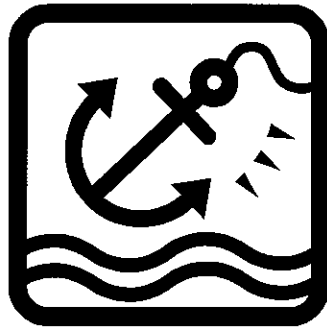


# Oakland Unified School District Writing Proficiency Project



## Process Writing Assessment

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Annotated Anchor Papers Spring Prompt: Formal Letter We Need Your Money!

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: Formal Letter

## Spring Anchor Paper—We Need Your Money!

Score Level: 4

PWA Field Test: Third Grade, Spring

Page 25 of 30

C [REDACTED] C [REDACTED]  
P.T.A. President  
R.H.S. P.T.A.  
4401-39<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94619

Dear Mrs. C [REDACTED]:

I am writing to ask for \$100 for [REDACTED]'s  
classroom. I think we should go on a class camping trip using the men

It would be extremely fun and educational. It wouldn't  
be too expensive and we might still have some money left  
for a couple of books.

It can be science, and teach us about nature.

We could maybe go to a campsite with a stream  
and possibly catch some tadpoles or small fish and bring  
them back to our classroom and learn about them.

Topic  
addressed  
coherently by  
developing  
central idea

Rare misspellings  
are typical first-  
draft errors.

Lively word  
choice -  
precise and  
descriptive

Paragraphs  
have topics  
sentence,  
multiple  
supporting  
sentences,  
and  
conclusion.

Many well-  
chosen  
supporting  
details

Varied  
spelling  
strategies  
used

Paragraphs indented.

Ideas progress into at least 2 logically sequenced paragraphs

Also, our current OCR unit is storytelling, and we can sit around the campfire and tell stories. Speaking of OCR units, our following unit is country life. We could live like indians! Catch fish, make bread over the fire, etc, etc. Write back soon and please include \$100. Thanks!

Paragraphs have at least 4 sentences each.

Varied and complex sentence structure

Clear sense of audience shown

Penmanship correct and neat

Blank lined paper for the body of the letter.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Student

Correct use of formal letter form

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

### **Spring—We Need Your Money!**

#### **Score Level 4**

*“Dear Mrs. C.”*

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

This student has written a paper that contains many of the elements of 4, but there are errors that make it not a true 4. The student has developed a progression of ideas that are contained in the three correctly-indented paragraphs of the letter. She states her reason for wanting money and two educational results that could happen if these funds were used to go camping. She is clearly aware of her audience, the PTA President, as shown by her choice of these “educational” benefits over entertaining ones. You can almost imagine her attempts to persuade the PTA President with the offer of using “some money left for a couple of books”!

She has shown mastery of **Writing Applications Standard 2.3** for letter-writing. Her second and third paragraphs include sensory details that support her request for money. Therefore, for organization, ideas and content, this student is achieving above grade level.

However, the student’s use of conventions is weaker than expected. She did make mistakes that a third grader who is writing above grade level should not make. She misspelled “lik” and has one run-on sentence. She did not properly indicate the name of the OCR Units with quotation marks or correct capitalization. While her sentence structure was varied, the sentences were all declarative in form.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 4.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Formal Letter**  
**Spring Anchor Paper—We Need Your Money!**

**Score Level: 3**

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009

1055 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Oakland CA, 94607  
White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Obama,

I am writing to ask you to cut the  
tax. Because I have a really big family  
and we are starting to lose money for food,  
water, and clothes that we might even have  
to move soon.

We still have about \$300, but it will  
be gone once my relatives come to visit. Please,  
everyone has been paying tax for a long time in  
America.

Use of  
commas for  
dates,  
cities/states,  
greetings

Clear sense of  
letter form

Variety of  
word choice  
and sentence  
structure

Correct  
paragraph  
indentation

Logical  
progression of  
ideas

Correctly spells  
compound word.

And we need to move to a better neighborhood,  
because where we live, there's a whole lot of  
shooting. We even have a jail about 3 blocks  
away. My family doesn't let me go outside  
to play anymore, because it's so dangerous in  
Oakland. It's very scary, because police walk  
around the apartments at night when it is like  
9:45. I hope you understand now. Thank  
you!

Sentence structure varies.

Correctly spells irregular word.

Sense of audience

Preliminary editing shows that author has a good sense of grade-level spelling and that most orthographic errors are first draft in nature.

Printing neat and legible with appropriate spacing and use of margins.

