually lay eggs in long chains

Grade Four Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2 Informational Writing

Grade 4

Optional Practice Prompt

Write a report that compares an Alaska and Hawaii. Use information from the fact sheet and what you already know to support your thinking.

Fact Sheet

Hawaii	Alaska
Warm weather	Cold weather
750 total miles of coastline	6,640 miles of coastline
Made up of several islands- 8 main islands	Some of the state is covered with glaciers
Grows cane sugar, pineapple, coffee beans, bananas and nuts	Grows cabbage, rutabaga, carrots, and turnip
Mauna Loa is located in Hawaii and is the largest volcanic mountain in the world.	More than 70 potentially active volcanoes
The state sport is surfing	The state sport is dog mushing (sled dog races)
The capital is Honolulu	The capital is Juneau
Wildlife includes: Deer, Whales, Dolphins, Bats	Wildlife includes: Bats, Bear, Deer, Moose

Grade Four Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3--> Opinion Writing

Writing Standards CCSS

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because*, *and*, *also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt:

Read the article, “Lunches Provided By Schools May Be Healthier.” How do you feel about this? In your opinion, do you think schools should be able to decide what you eat for lunch?

Write an essay clearly stating your opinion on this issue. Be sure to include information from the article to support your position.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Read “Having a Pet-The Pros and Cons”. Think about getting a new pet. How would convince your parents to get that new pet? What reasons would you share with them to support your opinion?

Write an essay clearly convincing your parents to get a new pet. Be sure to include information from the article to support your position.

Grade Four Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3 Opinion Writing

Grade 4

Lunches Provided By Schools May Be Healthier Than Lunches Brought From Home

Researchers find that school lunches may be a better choice for kids!

Many parents want their kids to bring lunches from home. They feel lunches from home are healthier than cafeteria food. However, they might be wrong. Researchers in England evaluated school lunches and hypothesized they may be actually healthier than lunches from home. Students may be better off buying lunch at school!

School Lunch vs. Lunch from Home

In 2009, researchers in England from The School Food Trust decided to research and evaluate school lunches. They wanted to compare cafeteria food to the food in lunches kids brought from home. Researchers spent three months finding out whether kids' lunches are healthier. They observed and recorded everything in the lunches. In total, they studied 3,481 students who brought lunches from home and 6,696 students who bought school lunches. What they found may be very surprising.

Overall, the researchers found that kids who ate school lunches ate healthier foods! For example, many more students ate vegetables when they ate school lunch. 66% of students who ate school lunch took servings of vegetables. But only 8% of students who brought lunch from home had vegetables!

The same pattern was seen when researchers studied drinks. Students who brought school lunch did not drink as many sugary drinks. They were also much more likely to drink water. Lunches from home did have more fruit and calcium, but overall, lunches brought from home contained more fat, more sugar, and more salt. Not what you want your kids eating!

This study wasn't the only one to find that school lunches are better. In 2006 another study was done in England. The lunches of 1,294 children were studied. Again, the researchers found that kids who bring lunches from home didn't have the essential ingredients needed for a healthy diet like vegetables. Few lunches from home contained all five healthy food groups (starch, protein, vegetables, fruit and dairy). And, most lunches from home contained sugary snacks and drinks.

School Lunches Healthier

The researchers all found that school lunches were healthier. The School Food Trust report says, “Lunches provided by schools are healthier than lunches brought from home.” Researchers say that school lunches are better because schools can control them. Schools can make sure the lunches are healthy. But lunches from home can’t be controlled. So students can **and do** bring more drinks and snacks that are high in salt and sugar (foods that are not allowed in school lunches). As a result, students who bring lunches from home typically eat more salt, sugar and fat than those who eat school lunch. The researchers say, “Ideally, children should be encouraged to [buy] school lunches.”

A Bright Future for School Lunch

Even though they are already healthy, school lunches are getting even better! The government is working to make even stronger rules so school lunches will be full of fresh, delicious food. President Obama has just signed a new bill “The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.” This bill will give \$4.5 billion to improving school food. This means that school lunches will be healthier and better-tasting than ever.

Grade Four Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3 Opinion Writing

Grade 4

Optional Practice Prompt

Having a Pet- The Pros and Cons

Buying a pet is something that has to be well thought about. Many people rush in only to find that they made the wrong decision afterwards. The choice you make does not only have consequences for your own life but it is also a choice you make for another living being.

