

Incorporating Hopi Values and Traditions in Writing

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Culturally Responsive Schooling with/in Indigenous Communities

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Author's Note

Leora Koruh is an ESS paraprofessional at Second Mesa Day School located on the Hopi Reservation. Acknowledgements must be given to my grandmother Anise Honhoinewa and my father Leon Koruh who have both passed but have played an integral part in who I am today and for all the knowledge they have passed on to me about Hopi culture and values. Correspondences in regards to this curriculum unit can be addressed to Leora Koruh P.O. Box 259, Second Mesa, AZ, 86043 Email: Leora.Koruh@secondmesa.org

Context

The Hopi reservation is located in North Eastern Arizona and is comprised of three different mesas: First, Second, and Third Mesa. Within each mesa there are communities or villages; First Mesa consists of Tewa, Sichomovi, and Walpi. Second Mesa consists of Musungnovi, Sipaulovi, and Shungopavi; and Third Mesa consists of Kykotsmovi, Old Oriabi, Hotevilla, Bacavi, and Moenkopi. The Hopi reservation according to the 2016 -2020 census data has a population of 9,886 that are living on the reservation with Shungopavi having the largest population.

The village of Musungnovi, in the community of Second Mesa is where I lay my roots. I have lived here all of my life and feel so connected and tied to our culture that I don't feel the need to move anywhere else. Our matrilineal lineage determines what community we are from and what clanship we will belong to throughout our lifetime, I myself belong to the Black Bear clan. I say Black Bear because in my village we are all different color bears according to our bloodlines and this helps to determine what our hierarchy is within the village. Our clans not only determine our identity but our responsibilities to our village and communities. For example, the bear clans are the mothers and fathers of every living being as well as leaders for the people, the corn clan is responsible for feeding the people, the water clan are responsible for taking care of the springs, and the eagle clans are the warriors or protectors, and so forth. With that being said, some of my clan responsibilities in the community are to uphold the traditions and values of our culture as well as making sure that our "children" are taken care of mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. We should also carry ourselves with the upmost respect and try not to portray ourselves in a negative manner.

Within our community we have an elementary school that serves nearly 200 students in grades K-6 for our students and for students who come from communities surrounding Second Mesa. Although we have 4 other elementary schools on the reservation, Second Mesa Day School has the highest enrollment rate. This school is centralized within the Hopi reservation and offers two classrooms per grade, physical education, Hopi Lavayi (Language), computer, library, and social emotional learning classes, as well as numerous extracurricular activities. The school is also equipped with an art and science classroom. Recently, the Hopi Tribe has placed a Head Start center within the school's campus that will serve 3 to 5 year old children.

I have been an Exceptional Student Services (ESS) paraprofessional, for more than 15 years, with previous experience as a child care provider and a head start teacher. I never intended to be in the education field but I was given the opportunity to be a teacher aide working with exceptional students. After obtaining my Associate's degree in Early Childhood, I found myself advocating and helping my students with disabilities it was then that I realized my heart was working with individuals with disabilities. I returned to school and obtained my Bachelor's in Special Education to make a difference in the types of services that they receive. Until I complete my certification assessment, I will continue to serve as an ESS paraprofessional.

Rationale

Working with my community gives me the opportunity to instill the values and traditions of our culture through everyday learning. Much of our values and traditions are being lost and one way of preserving this is by incorporating it into writing lessons that are being taught within the

classrooms. Over the years with my experience in education, I have observed the disconnect of our students with Hopi cultural knowledge in our schools. There are many factors to consider with this concern including: the influence of boarding schools and the transfer of knowledge between generations and the socio-economic factors that may contribute to concerns with substance abuse. Nonetheless, these are concerns of mine that influence my rationale to develop a culturally responsive curriculum unit.

The population I service in the educational environment are students in grades K-6 that are part of the Exceptional Student Services program. Most of these individuals receive services in an inclusion classroom and may have some type of disability that falls under the IDEA law. Although my focus is on my inclusion students, I also work with all students in the classroom setting. Therefore, I would like to focus this curriculum on implementing culturally responsive schooling practices by using Hopi cultural values teaching strategies to improve writing literacy. Why writing literacy? Well over the years it has become evident that our students have a difficult time gathering, composing, and writing meaningful written pieces. Every year our students are expected to write an essay for the state assessment and time after time they are unable to complete this portion. Most times they only reach the first stage of using a graphic organizer to compose their thoughts and then time is up and they haven't even began writing their essay; while others are stuck on trying to figure out what the writing prompt is asking that they are unable to even get started.

