

# Kentucky Writing Handbook

## Exemplar Set Reflective Writing

Grade 7

Score Point	Exemplar Set—Content
4	Journal Entry
3	Opened and Closed: My Life as a Writer
2	Writing
1	Dear Mr. H.
0	Reflective Piece

## Notes about the Reflective Exemplars

The reflective samples in this exemplar set are intended to provide scorers examples of student writing to clarify the language of the 0-4 content indicators of purpose, audience, and idea development for the reflective entry required in the writing assessment portfolio. Exemplar papers are not official anchor papers which should be used to “anchor” scorers to each cell when scoring a piece of writing. However, exemplars function similarly to anchor papers by demonstrating the language of the indicators in student examples. **While these exemplars show different students’ approaches to reflecting about their growth in writing through literacy, the reflective samples demonstrate only a small range of possible options and approaches that students might use to successfully accomplish the reflective purpose.**

When scoring, teachers should remember that the purpose of the reflective entry in the assessment portfolio is to analyze and evaluate growth in writing through literacy experiences. Strands of literacy as defined in Kentucky’s *Program of Studies* include reading, writing, speaking, listening, and observing. Likewise, students may find that their experiences reflect a combination of literacy strands demonstrating an inquiry approach to learning.

While this purpose is specific for this entry, students may focus their writing in any number of ways based upon their personal experiences. The experiences should be unique to the students to demonstrate choice and ownership in the writing. The reflective entries in the portfolio need not follow a prescriptive, pre-determined formula.

# Journal Entry

When most people describe me, the first thing that probably pops into their head is the exact opposite of boring: fun, energetic, action-packed, hyper, etc. But the important question is, am I able to insert those qualities into my writing?

I used to write *a ton*. I still do. But when I had rather large matter to focus on, I would often get carried away while writing and I'd concentrate on getting my every thought down onto paper. Then, something happened. It didn't only affect my writing, but it affected my reading choice and experience as well. That was when the big, friendly giant came into the picture; The BFG. The BFG made me realize that it is possible to keep writings short and sweet, and still get to the point. Before I read the book, I didn't exactly think that there was such a thing as too much information.

I was a bit different with my writings in times before I made the acquaintance with the BFG. I would write pages and pages, not knowing when to stop, and when I finally did, I would have constant urges telling me to go on. To go on and continue writing. I would write detail after detail, and I didn't give the reader enough time to think or visualize for themselves. I know that it's sometimes a good thing to let your entire mind spill out, but I think I might have done it too much. I didn't realize what pains the reader could be going through. I wanted them to be jumping for joy rather than crying in shame.

I've kept a journal for as long as I can remember. In "my green journal," I started writing a story. It has so many pages and extra information that anyone who reads it would be surprised to find out that it's still not finished. What happened was, I would get so interested in writing one particular piece of the story and get distracted by it. I

wouldn't be thinking of anything else at the moment. Direct focus would be on my writing only.

When I first read The BFG, I noticed how Roald Dahl made explanations. Unlike me, he gives the reader just enough information to think for themselves. For instance, he begins to describe the big, friendly giant's home:

"She saw an enormous cavern with a high rocky roof. The walls on either side were lined with shelves, and on the shelves there stood row upon row of glass jars. There were jars everywhere. They piled up in the corners. They filled every nook and cranny of the cave."

See? He explains what the cave looks like and gives you a visual image. He lets you see in *your* mind, *your* view of the cave, however *you* think the cave would look like. He doesn't overflow the page with details. That way, you can find the image yourself. He doesn't give you too much information, and he stays with what actually makes sense. I, however, would ramble on forever and say nothing important:

"The people up front will pass out some peanuts, pretzels, cookies, apple juice, orange juice, grape juice, and pine apple juice, and soft drinks. Thank you." announced the pilot."

In that part of the story, I say much more than is really needed. I could have just as easily said,

"In a few moments, snacks will be passed out for the hungry passengers." announced the pilot.

It still includes detail, but not so much to cause the reader to fall asleep in the middle of a sentence. So, that's the first lesson I've learned: keeping my writings simple.

Another problem I had was getting the reader interested. I just don't think that:

"One day in July a trip was planned for a little girl named Lauren" is going to cut it. When I create a piece of writing, I want the reader to enjoy it. I want them to want to keep on reading. I've experimented with different ways on starting out a story – whether it's a suspenseful lead or a funny lead- to see what fits best. I try to make the writing appeal to the reader. That was something I saw Roald Dahl do at the end of chapter one in The BFG:

*"Suddenly she froze. There was something coming up the street on the opposite side.*

*It was something black...*

*Something tall and black...*

*Something very tall and very black and very thin."*

That lead is one that should make you wonder. You wonder what is coming up the street. You want to know, so you find out, by continuing to read. That is a good example of a lead because it shows you how you can grab the reader's attention. As I said before, I do not want to write too much with the result being loss of interest. I've worked this, and I believe it's starting to show:

