

Writing Assessment and Evaluation Rubrics

Name Class Date

Above-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: The Writing Process (Unit 2, pages 108–111)

Assignment: Write a one- to two-page story about one of your family members.

Grandpa’s Big Catch

One of my earliest memories is of something that I’m not exactly sure whether I saw it happen first-hand or just think I did because I’ve heard the story and seen the pictures of it so many times. It happened when I was three years old, and my family was on vacation in the Florida Keys. My parents and grandparents had rented a boat so we could cruise around and fish in the ocean for a week.

From the photos that I’ve seen, I look like I was having a great time. I sat near the bow in a playpen, wearing my lifejacket and a big hat, while my mother and grandmother sunbathed and read books. My father had just gotten out of the navy, so he steered the boat. My grandpa spent most of the time fishing off the stern.

He was a preacher in a small town in Alabama. My parents had moved up north to Cincinnati when I was a baby, so we didn’t see my grandparents much. But everyone tells me that he was a popular man in his hometown. Everyone in Crawfordsville turned to him for advice. However, he wasn’t known as much of a fisherman. My mother says that during the first few days of our trip, my grandpa caught only a few small, old fish that the grownups cooked and ate for dinner. Whenever my mother tells this story she wrinkles her nose as if smelling something bad and says, “You, child, are lucky you were too little to eat them. You ate spaghetti.”

But then one day, almost at the end of our vacation, my grandpa felt a tug on his line. “I’ve got one,” he said. “A big one! The biggest I’ve ever felt!” My mom grabbed me, and we all crowded around him at the stern to watch him reel in his giant fish. My grandpa fought and struggled with that fish. He was sweating and yelling. The fishing pole bent and looked like it would break, and then, with one huge final tug, he landed the fish.

Except it wasn’t a fish at all. It was a baby alligator. It lay there on the deck flopping around and snapping its jaws. It was only about a foot long, and it looked scared. Everyone froze and stared at it. Then my grandpa turned and said to my grandma, “Lucille, get the camera.” He picked up the alligator by the tail and posed like he’d caught a prize-winning fish. Then he took the baby gator and gently tossed it back into the water.

My grandpa died of a heart attack a few months later. He was only sixty-four years old. I’m sad that I never really got to know him. All I have are a few fuzzy memories from my childhood and an old photo of him, in Bermuda shorts and a funny hat, holding up the baby alligator with a big smile on his face.

Opening sentence is awkward but establishes that the story is based on a memory; second sentence establishes context and hooks readers’ interest.

Presents details and events in a logical order

Uses relevant, natural dialogue to provide background information

Vivid details and dialogue bring the scene and characters to life.

Ending establishes the story’s importance and presents a strong closing image.

Summary: *This story is told in an engaging way and uses sufficient, vivid details and natural dialogue to give the reader a sense of the grandfather’s personality. The story is well organized and makes clear why the memory is important to the writer.*

This piece would probably receive a 4 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 95 if evaluated by the analytic scoring method—33 points for Focus/Organization, 35 points for Elaboration/Support/Style, and 27 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.