Incorporating our traditions, values, and morals in writing is one way we can help preserve these teachings and help students to have a sense of purpose and know their self-worth. It is too often now that we hear students say they are worthless, no one cares, or that they no longer want to be here, or why was I born. It is disheartening to hear our future generation speaking in these terms but engaging in these types of writing lessons will give them the opportunity to ask their parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and community members about the importance of Hopi culture and values.

Kyavsti, or respect, is a Hopi value that is part of and informs cultural values, ceremonial cycles, clan roles, and language for the Hopi people. For example, when students would see you in the morning, they would greet you in Hopi with, "*Lomatalungva*" (good morning) for boys and "*Nukwungtalungva*" (good morning) for girls. Also after eating breakfast or lunch students would thank the cooks by saying "*Kwakwai nu noosa*" (I am grateful for the meal) for boys and "*Asquali nu noosa*" (I am grateful for the meal) for girls, nowadays I rarely hear these words spoken by Hopi children. When walking into a classroom students greeted someone who entered by saying *yungya'a*, (come on in) they would show respect by being attentive, listening, and being engaged in the lesson. Teachings are still being taught within some homes, however, much of the younger generation has either forgotten or chosen not to continue with the teachings. Even if the Hopi culture and values are being taught within the home environment there may not always be a place in the school environment where it can be practiced.

Growing up, I was taught from a young age what my clan responsibilities were and how we fit into our Hopi culture. I was taught the responsibilities of being a girl growing into a woman and the things I would need to do to ensure that my family and people were taken care of. Lending a helping hand or doing something without having to be told this practice is having *hita'nangwa*.

As the saying goes treat others how you want to be treated and what goes around comes around. If you help others they will in turn come and help you when you are in need. I remember going school shopping and I really wanted overalls that all the other girls had and my grandmother told me I could not get them because they were too short. You can imagine I was sad and felt like she didn't care about my feelings. It wasn't till later that she told me girls or women should respect their bodies and that some things should only be meant for your future husband's eyes. These are only a few things that she taught me throughout my lifetime but I am very grateful for what she has taught me and now I am teaching my daughter these very same things.

If students have the opportunity to write about a topic that is relatable or something of their own teachings, they would be able to relate to the writing prompt while learning about the culture and values (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Some of the resources that could be used to implement this curriculum are AVID writing strategies, Step Up to Writing, Arizona State Standards, teachings passed from family, and bringing in presenters to expand students' knowledge.

Topic Summary

So how can we as educators help them to become fluent and creative writers utilizing their "funds of knowledge" (Moll, et al., 1992). When it comes to a writing assignment students tend to cringe because they do not know the writing process and have difficulty composing meaningful sentences. Then we have the area of Conventions of Standard English that they need to know to develop sentence structure, they have difficulty finding the appropriate words to express their ideas or lack imagination which makes it difficult for them to find ideas. Technology and internet has made its way into more homes and children are spending less time outdoors and more time on games and computers. We have to ask ourselves could this be another reason why students have difficulty. On the other hand, the strength that I have seen in many students is when using graphic organizers to gather their thoughts, they have a general sense of what they want to write. They are also able to verbalize what they want to write but when it comes to writing, they tend to sit there till someone can give them direction.

Additionally, the writing portion of the standardized test that occurs annually around April is a challenge for students. Oh my, this is where students really tend to get stumped and many times they are only able to compose a few sentences or a small paragraph, while others will not even try to attempt. With the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) over seeing many tribal schools it would be ideal for them to create a standardized test that is culturally relevant, maybe then we can begin to see higher test scores and our schools will not be labeled as failing or not meeting standards. Looking at the BIE website it states that assessments are "Integrated content and assessments ensure broad access to accurate and timely student and school-level information which is used for educational decision making" (Bureau of Indian Educations, n.d.). As I read this statement I can't help to think about the saying "ensure broad access", I would hope somewhere in the statement it would state culturally relevant. It makes me wonder if this is the reason why many schools teach to the test rather than for understanding.

