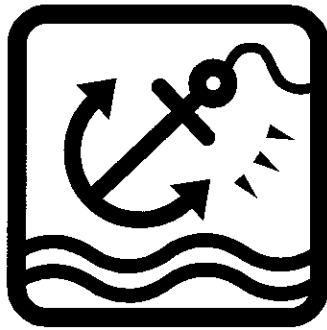


# **Oakland Unified School District Writing Proficiency Project**



## **Process Writing Assessment**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Annotated Anchor Papers Fall Prompt: Expository Letter Mystery Penpals**

Note: Please do not use the anchor papers with students prior to the administration of the Process Writing Assessment

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Expository Letter  
Fall Anchor Paper—Mystery Pen Pals

Score Level: 4

Salutation written and placed correctly, but comma is missing.

October 15, 2008

Date correctly written and placed.

Only first paragraph indented.

Dear Mystery Pen Pal

Introductory paragraph establishes purpose and context of letter.

Hello! It's me! But you must not know my name. Okay? Anyway, you are lucky because I will give you some clues about who I am.

Paragraph includes introductory, supporting and concluding sentences.

Sentence structures vary to convey clear sense of voice and audience.

Here is the first one. I am  $\frac{1}{2}$  Russian, Polish, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  Irish. I was born in either Oakland or Berkley but I can't say which because I do not remember. I once changed my friends' mind in first grade! I also like reading and I am very interested about brains. I am about 50 inches tall and about 56 lbs. with long dark blonde hair. My eyes are golden brown and my skin is a golden tan.

Spelling errors rare and do not interfere with meaning.

Vivid descriptive language.

Details included invoke a clear sense of audience—the author knows what will be intriguing to his readers.

Spelling errors rare and do not interfere with meaning.

Ideas are grouped into 3-4 "paragraphs," even though they are not indented—introduction, details about me, and conclusion.

In my family I have one brother, four grandparents, four aunts, four uncles, eight cousins, and more friends than I can count. My favorite food is chocolate, my favorite holiday is Halloween, so I am lucky it is coming up soon.

Holiday is properly capitalized.

Now I am coming towards the closing but I must tell my secret. My secret is I can climb on the outer edge of a climbing structure without falling or getting scared, and I have been doing it for about three years now.

Concluding paragraph reiterates the purpose of the letter, and piques curiosity by saving the most unique detail for last.

Sincerely,  
Your Mystery Pen Pal

Closing and signature properly placed and punctuated.

# **Third Grade PWA: Expository Letter Annotated Anchor Paper**

## **Fall—Mystery Pen Pals**

### **Score Level 4**

*“Hello! It’s me!”*

#### **What makes it a 4?**

This author coherently and thoroughly addresses the topic of describing himself. He organizes his letter into a very satisfying progression of logically-sequences paragraphs, beginning with an introduction that introduces the purpose of the letter in a playful and inviting way. He continues with a long second paragraph that includes many well-chosen details, such as his heritage, interests, appearance, family, favorites, and a very intriguing reference to the time he “changed his friend’s mind in first grade.” His introductory paragraph includes a topic sentence, multiple supporting sentences and a concluding sentence, and his final paragraph restates the purpose of the letter and presents the fascinating detail of all.

At regular points throughout the letter, the author directly addresses the reader, varying sentence structure and length to draw our attention deliberately to these moments (i.e. “Okay?” and “Now I am coming towards the closing...”). The conventions of this letter are nearly flawless, and any errors are first-draft in nature (e.g. missing comma in salutation, penmanship) or do not interfere with meaning (e.g. “Berkly”). The author is not yet using some of the more sophisticated conventions of the Score Level 4, such as colons, ellipses, or dialogue, but it is still early in the year.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 4.

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Expository Letter  
Fall Anchor Paper—Mystery Pen Pals

Score Level: 3

Salutation written,  
placed and  
punctuated  
correctly.

Dear Mystery Penpal,

October 15, 2008

Date correctly  
written and placed.

Hi! It's nice to be  
writing to you! I'm going  
to write about my self and  
you are going to guess who I

First three  
sentences establish  
purpose of letter  
and demonstrate a  
clear sense of  
audience.

Nationality not  
capitalized.

am! I am half chinese and  
half japanese;

I like playing  
with cool balls called Bakugan!

Another thing I like playing with  
is these lego cool bionicles!

Effective variation of  
sentence structure.

Concrete sensory  
details and  
descriptive  
language.

Some thing thats weird about me  
is I stick Bakugan under the

table. I'm in fantastic 3<sup>rd</sup> grade!

A Super secret about me is I  
spy on people! My favorite  
color is lava brofired! I love

~~to eat~~ noodles! My favorite  
animal is the swimming fish. I  
have seven people in my family  
and those people are my  
Nana, Papa, brother, sister,  
Mom, Dad, and me! My super age  
is seven years old! My  
ultimate weight is 66 pounds.  
Can you guess who I am?

Fails to double  
consonant.