An unwanted animal is a very unhappy animal, even if it's physical needs are being met. Every year thousands of dogs, cats, rabbits, tortoises, hamsters are being thrown out on the streets by their owners because reaching the wrong decision was so easy.

Being the considerate and responsible person you are you will want to make sure that you only get a pet if you can give him or her a good life with you.

So let's start with the advantages of having a pet before we get to the facts which speak against pet keeping.

Pros

- A pet brings happiness and joy into your life.
- A pet gives you the opportunity to share your love and caring.
- If you are living on your own a pet keeps you company.
- Animals give unconditional love - they don't care who you are, what you are or how much you earn.
- Pets make great companions for kids, helping them in times of emotional turmoil or trouble as well as educating them about nature and non human beings.
- Kids learn how to be more understanding, patient and responsible in their actions when they grow up with a pet.

Cons

- Owning a pet means being responsible for another being who depends fully on his caretaker. This responsibility may be experienced as a burden at times.
- If you lead a very busy life being responsible for the physical as well as the emotional needs of a pet maybe too much to muster.
- Who is going to look after your pet when you go on holidays or, heaven forbid, if you have to go to hospital?

- Animals have physical needs just as we do. They need to eat and get rid of waste material. This means that you will have to put up with certain smells in your house, no matter how clean you keep your pet. If you are very house proud or maybe even a bit compulsive when it comes to bacteria, if you like a spotless place to live in, animal hair and dander might not be for you.
- Keeping a pet may be quite expensive. You need money to feed the animal and to provide healthcare. Depending on the species this may amount to a considerable sum each month.
- I know of many good hearted people who underestimated this important factor only to find themselves in serious debt after the illness of their beloved animal. Just imagine the heartbreak of having a pet put to sleep just because you could not find the money to pay for necessary surgery or treatment!

Even so there are many animals on the market which are suitable for all different life styles we must never forget that animals are sentient beings who fully depend on their people.

If in the end you do decide to get an animal companion, make sure to pick a healthy specimen in good condition, don' get carried away by his sweet looks and if in doubt, ask your veterinarian.

Remember: A pet is for life!

Patience, love and knowledge are key when it comes to keeping pets. You may have many questions of How To and Why when it comes to your dog, his training, his health, his psychology and behavior.

Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/5421196>

Grade Five Trimester 1 Writing Assessment

Trimester 1 -->Informational

Writing Standards CCSS

Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Assessment Prompt:

Using page 5 from *Something Upstairs* student literature packet, write the facts you know about slavery on the graphic organizer. Then read the narrative of Venture Smith highlighting important facts and details about slavery.

Write an account (five paragraph essay) of what life was like being a slave in RI. Be sure to use the facts you highlighted as well as information from your graphic organizer. Remember to use specific facts and details.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Hurricanes can have an impact. Read the informational text about hurricanes. What do you already know about how hurricanes can impact people, places, and the environment?

Write a report about the impact of hurricanes. Use information from the text and what you know in your report.

Grade Five Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2--> Opinion

Writing Standards CCSS

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because*, *and*, *also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section

Assessment Prompt:

Read the article "Should Kids Wear School Uniforms?" by Sherry Bowen.

Should North Smithfield Public Schools students be required to wear uniforms? How do you feel about this? In your opinion, do you think North Smithfield Public Schools students should be required to wear uniforms?

Write an essay (at least five paragraphs) clearly explaining your opinion of whether North Smithfield Public Schools students should be required to wear uniforms.

Optional Practice Prompt:

Pretend you have been selected to help rewrite the school homework policy. In your opinion, what should be included in the homework requirements for the new homework policy?

Read the text. Based on the text provided, write an essay including suggestions you would make. Be sure to explain your opinion about homework requirements and include evidence from article

Grade Five Trimester 1 Writing Assessment (optional)

Trimester 1 Informational Writing

Grade 5

What Are Hurricanes?

By Cindy Grigg

Caption: This picture taken by the ISS shows a rare Southern Hemisphere cyclone (that is why it shows a clockwise rotation).



Hurricanes form over warm ocean water. Most of them form in the South Atlantic Ocean. They only form in the summer and early autumn months. Without the heat of the warm ocean during the summer months, hurricanes could not form. No one knows exactly what causes hurricanes.

We do know that during the months of May to November, large areas of very low pressure form over the surface of the ocean. Warm, moist air rises, creating low pressure areas. Cooler air pushing down from the north begins to take its place. The moving air begins to swirl, and a tropical cyclone begins.