Living in two worlds can be difficult for our Indigenous students. Why? First of all, most of the curriculums that are used within Indigenous schools are written for students in the mainstream of Western culture. Therefore, they are not culturally sensitive or relevant to our students, making it

difficult for them to make a connection. It would be ideal if all tribes would be able to create their own educational standards just like the Navajo tribe (Office of Curriculum, Standards and Assessment Development, n.d.). If each tribe created their own standards, I believe that students would become engaged in lessons. Students will not only have the opportunity to learn the standards but also have the opportunity to learn about their language, culture, and values. As history has told us this was the reasoning behind Indian Boarding schools, although we have gotten away from Indian Boarding schools in a sense, I feel as if they are still here. I often think about what was said in the reading of *Choice and Self-Determination: Central Lessons from American Indian Education*, “After all, Indian schools, were created to civilize Native children, to eradicate Native identities, language, and culture” (Morgan, P.1,1958). Not in the sense of the physical and emotional abuse but the assimilation of culture and values. Why? I have seen many schools that have been teaching to the curriculum or to what they feel our students need to be taught therefore, putting aside the teachings of our language, culture, and values.

It is important to work toward becoming culturally responsive educators. One way to do this by developing writing assignments that students can make connections that include topics and content from the students’ cultural backgrounds. As we move along in this course, I have come to the realize that I have been doing this verbally but not to the level of incorporating these values and traditions in a meaningful way. I never really thought about how we can incorporate our traditions and values in a meaningful way while simultaneously addressing educational standards. With this refined, there are plenty of ideas that come to mind in how this can be incorporated within our school. For example, we can incorporate using the planting of the *uuyi* (corn fields) to teach concepts in math such as rows and arrays, volume, area, and perimeter. In the area of English Language Arts we can incorporate our Hopi *tutuwusti* (stories) and create comprehension questions to go with each story. This would also be a great way to teach and incorporate the values of our culture in educationally relevant ways. We can incorporate our Hopi *lavayi* (language) in these lessons so that they are using the words in the correct manner. Better yet we can develop our own vocabulary words for each lesson. Although each village has different dialects this is where we can involve our parents. They can be the teachers at home and inform the students what the proper dialect is within their community or village. As you can see there are many ways that we can implement the culture, language, and values in everyday assignments while teaching the standard.

Teaching strategies combined with culturally responsive content is beneficial for teaching writing and I provided examples of three strategies here. The first strategy that can be used is the Step- Up to writing curriculum. This an easy curriculum to teach them the early process of paragraph structure and is teacher guided. With this process the teacher will guide the students to create a topic sentence and a conclusion statement. They will use stars to indicate each main idea and three bullet points for each evidence that will go with each main idea. Once this outline process is completed then it will be transferred to colored strips of paper. Yellow strips to write the topic and conclusion statements, red for the main ideas, and green for each evidence that will support the main idea. This process will help to break down each component so that it is easier for students to follow and they do not feel overwhelmed with writing it all in one shot.

The second strategy is the AVID writing strategies. Mainly because we are an AVID school and it would make sense that our children learn how to implement the AVID strategies in their

writing. What is AVID? AVID is an acronym for Advancement Via Individual Determination and was derived from a federal court ordered integration of the San Diego Unified school district as the court ruled that 23 of the school were “racially” isolated. AVID came into existence in 1980 when an English teacher by the name of Catherine Swanson believed that with individual determination, hard work, and support, capable but under achieving students could succeed in rigorous curriculum and in college (Drumright, et al., 2016).

Another strategy that can be used is the Write Bright Station, although I am not too familiar with this program it appears to be a program that can be easily followed and gives step by step tutorial. This writing program uses videos to help enhance the writing process and is all computer based, although materials can be printed. It also has students focus on using their five senses in their writing, by using their senses the reader can feel that they are part of the story, hence they will feel a connection to what the writer is trying to convey. It also teaches two types of writing using Prompt and Source. The Prompt section includes an outline for narrative writing that includes the Lead In – when and where, what are you doing, problem, climax, and the end (Write Bright Station, n.d.). This section helps the student write to a writing prompt with the use of resources. The Source process teaches students to complete a writing task that includes using resources to provide evidence. Although this program provides its own topics and is computer based it can be used as resource to help students learn the mechanics of writing.

There are many programs available that can be used or bought by school systems but it is our job as educators to ensure that our students become productive citizens in this ever changing world. Whatever resources you chose to use don’t forget that we are focused on Culturally Responsive Learning and what goal you would like to achieve. We as Indigenous teachers can no longer stand by and let our teachings become lost or forgotten when we now know that we can make the change in our everyday lessons (Brayboy, 2005).