*"It was three o'clock, and my mom and I were driving to my usual Monday piano lesson. I was pretty excited since I had practiced my classical piece a good bit over the past week. Little did I know that there was no reason to look forward to my piano lesson that day. No reason whatsoever."*

That is an example of a suspenseful lead, coming from my personal narrative. Hopefully it makes you wonder, like it did in The BFG. One other writing notion I've used, and probably my favorite, is putting incomplete sentences after certain sentences

for affect. After reading different books, I've noticed that some authors tend to use this, and I've picked up on it. It makes the situation seem important. Here is an example from my personal narrative:

"It was a risk I was willing to take. Walking home."

It seems to draw attention to sentence...raises it up higher so that you know it is a major part. It emphasizes.

In my writings, I've tried to tie in qualities from those of Roald Dahl, knowing that he was very successful. But I make them my own...show a bit of my personality. I've shown a little bit of who I am in writing, and I think that gets the reader interested.

I've tried very much to improve on my weaknesses. Over the years, I think my writings have been more and more enjoyable to read. The BFG taught me how to write in a short, sweet, and simple matter. It taught me how to make my writing pleasing to the reader. I will keep on trying to get better; trying different concepts to see what would work best. I go with whatever fits. Knowing that, I now like to think:

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go."

T.S. Elliot

# Journal Entry

When most people describe me, the first thing that probably pops into their head is the exact opposite of boring: fun, energetic, action-packed, hyper, etc. But the important question is, am I able to insert those qualities into my writing?

*establishes an insightful authentic purpose*

*conveys voice*

I used to write a ton. I still do. But when I had rather large matter to focus on, I would often get carried away while writing and I'd concentrate on getting my every thought down onto paper. Then, something happened. It didn't only affect my writing,

*establishes authentic purpose*

but it affected my reading choice and experience as well. That was when the big, friendly giant came into the picture; The BFG. The BFG made me realize that it is possible to keep writings short and sweet, and still get to the point. Before I read the book, I didn't exactly think that there was such a thing as too much information.

*analysis*

*maintains purpose*

I was a bit different with my writings in times before I made the acquaintance

*analysis about growth as a writer*

with the BFG. I would write pages and pages, not knowing when to stop, and when I finally did, I would have constant urges telling me to go on. To go on and continue writing. I would write detail after detail, and I didn't give the reader enough time to think or visualize for themselves. I know that it's sometimes a good thing to let your entire mind spill out, but I think I might have done it too much. I didn't realize what pains the reader could be going through. I wanted them to be jumping for joy rather than crying in shame.

*reflective thinking*

*background information*

I've kept a journal for as long as I can remember. In "my green journal," I started writing a story. It has so many pages and extra information that anyone who reads it would be surprised to find out that it's still not finished. What happened was, I would get so interested in writing one particular piece of the story and get distracted by it. I

*appropriate tone*

*idea development through personal anecdote*

*insight about own writing style*

wouldn't be thinking of anything else at the moment. Direct focus would be on my writing only.

connection to literacy strand (reading)

reflection about self as a writer

When I first read The BEG, I noticed how Roald Dahl made explanations. Unlike me, he gives the reader just enough information to think for themselves. For instance, he begins to describe the big, friendly giant's home:

support example from author

"She saw an enormous cavern with a high rocky roof. The walls on either side were lined with shelves, and on the shelves there stood row upon row of glass jars. There were jars everywhere. They piled up in the corners. They filled every nook and cranny of the cave."

details address audience's needs

See? He explains what the cave looks like and gives you a visual image. He lets you see in *your* mind, *your* view of the cave, however *you* think the cave would look like.

support for literacy growth connection

He doesn't over flow the page with details. That way, you can find the image yourself. He doesn't give you too much information, and he stays with what actually makes sense. I, however, would ramble on forever and say nothing important:

support of literacy connection

"The people up front will pass out some peanuts, pretzels, cookies, apple juice, orange juice, grape juice, and pine apple juice, and soft drinks. Thank you." announced the pilot."

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voice  
reflection about writing growth

analysis

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"One day in July a trip was planned for a little girl named Lauren" is going to cut

insightful ideas development

it. When I create a piece of writing, I want the reader to enjoy it. I want them to want to

literacy connection reaching back influenced writer

keep on reading. I've experimented with different ways on starting out a story - whether

it's a suspenseful lead or a funny lead- to see what fits best. I try to make the writing

appeal to the reader. That was something I saw Roald Dahl do at the end of chapter one

in The BFG:

"Suddenly she froze. *There was something coming up the street on the opposite side.*

*It was something black...*

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analysis about writing

support + examples of literacy connection

That lead is one that should make you wonder. You wonder what is coming up the

street. You want to know, so you find out, by continuing to read. That is a good example

claim about self

of a lead because it shows you how you can grab the reader's attention. As I said before, I

do not want to write too much with the result being loss of interest. I've worked this, and

I believe it's starting to show:

"It was three o'clock, and my mom and I were driving to my usual Monday piano lesson. I was pretty excited since I had practiced my classical piece a good bit over the past week. Little did I know that there was no reason to look forward to my piano lesson that day. No reason whatsoever."