A tropical cyclone can be seen on radar. The rain clouds that form a tropical cyclone make a spiral. The spiral swirls counterclockwise. It looks like a giant doughnut. The hole in the middle is called the eye of the storm. The eye is an area of very low pressure. It is an area of calm while the storm swirls around it.

These storms can be hundreds of miles wide. Warm damp air from the warm ocean water rises up inside the eye several miles high. As the air rises, it cools. Rain falls. Cooler air falls, too. This puts pressure on the warm sea air. The pressure pumps the warm sea air back up into the eye of the storm. The storm grows.

Sometimes cool air over land or cool ocean currents causes the tropical cyclone to break up. If it keeps going, it just gets bigger and stronger. Winds near the eye become stronger. If the wind speed is 74 mph or stronger, the storm is then called a hurricane. Sometimes the winds of a hurricane can reach speeds of 200 mph.

A hurricane moves in two ways. It rotates around the eye of the cyclone. It also moves in a line called the storm path. No one ever knows for sure where the path of a hurricane will take it. Forecasters can only make a good guess. Satellites keep an "eye in the sky" on the oceans as they watch cloud formations that could become hurricanes. Radar and airplanes are used to track some storms at sea.

When a tropical storm is found, the U.S. National Weather Service will tell its location on radio and TV. If it seems to be heading for a beach area, a warning will be issued. People will be told what to do. Windows should be boarded up. Lawn furniture and trash cans should be brought inside to keep them from blowing around and hurting someone. If the hurricane is expected to be really strong, people are told to leave the area.

Hurricanes bring high waves, heavy rain, and strong winds. High winds from the hurricane tend to push ocean water toward the shoreline. This is called the storm surge. Often it is one of the greatest causes of damage in a hurricane. It can pull homes, cars, and boats out to sea. It can cause flooding in low areas that takes weeks to go away.

High winds often cause major property damage. Winds may down trees and power lines. Hurricanes bring torrents of rain. Hail often falls. Hurricanes may dump fifteen inches of rain on one area in just a few hours. Flooding can happen over large inland areas-areas not even affected by the storm surge.

There may be strong thunderstorms. Tornadoes and waterspouts may form, too. Tornadoes form on land. Waterspouts are tornadoes that form over oceans. Some waterspouts can sink ships at sea.

Hurricanes are frightening storms. People in beach areas should be aware of hurricane warnings in their area. They should follow the advice given by officials in case of an emergency. Often warnings are issued days before a hurricane is expected to make landfall. Although forecasters can sometimes be wrong, it is far better to be safe than sorry!

Grade Five Trimester 3 Writing Assessment

Trimester 3--> Narrative

Writing Standards CCSS

Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

Assessment Prompt:

In the story, : "The Golden Mare, the Firebird, and the Magic Ring", the author developed a strong main character. Think about the main character and the details the author used to create that character.

Write an original story to continue where the passage ended. In your story, be sure to use what you have learned about the main character as you tell what happened.

Optional Practice Prompt:

You have received an award for _____. What did you do to earn this award? How did you feel?

Write an essay clearly explaining the award's purpose and what you did to deserve it.

Grade Five Trimester 2 Writing Assessment

Trimester 2 Opinion Writing

Grade 5

Should Kids Wear School Uniforms?

By Sherry Bowen

Topics: School Policy and Education Issues

Do school uniforms help curb violence, foster a better learning environment or promote discipline in students? Many people think so and are pushing schools to require them.

Opinions about uniforms and dress codes vary about as much as the reasons for having them -- parents seem to love them and students seem to tolerate them at best. Nevertheless, many schools have jumped on the bandwagon despite students' expressed concerns about their freedom of speech.

In a 1996 Long Beach, Calif. speech, former President Bill Clinton announced his support of that district's uniform initiative.

"School uniforms are one step that may help break the cycle of violence, truancy and disorder by helping young students understand what really counts is what kind of people they are," Clinton said. It didn't take much more than this presidential nod of approval to get the uniform ball rolling in many school districts across the country.

Requiring all students to wear the same cardigans, slacks or skirts is a practice employed throughout history and all over the world. England, for example, even required uniforms in all public schools for a time. Recently, it seems American schools desperate for peace and order are willing to follow this trend in order to get their students on the right track.

Present statistics in the Long Beach district seem to support the claim that the clothes students wear can affect the crime rate. Now, three years later, many districts have followed suit with public schools in Chicago, Dallas, Sacramento, Phoenix, Seattle, Kansas City, Memphis, Baltimore and Atlanta all making the jump to mandatory uniforms.