Student Engagement

Leading us to student engagement, we can begin to implement culturally responsive writing lessons into the classroom. I’m sure within every Indigenous community there are stories or life lessons that have been passed on from generation to generation. This is a great start to getting students to use their prior knowledge in their writing pieces. It also gives them the opportunity to reach out to family members about topics they might not know or might need further clarification on. There are many ways that we can bring culture into the classrooms such as inviting elders, artists, and community members as well as providing some hands on activities in whatever subject area you may be teaching.

The following writing lessons are designed for a 5th grade classroom. In this curriculum unit, writing lessons incorporating Hopi culture, language and values will be used to teach persuasive writing and recalling important information from a narrative text in sequential order

These are a few of the standards that can be taught during the lessons:

5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5.W.5 With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 5.)

5.W.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work and provide a list of sources.

5.SL.1 - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. c. Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others. d. Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions based on information and knowledge gained from the discussions.

5.L.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections in general and their function in particular sentences. b. Form and use the perfect (e.g., I had walked; I have walked; I will have walked) verb tenses. c. Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions. d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense. e. Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., either/or, neither/nor). f. Write and organize one or more paragraphs that contain: a topic sentence, supporting details, and a conclusion that is appropriate to the writing task (Reference Writing standards 1-3).

5.L.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series. b. Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. c. Use a comma to set off the words yes and no (e.g., Yes, thank you), to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., It's true, isn't it?), and to indicate direct address (e.g., Is that you, Steve?). d. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works. e. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

The following lesson plans will be implemented to complete a persuasive writing piece and recalling important information from a narrative text in sequential order.

Lesson 1: Narrative Writing

Obj: I can convince someone of my idea or opinion through a persuasive essay.

Obj: I can identify the main idea and the important details of the text.

Assignment: Students will either write a persuasive or narrative writing piece using the topic below.

Topic: Soyoko Day – Why should we hunt or grind corn for Soyoko and what is the importance of doing so?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Teacher Instruction: Introduce topic by sharing a story about <i>Soyoko</i> day.	Teacher Instruction: Introduce vocabulary – <i>Soyoko, aayahta, piki, toosi, soowi, taavo, sikwi</i>	Teacher Instruction: Introduce narrative writing samples	Teacher Instruction: Edit first draft	Teacher Instruction: Review and edit second draft
Student Engagement: Students will share an experience that they may have had with <i>Soyoko</i> .	Student Engagement: Students will define vocabulary, use in a sentence, and draw a picture.	Student Engagement: Students will start first draft	Student Engagement: Students will make edits to rough draft	Student Engagement: Students will complete final draft and will be assessed using a rubric

Background history:

Soyoko (an ogre lady that comes in the month of February and is a disciplinarian). During this time she comes to the homes and *aayahta* (tells) the male and females what she would like for them to do for her in order for her to cleanse your soul. In a way it is like repenting for your sins. She tells the males that she would like for them to go hunting for her, this can be in the form of rabbits, any type of game or nowadays store bought meat. As for the females she asks for them to put their baking and grinding skills to use by making *toosi* (ground sweet corn) and *piki* (a paper-thin blue corn bread made on a hot stone) for the *Soyoko*. This will give students the opportunity to have discussions with their families about why this tradition is important to the Hopi people and what moral is taught during this time. I was always told by my *So-oh* (grandmother) that if I ever moved off reservation that this is one ceremony that I should come home for every year. Why? It was told to me that this is a time for renewal for all the wrong doings that have occurred throughout the year whether it be your own or others. In each culture there is always a tradition or time when this happens (Holm, et al., 2003), so no matter if you are Hopi or not that there is a tradition that can be tied or similar to this that others can write about. While writing this piece they can elaborate why they feel they should be forgiven for what they have done or the bad things that they may have been a part of during the year. Or even why others should be forgiven. With the way things are happening in the world today it is hard to stay on track and if we fall we always need to remember to dust off and get back up because we are placed on this earth for a purpose. This is the time that we need to face the truth about our faults so that we may become great stewards for future years. These are values that many of our people have forgotten and need to be reminded from time to time. I now see people that have moved away and think it is a privilege that they do not have to participate because they have moved away or because they do not want to face her. Whatever the reason these are morals that need to continue to be taught to our younger generation so that they are aware of the importance of this day.

Lesson 2: Self - Identity

Obj: I can describe the factors that shape a person's personal identity.

