



Narrative Writing Sample- Grade 3

Here is a student sample that shows evidence of the ways students benefit from:

- the use of graphic organizers (Narrative Writing Diamond)
- teacher modeling
- guided practice
- the use of sentence starters to build vocabulary and fluency.

Teachers often ask, “*When do students stop relying on modeling and sentence starters?*” I’d like to have a perfect answer to that question but here’s the reality – **the modeling component of the [Empowering Writers' methodology](#) allows students to peek inside the mind of the author in order to broaden their experience, enhance their vocabulary, and have a strong model to emulate.** Sentence starters add a bit of variety and powerful word choice for students who may not have those tools themselves. I use modeling and sentence starters year round for all grade levels, K-8.

What I’ve seen is that some students rely on the modeling and sentence starters longer than others. They simply need more reinforcement in order to internalize the process and apply it independently. Others, however, begin to compose their own sentence starters and use elements of the model in very creative ways. These students are learning to play with words and syntax and are ready to flex their creative writing bones because they’ve been given the

tools they need. Those that still need the scaffolding are reassured by this support, gaining confidence and skill with each subsequent rehearsal.

In the sample, you'll see evidence of all parts of the writing diamond. **The student sample reflects the learning that has taken place in the classroom.** This student is reliant on the diamond structure and is using sentence starters effectively. As this student matures the writing will also mature to the point where the diamond structure melts away, and sentence variety and powerful word choice is evident naturally.

Here's what worked in the piece:

- Beginning-sound effect and put the main character in the setting
- Great use of suspense-Magic of three technique
- Good use of "Red Flag Phrases"
- Included reactions
- The author included a great description of the giant
- The reader was able to have a picture of the giant in his/her own mind
- The author also included wondering/thinking throughout the main event-this makes the reader wonder as well.
- The author did a wonderful job using "Red Flag Phrases" throughout the main event-this helps transition the reader through the different events happening and gives the story fluency.
- The main event has a mix of action, dialogue, sound effects and wondering.
- Extended ending included a feeling, memory and decision

For more information on narrative writing see [Empowering Writers' Narrative Writing Guides](#)

The Extremely Weird Adventure

Beginning-
Sound

Crackle crackle! I heard leaves crackling in the woods.

Suspense-Magic of 3

Suddenly I heard a boom! It sounded like thunder. What's that noise? I wondered. It's probably just my ears playing tricks on

Red Flag
Phrase

Hint #1

reaction

me. A moment later I heard a bang. It was no trick definitely something is out there. There might be someone else in the

Red Flag Phrase Hint #2

forest. I was so scared I turned around to go home. Without

Reaction

Red

warning, a foggy figure shadowed over me. It was a tall spooky

Hint #3

Discovery

giant.

Use of
Sentence
Starters

I was surprised to see that the giant had curly hair. I glanced at him and saw that he had red eyes like a laser, and a nose like a pig. My eyes widened as I spotted a golden earring in his ear. The massive giant was wearing a blue shirt with a Nike Symbol on it and blue basketball shorts.

Description
of
Giant

Suspense-
wonder

I wondered what he would do to me! Suddenly, he grabbed me and stuck me in the loop of his earring. Where is he taking

Red Flag Phrase

Action

me? I wondered. I tried to wiggle out of the earring but nothing

Action

happened. So I just sat and waited helplessly. The giant traveled

What do you see?

miles, stepping over tall buildings and houses, and jumping over

muddy swamps. Before I knew it, we reached this misty village

Red Flag Phrase

called Giant Land. Reader, this is a place no one wants to be. I saw

about 500 giants running about.

Red Flag Phrase

Just then, the giant took me to a room filled with big

what did you see?

bottles of potion that were orange, pink, and blue. Without

Red Flag Phrase

Action

warning the giant smacked me out of his earring and stuck me in

the blue bottle of potion. Inside the bottle was a note that said,

"Warning: this potion will make you a big ugly giant if you stay in

wonder

it until midnight." I wondered what I should do. "I have an idea,"

Dialogue

I said. "I'll roll the bottle off the counter and it will break so I

action

sound

can run home." I rolled myself off the counter and SMASH! The

action

bottle broke. I ran as fast as I could through Giant Land. It felt

like I was running through a maze of enormous feet.

Ending

Finally, I was out of that terrible place. I stopped and

action

rested for a short while, and then continued on my way home. I

feeling

was so relieved when I saw my beautiful house appear in front of

memory

decision

me. I'm always going to remember that adventure, but now I know

don't go in forests alone.