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literacy connection

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used, and probably my favorite, is putting incomplete sentences after certain sentences

for affect. After reading different books, I've noticed that some authors tend to use this, and I've picked up on it. It makes the situation seem important. Here is an example from my personal narrative:

*Support  
examples  
of literary  
connection*

"It was a risk I was willing to take. Walking home."

It seems to draw attention to sentence...raises it up higher so that you know it is a major part. It emphasizes.

In my writings, I've tried to tie in qualities from those of Roald Dahl, knowing that he was very successful. But I make them my own...show a bit of my personality. I've shown a little bit of who I am in writing, and I think that gets the reader interested.

*voice*

*analysis  
about own  
writing*

I've tried very much to improve on my weaknesses. Over the years, I think my writings have been more and more enjoyable to read. The BFG taught me how to write in a short, sweet, and simple matter. It taught me how to make my writing pleasing to the reader. I will keep on trying to get better; trying different concepts to see what would work best. I go with whatever fits. Knowing that, I now like to think:

*reflection  
about writing*

*maintaining  
purpose*

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go."

T.S. Elliot

**Kentucky Writing Exemplar  
Reflective  
Grade 7**

**4 Content  
Purpose and Audience;  
Idea Development and Support**

**Journal Entry**

- **Establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose throughout**

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose through analyzing the effect Roald Dahl's BFG had on her growth as a writer. \* Examples throughout the essay make the literacy connection ("Unlike me, he gives the reader just enough information to think for themselves. "; " In that part of the story, I say much more than is actually needed. I could just have easily have said, ").

- **Indicates a strong awareness of audience's needs; communicates effectively with audience; sustains distinctive voice and/or appropriate tone**

The writer indicates a strong awareness of the audience's needs through the use of an appropriate, yet distinctive tone ("See? He explains..."). Reflective statements about growth are clearly illustrated with specific examples and details (see 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> pages).

- **Demonstrates reflective, analytical, and/or insightful idea development; provides specific, thorough support; skillfully applies characteristics of the genre**

The writer skillfully develops, through use of specific passages, examples, and personal anecdotes, the controlling idea: her risk-taking and experimentation as she tries different ways to improve her writing. Evidence of reflective and analytical idea development with specific thorough support can be found throughout the writing.

\* A connection to a literacy strand can be accomplished in different ways other than referencing a book or technique.

## Open and Closed: My Life as a Writer

"Books Fall Open and You Fall In" This is a poster that is hanging in my writing and reading class. The poster explains what happens to me many times a day. Whenever I can find a fraction of a second to find a new exciting point in my book, I take it. It is very hard to get me to stop reading. Once I have started, I find it hard to quit. My parents have even grounded me because I wouldn't turn out the light and go to bed! "Just five more minutes, mom. Let me finish this chapter!" is what I have found myself saying constantly.

I have many strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing. I think reading is one of my strongest subjects. I love to read because it is easy to do. I usually read series because I don't like my stories to end. It takes me a while to get used to the new series, though. This is usually a problem for me, because I get used to walking to the same place every time I go into the library. But when I go on to a new series, I have to have to go to a new place.

Writing on the other hand, isn't one of my favorites. That is because it takes me a while to come up with a topic. When I do come up with a topic, it

is hard for me to remember enough to make a story because I usually don't remember all the details. Something that did help me when I was trying to pick a topic is something Mrs. N , our former reading and writing teacher, told our class constantly. "Make it long enough to cover the subject, but short enough to keep it interesting" A.K.A – the mini skirt analogy. Usually, I didn't even have enough to "keep it interesting." That's when I have to start the topic process all over again.

My reading doesn't really connect with my writing. So it was hard for me to find something that connects. Our teacher gave us three ways we can connect our reading and writing; by the books we read, an experience, or a person that has influenced us. After much thinking, I realized that my reading and writing did connect in one tinny-tiny way. My reading was extremely realistic, and my writing was similarly realistic.

I read books about teens who face a deathly illness everyday, and no one can seem to find a cure. In the first book of the One Last Wish series by Lurlene McDaniel, Jenny Crawford is struggling with cancer. Jenny is told that there is nothing else the doctors can do. With that, she is sent home with medication and is told to wait until her time. Because she is in the bed all the time, Jenny has a lot of time to think. She is very wealthy and wants to give to those who suffer from illnesses similar to hers. Jenny decides to give one