Assignment: Students will create a poster that incorporates who they are: clan, Hopi name, family tree, etc. exploring who they are and where they come from. Students can include clan responsibilities, meaning of their Hopi names and any other information that they would like to share about themselves.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Teacher Instruction: Discuss about the baby naming process. Asking students what their Hopi names are and if they know the meaning.	Teacher Instruction: Provide materials to students – poster boards, makers, stickers, etc.	Teacher Instruction: Allow student to utilize computers and printer for printing text and pictures	Teacher Instruction: A rubric will be used for assessment on poster	Teacher Instruction: Assessment on class presentations using anecdotal notes
Student Engagement: Students can share the knowledge that they have about baby naming and what their Hopi names	Student Engagement: Students will begin working on posters in class.	Student Engagement: Students continue working on posters using computer for typing and printing pictures if needed	Student Engagement: Presentation day	Student Engagement: Students will participate in a socratic seminar to check for understanding of classmates presentations

This poster piece will help them to have better understanding of self-identity and the importance of family and heritage. As stated in the beginning of this curriculum each clan has different responsibilities or roles that they bring to the community. The saying goes “It takes a community to raise a child” well it is certainly so in Hopi culture. When we are born we are given to our paternal grandmother and she is responsible for ensuring no harm comes to the baby and mother during a 21 day period. On the 21st day the paternal aunts come and wash the baby and mother's hair, then they give the baby a Hopi name and take him or her to greet the sun for the first time. This is part of their identity and something that they can incorporate in their poster. All students have a story to tell no matter what culture they belong to and if they are able to see what their worth is within the community students will be able to take pride in who they are, their clanship, culture and how they can become stewards to their community. Having a sense of pride in who you are gives you the strength, compassion, and encouragement that we need to get through this everchanging world.

Lesson 3: Sequencing

Obj: I can describe the sequence of events using characters, setting and details from an event.
 Assignment: Students will be able to choose what topic they would like to write about, but it will have to be something that is related to the culture. Whether it be a *Katsina* dance, social dance, basket dance, baby naming or any other type of cultural event that they may have been a part of or seen. I know this seems like a very vague topic but this is an assignment that will carry the most details and their own personal experience. Once again this can be a universal assignment that can be used for all students. This gives them the opportunity to learn about one another and to share their experiences within their culture.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Teacher Instruction: Discussion about different topics that can be used in this lesson	Teacher Instruction: Will show examples of sequencing	Teacher Instruction: Provide materials to create a timeline – poster board, makers, construction paper	Teacher Instruction: Provide Tri-fold boards for final presentation	Teacher Instruction: Rubric below will be used for assessment
Student Engagement: Students will have the opportunity to partner share about their topic	Student Engagement: Students will review sequencing rubric (see example)	Student Engagement: Students will create a rough draft of their timeline. (Students that may be working on the same topic can chose to work with a partner.)	Student Engagement: Work on final draft independently or with partner	Student Engagement: Presentation day

Name _____

Grade: _____

Sequencing Events Rubric

4	3	2	1
You were able to correctly sequence the events of the story	You were able to sequence most of the events in the correct order	You were able to sequence some of the events in the correct order	You did not sequence the events of the story correctly
You are able to use many different sequencing words correctly	You were able to use some sequencing words correctly	You used some sequencing words	You did not include any sequencing words
You used complete sentences and thoughts	Most of your sentences make sense	Some of your sentences make sense	Few of your sentences make sense
You spelled each word correctly	Most of your words are spelled correctly	Some of your words are spelled correctly	Few words are spelled correctly
Your capitalization and punctuation are correct	Your capitalization and punctuation are mostly correct	You have many errors in your capitalization and punctuation	You did not capitalize any words. You did not use any punctuation
You indented your paragraphs	You indented your paragraphs	You did not indent your paragraphs	You did not indent your paragraphs

Thank you for sharing your writing with me.

Student Comments

I did well in the following areas:	I need to work on the following:

Assessment

When assessing students, I think it is important to keep in mind each student's level of learning and understanding as we have many unique learners. Students will be assessed at the end of the week for each lesson using a rubric that will be provided to them prior to completing the assignment. The rubric provided will be used as a guide for students. Having a rubric will help students to understand what the reader should be visioning in their story and how to make their story come to life. The rubric that is provided should align with the state standards that you are implementing as well the AVID strategies.



