

Writing Prompts:

How are they scored for students in grades 3 and 4?

What are some examples of prompts?

(Excerpts from the CT State Dept. of Ed. website)

- Students are given 45 minutes to provide a written response.
- Directions suggest that students take the first part of the 45 minutes to plan before writing the actual response.
- The written response is scored holistically, which means that the score represents the overall strength of the paper as judged by trained scorers.
- Each scorer assigns a score on a scale from 1 to 6. See scale (rubric) below.
- Scorers are trained to read through errors in spelling and writing mechanics. These errors are not considered as part of the holistic score.

Narrative

The narrative mode will consist of prompts designed to elicit both personal narratives and fictional narratives. (A narrative is a story or description of actual or fictional events.) The scorers will be using one narrative rubric to help them determine a score for each paper. A holistic impression of the quality of the writing is the guiding criterion for the score.

The Rubric:

Score Point 1: An undeveloped response

Typical elements:

- Contains few or vague details
- Is too brief to indicate sequencing of events
- May be difficult to read and understand

Score Point 2: An underdeveloped narrative

Typical elements:

- Contains general, unelaborated and/or list-like details
- Shows little evidence of sequencing of events
- May be awkward and confusing

Score Point 3: A minimally-developed narrative with little expansion of key events and characters

Typical elements:

- Has little elaboration with more general than specific details
- Shows some evidence of an organizational strategy with some sequencing of events
- May be awkward in parts

**Score Point 4: A somewhat-developed narrative with moderate expansion of key events and characters*

Typical elements:

- Is adequately elaborated with a mix of general and specific details
- Shows a satisfactory organizational strategy with satisfactory sequencing of events
- May be somewhat fluent

** On the CMT—a double score of an 8 is considered meeting goal.*

Score Point 5: A developed narrative with mostly effective expansion of key events and characters

Typical elements:

- Is moderately well elaborated with mostly specific details
- Shows generally strong organizational strategy and sequencing of events
- May be moderately fluent

Score Point 6: A well-developed narrative expanding on key events and characters

Typical elements:

- Is fully elaborated with specific details
- Shows strong organizational strategy and sequencing of events
- Is fluent

Examples of writing prompts:

An example of a personal experience narrative:

Think about a day when you had something special happen. What happened on that day that was so special?

Write a story about that special day.

When you write your paper, be sure to:

- tell your story in the order things happened;
- include **who** or **what** your story is about;
- include **when** and **where** your story takes place; and
- include details about the events.

An example of a fictional narrative:

Imagine that a gorilla walked into your classroom and sat down at a desk.

Write a story about what happened next.

When you write your paper, be sure to

- tell your story in the order things happened.
- include **who** or **what** your story is about.
- include **when** and **where** your story takes place.
- include details about the events in your story.