Sincerely,  
Alysia Saturn

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

### **Spring—We Need Your Money!**

#### **Score Level 3**

*“Dear Obama”*

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

The student is writing at grade level most of the time. She has focused her letter on stating her request and the reasons President Obama should cut taxes. She correctly uses the letter form and has a variety of sentence structures. She is able to personalize her request by explaining the situation in Oakland and in her home. This connection furthers her sense of audience as she explains her neighborhood for President Obama. Her descriptions of Oakland are specific and provide sensory details: “it’s very scary, because police walk around the apartments at night when it is like 9:45.” While she does state that she hopes that President Obama “understands now”, the letter would have benefited from a restatement of her main idea at the end.

She does have a run-on sentence in the beginning paragraph, which should not happen at third grade level. Her first and third paragraphs are not indented, but they are separated by spacing on the lines and a change in paragraph focus. Her spelling is good. She uses commas in a series and apostrophes correctly. Her subjects and verbs are in an agreement and she uses varied, complex verb tenses.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 3.

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Formal Letter  
Spring Anchor Paper—We Need Your Money!

Score Level: 2

April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Mr. [REDACTED]

Principal

[REDACTED] Elementary School

1640 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue

Oakland, Ca. 94606

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]:

Expresses  
main idea  
about topic

I am writing to tell you that my  
classroom new chapter books, crayons, color-  
pencils, markers, a bigger map, paint, paint-  
brushes, playdough, a carpet, and pencils.

Capitalizes  
sentences,  
proper nouns,  
& pronoun I.

My class needs chapter books because  
we want to read new chapter books. We  
need crayons because it is all broken into  
little pieces. We need new color pencils  
because it is getting smaller and when it  
gets smaller we can't sharpen it. We need new

Complex  
sentences

Some use of  
adjectives



markers because all the ink is out.

My class needs a bigger map because  
the map that we have is small.

We need new paint because the colors are all  
mixed up. We need new paint brushes because  
it is spreaded a part. We need new play dough  
because the colors are mixed up. We need a

new carpet because it is dirty. And we  
need new pencils because people break them  
in half. I think we should buy all this  
stuff for five hundred dollars. Thank  
you for reading this letter. Mike

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Missing and misspelled words occasionally interfere with understanding.

Proper ending punctuation

Indentation of paragraphs at appropriate places.

Developing sense of audience

7 or more sentences

Many elements of letter writing present

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

### **Spring—We Need Your Money!**

#### **Score Level 2**

*“Dear Mr. R.”*

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

The student has written a below grade-level letter to her principal for added funds to buy school supplies. Her letter is focused on her main topic, but she uses the same sentence structure over and over to explain the reason for each item her classroom needs. This repetition results in a list format that is not engaging for the reader. While continuing to use this same sentence structure, she decides to end her second paragraph and start her third. She appears to understand and correctly use the letter writing format, despite not capitalizing Ca/CA. The listed items that she has requested for her classroom are very specific, but she does not provide sensory details about the overall condition of her classroom.

While the spelling of high frequency words is correct, she does make some errors confusing “new” and “need”. She does use proper punctuation at the end of her sentences and capitalizes the beginning of her sentences. However, it is hard to tell if the more complex types of punctuation used by third grade are understood since she never uses them. She is able to correctly use commas in a series. Her use of “spreaded” shows that past tense irregularities are not yet mastered.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 2.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PWA: Formal Letter Spring Anchor Paper—We Need Your Money!

Score Level: 1

Some elements of letter form present

Business Letter

5,804

MC [redacted]  
2938 J67 Lone  
001 Lind/100  
94601

Minimal writing

Writing loosely related to topic

Dear Mr. Heart

Unclear, wandering ideas

I am writing to request  
\$100 so our class get toy at at the toy store  
I we like to get Cat, Dog, Get Cars, Books,  
God Books.

Conventional spelling for some regular high-frequency words

Confused sense of audience

Subject and verb do not agree. Misspellings interfere with understanding.

Sentences are simple and repetitive.

Simple sentence structure

[redacted]  
Sincerely,  
[redacted]

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

### **Spring—We Need Your Money!**

#### **Score Level 1**

*“Dear Mr. H.”*

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

This student is clearly writing below grade level for third grade. He does not meet the expectation of several paragraphs supporting the topic of requesting funds. He does state his request clearly in the first sentence, but then he moves from the topic of toys to books. There is minimal writing and the focus is wandering from the chosen topic. There is some understanding of the letter form. Mr. H’s title is missing in the salutation, which results in a confused sense of audience. The greeting of the letter has a period after Dear and a preprinted colon at the end of the line, which indicates confusion about how to properly punctuate this part of the letter.

There are errors in spelling that should be mastered by the end of third grade like “stor”. The sentence construction is also unclear. The use of verb forms is incorrect in the phrase “so our class got toy” instead of “so our class can get toys”. The second sentence is very difficult to read.

The preponderance of evidence indicates a score of 1.