

NJSLA Narrative Task

Grade 4 Writing

Lesson 4: From Proficiency to Advanced-Proficiency

Rationale

- To achieve the highest score on the Narrative Task prose constructed response, students need to demonstrate advanced-proficiency, including “effective development of the topic and/or narrative elements by using reasoning, details, text-based evidence, and/or description” (NJSLA draft rubric). This lesson teaches students to identify and add these elements to their writing.

Goal

- To have students revise the prose constructed responses in Lesson 3 to include advanced-proficient elements

Task Foci

- **CCSS W.4.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **CCSS W.4.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)
- **CCSS W.4.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 4 here.)
- **CCSS W.4.8:** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
- **CCSS W.4.10:** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Objectives

- Students will identify advanced-proficient elements in their prose constructed responses.
- Students will demonstrate advanced-proficiency in writing stories.

Materials

- Student Stories from Lesson 3 (saved as Word files or printed out)
- Computer with Microsoft Word (per student)
 - Note: Since NJSLA is a computer-based test, it would be best if students can practice typing their essays rather than writing them by hand.
- Narrative Story Prompt and Text

- Transitional Words and Phrases handout
- Figurative Language handout
- Colored pencils (if done on paper)

Preparation

- If using computers for this lesson, students need to know how to use the highlighter in Microsoft Word. It is located in the font section of the Home toolbar next to font color. To change the highlighter color, click the arrow next to the icon, and then click on the color you want. Hold left-click and drag your cursor over the words you want to highlight. Release left-click to apply highlighter.
 - Alternatively, have students print out their stories and use colored pencils to identify their stories' advanced-proficient elements.

Procedures

- Tell students that today they are going to return to the story they wrote in the previous lesson and identify and add advanced-proficient elements. Then they are going to revise their story.
- Have students open their saved stories (or distribute their printed stories).
- Ask the question, **“What makes writing advanced-proficient?”**
- NJSLA looks for elements in student writing that demonstrate excellent written expression: the use of figurative language, dialogue, and higher-order transition words.
- Students will also be evaluated on how well they follow the prompt.
- Highlighter/Colored pencils (colors are arbitrary, but everyone should use the same color to identify the same element). Explain a color and then give students time to mark their essays before moving to the next color. Circulate while they do so.
 - Yellow—Dialogue (pencil: underline)
 - Light Blue—Textual evidence, in the form of references to the literary text: setting, character traits, development of theme. (This will vary based on the prompt) (pencil: underline)
 - Pink—figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, etc.) (pencil: circle)
 - Light Green—higher-order transition words (esp. chronological) (pencil: draw a box)
- After students have highlighted, ask them which elements were missing or lacking in their essays.
- Next, guide your students through each color.
- Yellow: Explain that almost all stories have dialogue. It gives voice to the characters.
 - Have students read their dialogue and ask themselves how it progresses the plot or develops character. Dialogue that doesn't do at least one of these things is probably unnecessary, especially in a short story.
 - If students don't have any dialogue, give them this time to think about what parts of the story they could improve by adding some.
- Give students a few minutes to make any revisions.
- Light Blue: Explain to students that even though they are given a lot of creative freedom in the Narrative Story Task, it is important to make sure that they addressed the prompt. Any reference to the literary text and any details that answer the prompt should be highlighted. For example, if the prompt asks students to continue the story where the text left off, is there a clear transition at the beginning of the student's story that doesn't leave an unexplained gap? Or, if the student is asked to write a new story based on the same theme as the literary text where is this theme developed in their story?
- Pink: Distribute the Figurative Language chart. Tell students they are going to examine their use of figurative language.

- First, have students look at what they've highlighted in pink. What type of figurative language did they use? How does this language add to their story?
- Second, have students think about where they can add figurative language. Where would these additions help create a more vivid sense of a character, setting, theme or mood? Would a simile or metaphor help illuminate a character trait or emphasize a theme? Can they add personification to an aspect of the setting to make the setting more vibrant?
- Light Green: Distribute the Transitional Words and Phrases chart. Explain higher-order transition words (e.g. further, however, first, finally, therefore, for example, etc.). Higher-order transition words and phrases indicate the relationship between ideas through time, comparison/contrast, consequence, priority, etc. Because a plot unfolds over time, chronological transitions are especially important in the Narrative Story Task.
 - First, have students evaluate what they highlighted. Some questions for students to consider: How do these transitions show relationships between ideas? Are any of them unclear? Could a different word or phrase indicate the relationship more accurately? Do your transitions indicate time the progression of the story? Is the progression of the plot clear to the reader?
 - Second, have students think about where they can add transitions. Where would adding a transition help clarify the relationship of ideas or show the progression of ideas?
- Give students a few more minutes to go through their stories and make further revisions with the four aspects covered in this lesson.
- Lastly, ask students to proofread, checking for any errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Have students save their highlighted drafts. Have students print in color if permissible, so you have a copy of their edits. If not, have them make a copy of the file, remove the highlighting, and print in black and white. (To un-highlight, select all the text and click "no color" in the highlighter tool.
- Have students print their work and collect.

Assessment

- Students' writing should demonstrate successfully incorporated advanced-proficient elements.
- Check which students aren't developing a conflict or don't have a clear plot structure with a beginning, middle, and end. Check that students are using dialogue that helps advance the plot and develop the characters. Check that students are using vivid descriptive words and higher-order transitions (especially chronological).

Extension Activity

- Place students in pairs and have them review each other's descriptions/stories, applying what they've learned from this lesson.

Transitional Words and Phrases

To show similarity or addition	Also, additionally, equally, further, in addition, likewise, similarly, too
To show difference or contrast	Although, another, besides, by comparison, conversely, even though, however, in comparison, instead, neither, nevertheless, on the other hand, otherwise, yet
To show cause or consequence	As, because, consequently, finally, hence, since, so, then, therefore, thus
To show chronology or sequence	After, at the same time, before, during, earlier, finally, first, later, meanwhile, next, second, then, third, until, while, yet
To show priority or importance	Above all, also, besides, firstly, further, furthermore, next, secondly, thirdly
To show an example or summary	For example, for instance, in conclusion, in other words, in short

This table provides examples of some transitional words and phrases and when to use them. The examples below are by no means all of the transitional words in English. What others can you think of?

Figurative Language

This table lists the types of figurative language most commonly found in literature. Try to include at least three of them in your story.

Type	Definition	Example
Alliteration	The repetition of initial consonant sounds	<i>Busy Bees Buzzing</i>
Imagery	Language that appeals to the senses.	Warm chocolate syrup oozing out of the bottle
Metaphor	A comparison between two unlike things. It does <u>not</u> use “like” or “as”	My cell phone is a dinosaur
Onomatopoeia	Words that imitate sounds	boom, clang, pow, whoosh, zip
Personification	Giving human characteristics to objects or animals	The evergreens shivered in the gust of wind
Simile	A comparison between two unlike things using “like” or “as”	He raged like a thunderstorm