The issue of school uniforms, whether in a private or public school, is not clear-cut. They seem to work best when whole school communities discuss and agree upon a policy and then enforce it. And most proponents agree that requiring uniforms will only bring success if other programs accompany it.



Uniforms may be a part of the solution, but they are not the only way to improve schools.

Possible Benefits

Some parents and teachers believe uniforms:

- **Increase students' self-esteem** because they do not have to participate in the "school fashion show." Dressing alike helps students learn that what really counts is on the inside.
- **Decrease the influence of gangs** and gang violence. Uniforms make it more difficult to sneak in weapons, and easier to ban gang colors or symbols.
- **Improve learning** by reducing distraction, sharpening focus on schoolwork and making the classroom a more serious environment.
- **Promote a sense of teamwork** and increase school spirit.
- **Mask the income difference** between families. All children dress the same, whether rich or poor.
- **Improve behavior** and increase school attendance. Some students actually skip school to avoid embarrassment about their clothing.
- **Save families time and money.** Many parents report that three uniforms cost about the same as one pair of designer jeans. Even some students admit that wearing the same colors everyday makes it easier to shop for new clothes.
- **Help administrators** quickly identify outsiders who could be a danger to students.

At What Cost?

But some students and parents say uniforms:

- **Violate** the right to freedom of speech and expression.
- **Cost too much** for families who already struggle to make ends meet.
- **Merely put a band-aid** on the problem of school violence and fail to address the real issues behind it.
- **Emphasize conformity**, not individuality, and do not allow students to develop their identity.
- **Hide warning signs** that point to problems. Often the way a child dresses can indicate the way he is feeling. Uniforms eliminate these red flags.
- **Offer ways for administrators to exert power** and an unnecessary amount of authority.
- **Have not been statistically proven** to decrease violence or promote discipline.
- **Fail** to allow students to learn to make good choices based on their own values.

Grade Five Trimester 2 Writing Assessment (optional)

Trimester 2 Opinion Writing

Grade 5

Optional Practice Prompt

What are the Pros and Cons of Homework?

Homework is a part of the fabric of most educational systems, but does it really make better students?

The pros of homework

Homework, especially in high school and college level coursework, is crucial if a student is to absorb all of the material required to master a subject. Class time at these levels is best used to embellish and build on the information the student has already acquired during periods of self study. It allows a teacher to go beyond the textbook.

By having homework, students can concentrate on what matters the most during school time, which are discussions, learning, experimenting and asking questions.

Rote learning

Homework can provide important practice for many of the skills required for learning, particularly in the areas of rote learning. Homework involving simple math operations, spelling and vocabulary lists can help students build the foundation for further learning.

Reading is good for the developing brain

Reading assignments are especially important even at early ages. Reading develops many aspects of the developing brain, and should be encouraged.

Lack of classroom time

Homework can be necessary when classroom time is not enough to provide the subject exposure needed to do the job.

Instills discipline

Many proponents of structured extracurricular study programs view the opposition to homework as codling an already soft and lazy student population. They feel that homework instills discipline, and creates a superior intellect.

The cons of homework

Few opponents of homework feel that it is never needed. Their position is that it is often over applied and used inappropriately, especially at younger ages.

Our own fear

The introduction of large scale homework assignments to younger students was a result of the scare caused by Russia's launch of the Sputnik Satellite and their subsequent achievement of being the first country to put a man into space. We feared that a learning gap had occurred between our two countries, and tried to instill advanced learning disciplines at earlier and earlier ages to compensate.

Too young

Many studies indicate that homework has little positive effect on the performance of students in the earlier grades. There is only so much that a mind of that age can absorb through self study, and piling on homework doesn't change that.

Too much homework does have its down side as well. Students will have less time exploring their talents and develop other areas of interest such as music and sports.

Homework is stressful

Additional studies have shown that the over-application of homework can stress individuals to the point that it has a negative effect on performance, resulting in an outcome opposite of desired goal.

Better system needed

Many critics of the current system endorse a graduated level of homework which increases slowly as the student develops. One proposal is to limit homework to 10 minutes a day for each grade the student has achieved. For example, second graders would receive 20 minutes per day, and sixth graders an hour. By the time students graduate from high school, they will be working 2 hours per night, and be on a path that will make them ready for the demands of college.

Kids need time to enjoy, too

Homework on weekends and holidays is also shown to be more of a detriment than an aid to learning. Kids need time off, too.