Body of paragraph  
includes many well-  
chosen details.

Interesting use of  
superlatives in  
several places to  
convey voice.

Misspellings rare.

Sincerely,  
Your Mystery Penpal

Closing and  
signature properly  
placed and  
punctuated.

# Third Grade PWA: Expository Letter Annotated Anchor Paper

## Fall—Mystery Pen Pals

*Note: This writing sample is from a second grader in a 2/3 class who completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Fall PWA. For assessment purposes, students should always be evaluated using the appropriate grade level rubric (in this case, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Rubric), even when completing a PWA from another grade level. Because this paper scores at a Level 3 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Rubric as well, it was included with this set of anchor papers.*

### **Score Level 3**

*“Hi! It’s nice to be writing to you!”*

### **What makes it a 3?**

The paragraph begins by establishing the purpose of the letter (i.e. “...you are going to guess who I am!”), and continues with a logical progression of well-chosen, relevant details. The length of the piece (1 ½ pages) allows author to include concrete sensory details and descriptive language (e.g. “Bakugan under the table,” “lava hot red,” “swimming fish”) throughout the piece. He uses a transition effectively in the middle of the letter—“Something that’s weird about me...”—to reestablish a connection with the reader, drawing our attention with the change in sentence structure. The final sentence refers again to the purpose of the letter and provides an effective concluding sentence for the paragraph.

All the elements of a friendly letter are in place and correctly used. The penmanship is legible and the spelling almost flawless. The rarity of errors indicates that these misspellings (“my self,” “swiming,” “ultamate”) are most likely first-draft in nature, and in any case do not interfere with meaning. The slight overuse of the exclamation point and the failure to capitalize a nationality are grade-level appropriate this early in the year.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 3.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Expository Letter Fall Anchor Paper—Mystery Pel Pals

**Score Level: 2**

Oct 9, 2008

Salutation written and placed correctly, but comma is missing.

Dear Pen Pal

No introduction.

I am a girl. My favorite colors are pink, purple and blue. I like to play soccer. I like dogs and cats. I'm interested in my family and my dog. I like to color and painting

Sentence structure very repetitive.

Specific details included, but no descriptive language.

Sight word misspelled.

I have tow turtles and one gold fish. I eat fruits and vegetables and watermelon. I play vidio games too. Some time I will go visit my grandpa house.

All sentences properly capitalized and punctuated.

No conclusion.

Misspellings fairly common, but do not interfere with meaning.

Closing and signature written and placed correctly, but comma is missing.

Sincerely  
Mystery Penpal  
Melissa



# **Third Grade PWA: Expository Letter Annotated Anchor Paper**

## **Fall—Mystery Pen Pals**

### **Score Level 2**

*“I am a girl.”*

### **What makes it a 2?**

A substantial amount of writing expresses a clear idea about the topic, but communicates no sense of the purpose of the letter. The author is describing herself, but not in the context of the guessing game established by the prompt. Sentences are fairly simple and very repetitive. Most elements of a friendly letter are present, but commas are missing from both the salutation and closing. The author includes specific nouns such as “turtles” and “goldfish,” but no descriptive language. Most words are conventionally spelled, although some common words (“famaly” and “tow”) are misspelled. There are no run-on sentences.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 2.

# 3rd Grade PWA: Expository Letter Fall Anchor Paper—Mystery Pel Pals

**Score Level: 1**

Paper used incorrectly, with space for closing used for date and greeting.

Salutation and closing not punctuated with commas.

First sentences imply but do not clarify purpose of letter.

10/23/2008  
Dear mystery pen pal

Words and sentences sometimes lack proper spacing.

Unusual grammatical structure.

I am so excited I can't wait  
I wear a blue pants. And I wear  
a white shirt. And I am a girl. I  
have black hair. And I like to  
play tether ball. I play wall ball.  
I like to play monkey bars.

Missing period.

Descriptive language limited to common color words.

Repetitive sentence structures.

The word "and" overused as a transition between sentences.

Capital letter in the middle of a sentence; names of games improperly capitalized.

No conclusion.

I love  
Mystery Pen Pal

Closing and signature not aligned.

# **Third Grade PWA: Expository Letter Annotated Anchor Paper**

## **Fall—Mystery Pen Pals**

### **Score Level 1**

*“I am so excited I can’t wait.”*

#### **What makes it a 1?**

The author describes herself without establishing a purpose, context or audience for the letter. The writing is minimal, and includes some elements of a friendly letter, but these elements are confused and misplaced on an upside-down piece of prompt paper. The language and sentence structure are simple and repetitive. Spelling is flawless, and the inclusion of the correctly-spelled words “Tetherball” and “Monkey bars” indicates a good sense of spelling patterns that may serve this author well when she ventures into more descriptive and risky vocabulary. Errors in convention include the missing period in the first sentence, the improper capitalization of the names of the games, and lack of adequate spacing between some words and sentences. The penmanship is legible.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 1.