Two-Column Notes Assessment Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Content (accurate information recorded within notes)

	Present	Absent
Name, date, subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Title	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Essential Question or Learning Objective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Left side: levels of questions, main ideas, key words, terms, steps for problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Right side: notes, facts, examples, definitions, problem-solving, pictures/graphic organizers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary (optional)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of the "After" layers of the STAR process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/> (3) Advanced	<input type="checkbox"/> (2) Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> (1) Developing	<input type="checkbox"/> (0) Not Evident
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Notes: _____

Another way would be through the Socratic seminars, these are like talking circles where students can share and is all student lead. The teacher acts as a facilitator and will be able to take notes on each student for their level of understanding. Having these types of seminars will give the students the opportunity to speak in a constructive manner on each writing topic. Also for those students who are quiet and shy it will give them the confidence to speak in front of their peers. Lastly, it can help other students who may not have understood the lesson the opportunity to learn from their peers.

For those students who are unable to complete the writing assessment they can be assessed by drawing a poster, making a collage or using the text to speech application. Therefore, none of your students should be left out of the assessment.

The following are examples of writing rubrics and other tools that students and teachers can use for assessment.

Descriptive Writing Rubric

Using Sensory Images, Precise Adjectives, and Vivid Verbs

Readers enjoy descriptive writing because it helps them see someone or something in a new way. Using words and images that bring sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing to life are crucial to good descriptive writing. Powerful adjectives can help tell a descriptive story, too.

	1 Novice	2 Discoverer	3 Achiever	4 Hero
Ideas and Organization	No evidence of a purpose or logical ideas that help the reader see what is being described.	Hints at using organized ideas to describe people, places, and things.	Well-focused sentences and paragraphs are logical and help readers see what is being described.	Interesting and precise sentences and paragraphs tell a descriptive story with metaphor.
Word Choice	Lacks evidence of sensory words and adjectives.	Provides some sensory words and adjectives.	Uses well-crafted sensory images and appropriate adjectives that describe.	Engages the reader in the story by making people, places, and objects come alive with sensory details, comparisons, and powerful adjectives.
Structure, Grammar, and Mechanics	Lacks evidence of proper use of complete sentences; proper spelling; punctuation; or grammar.	Exhibits some understanding of sentence structure; many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Shows sentence variety, with few errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	Offers readers engaging and compelling sentences and paragraphs without spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors.
Creative Presentation and Art	No sense of artistic concern or care for neatness; no attempt to interest the reader through sensory detail.	Provides some concern for artistic technique and neatness; offers basic description.	Exhibits strong use and understanding of artistic concepts; details figure strongly in the work.	Creative use of materials to tell an engaging story; artistically powerful details and description.

Notes _____

Key
 14–16 points: Excellent
 11–13 points: Very Good
 8–10 points: Good
 5–7 points: Fair
 0–4 points: Poor

Score

Narrative Writing Rubric
Telling Stories with a Beginning, Middle, and End

What do narrators do? Do you know what happens? Do you know what happens? Do you know what happens? Do you know what happens?

	1 Novice	2 Discoverer	3 Achiever	4 Hero
Ideas and Organization	No evidence of a purpose or logical ideas that help the reader see what is being described.	Hints at using organized ideas to describe people, places, and things.	Well-focused sentences and paragraphs are logical and help readers see what is being described.	Interesting and precise sentences and paragraphs tell a descriptive story with metaphor.
Word Choice	Lacks evidence of sensory words and adjectives.	Provides some sensory words and adjectives.	Uses well-crafted sensory images and appropriate adjectives that describe.	Engages the reader in the story by making people, places, and objects come alive with sensory details, comparisons, and powerful adjectives.
Structure, Grammar, and Mechanics	Lacks evidence of proper use of complete sentences; proper spelling; punctuation; or grammar.	Exhibits some understanding of sentence structure; many spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	Shows sentence variety, with few errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	Offers readers engaging and compelling sentences and paragraphs without spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors.
Creative Presentation and Art	No sense of artistic concern or care for neatness; no attempt to interest the reader through sensory detail.	Provides some concern for artistic technique and neatness; offers basic description.	Exhibits strong use and understanding of artistic concepts; details figure strongly in the work.	Creative use of materials to tell an engaging story; artistically powerful details and description.

Notes _____

Key
 14–16 points: Excellent
 11–13 points: Very Good
 8–10 points: Good
 5–7 points: Fair
 0–4 points: Poor

Score

Resources

Brayboy, B. (2005). Toward a Tribal Critical Race Theory in education. *The Urban Review*, 37(5), 425-446.

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