

Grade 6: Narrative (Example of a “High” paper)

Title: “Mother’s Day Pancake Breakfast”

Topic: Have you ever made someone happy—or given someone a good surprise? **Tell a true story** about a time when your actions had a positive effect on someone else.

SCORES AND COMMENTARY (Phrases in bold are taken from the *Official Writing Scoring Guide*):

Ideas and Content: 5 The writing is **clear, focused and interesting**. The writer has provided **relevant, carefully selected details, which create a thorough, balanced explanation of the topic**. **The writing makes connections and shares insights**. (“So I made perfect pancakes to put in place of the blackened toast. Ok now, what does mom like on her pancakes? Strawberries and cream. I got the strawberries and the whipped cream out of the refrigerator. I mounded on the sweet fluffy cream.”)

Organization: 5 The organization is **strong and moves the reader through the text** while telling the story of making the pancakes. The **introduction is inviting and the ending gives a satisfying sense of closure**. Details fit in the process where placed.

Voice: 6 **The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic** and purpose of telling a narrative story. **There is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.”** The writing is **expressive**, showing **originality and liveliness**. (“I snuck downstairs, quiet as a church mouse, so as not to awaken my mom. If she walked through the door I would be burnt toast! Ahhh! The toast was burning!”)

Word Choice: 5 The words **convey the intended message in a interesting and natural way**, creating **clear images**. The expressions are **fresh and vivid**. Words are **thoughtfully placed for impact**. (“I cut myself with the razor sharp blade that I found in the kitchen drawer,” “I could almost taste the magical smell drifting in the air; of the delectable pancakes.”)

Sentence Fluency: 5 The writing **has an easy flow and rhythm**. **Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable**. (Note: occasional punctuation errors should not affect the sentence fluency score.)

Conventions: 5 This essay scores a low 5 in conventions. The writing **demonstrates a strong control of standard writing conventions**. **Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability**. There is **little need for editing**, especially in the areas of spelling and punctuation.