



*Increasing Writing Test Scores
in the Elementary Classroom*

Milltown Elementary
Milltown, Indiana



Presented by: Patricia Key, 2nd grade teacher

Assisted by: Tami Geltmaker, Principal

School Facts

- Elementary
- 221 students, K-6
- Rural southern Indiana
- Veteran staff with few new members
- ISTEP (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) , 3-6 grades, county benchmarks K-6
- 60% poverty, 33% Title I, 14% disability, 20+% mobility- Top 7% in statewide testing last few years

Milltown Elementary is Successful in Writing

- Professional development
- Workshops
 - Books
- Observations of other teachers
- In-school PD
 - Writing team analyzes data
 - Present to rest of staff
 - Develop building-wide strategies
 - After-school meetings
- Teacher collaboration building-wide



Classroom Practice

- Structure
 - No wasted time
 - Bell work
 - Established daily procedures
- Practice Work to Establish Strong Language
 - DOL
 - Draw and Write
 - Doodle Loops
 - Four Block Model and Write
 - Strong language practice
 - Daily teacher modeling
 - Students share work with their class, teacher, and other classes



Language Through Literature

- Charlotte's Web
- Trumpet of the Swan
- American Girl series



Games

- Wordo
- Memory Match



The Dead Verb Funeral



- Memorize strong verbs for moving, talking, and looking
- Dead verbs: are, is, have, had, am, be, was, were, has, went
- Technique: flip sentence to remove dead verb
- School-wide list creates teacher ownership



Planning Your Writing



- Add strong verbs, similes, and a good lead to your planning page
- Beginning, Middle, End (Sideways for a list)
- Map

Good Leads

- Question
- Onomatopoeia
- Start with an Ending
- Quotations or Dialogue
- Point of Excitement

Examples of Student Work

- ISTEP (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) writing prompts
- Locally designed benchmarks writing prompts

Summary Points

- Great literature
- High expectations, committed to excellence
- Professional development- in and out of building
- Teamwork
 - Analyze data in teams across the building
 - Develop strategies building-wide
- Challenges still ahead
 - Training new staff

Test 3

Plan your writing.

DO NOT WRITE HERE

Beginning of My Story

setting
lead
strong language

DO NOT WRITE HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

Middle of My Story

! ? "and" but"
describe
What happened
because of that

DO NOT WRITE HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

End of My Story

Tie your story up
happy - humorous
satisfying ending

DO NOT WRITE HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

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Strong Language

(to be memorized)

<p><u>Moving Words</u> sprint bolt rush stormed creep dash fly flew flop tumble collapse charged pranced hoist (lift something heavy) pelted (hit hard)</p> <p><u>Moving Slowly</u> amble stroll inch trudge tip-toed</p>	<p><u>Talking Words</u> blurt gabbed chatter mumble (talk under your breath) giggle</p>
<p><u>Make Your Face:</u> smile frown squint stare pout yawn scowl (mean look)</p>	<p><u>Angry Words</u> furious annoyed cruel enraged hateful rude</p>
<p><u>Looking Words</u> peer gaze peep glance stare</p>	<p><u>Sizes</u> huge gigantic enormous massive</p>
<p><u>Similes</u> as soft as feathers as quick as a mouse as quiet as a mouse as clumsy as a bull in a china shop as mad as a wet hen</p>	<p><u>Colors or Adjectives</u> black as coal sparkled like diamonds radiant brilliant</p>

Name:	WD Score:	%
Date:	Conventions Score:	

Writing Development Rubric (Based on ISTEP+ Language Development Rubric)

- 6= Excellent. Fully accomplishes task. Distinctive and outstanding performance.
- 5= Solid. Fully accomplishes task but lacks sophistication and consistency of a 6 score.
- 4= Good. Accomplishes task but needs more development, organization, or sophistication in the writing style.
- 3= Minimally accomplishes task. Some development, organization, and style, but they are weak.
- 2= Partially accomplishes task. Difficulty maintaining focus or too brief.
- 1= Fails to accomplish task. Very brief or rambling. Hard to read.

6	5	4	3	2	1	Development
						Ideas (stays on topic, focused not rambling)
						Content (in-depth information, supporting details, strong lead, conclusion)
						Organization (clear order)
						Style (word usage – strong verbs, descriptive language)
						Fluency (easy to read, flows smoothly)
						Audience or Voice (original, lively, and interesting)

Comments:

Average Score: = /36 = % = Grade equivalent =

Writing Conventions Rubric (Based on ISTEP+ Language Conventions Rubric)

- 4= There are no errors that impair flow of communication. Errors that appear will generally be of the first-draft variety; they have a minor impact on the overall communication.
- 3= Errors are occasional but do not impede flow of communication; the writer's meaning is not seriously obscured by the errors.
- 2= Errors generally frequent and may cause reader to stop and reread. Some aspects may be more consistently correct than others, existing errors do impair communication. With a little extra effort by reader, it is still possible to discern most, if not all, of what the writer is trying to communicate.
- 1= Errors are serious and numerous; they cause reader to struggle to discern writer's meaning. Errors frequently of a wide variety. May be sections where it is impossible to ascertain what the writer is attempting to communicate.

4	3	2	1	Conventions
				Beginning capitalization
				Capitalization of proper nouns
				Proper ending punctuation
				Subject and verb agreement
				Spelling of grade-level-appropriate words
				Run-on sentences or sentence fragments

Comments:

Average Score: = /24 = % = Grade equivalent =

Strong Writing Wall

1st Grade Verbs

leap
dash
creep
grab
stare

1st Grade Adjectives and Adverbs

tiny
quickly
gloomy
kind
beautiful

2nd Grade Verbs

rushed
flew
amble
gazed
gabbed

2nd Grade Verbs and Adverbs

huge
adorable
furious
lovely
pouting

3rd Grade Verbs

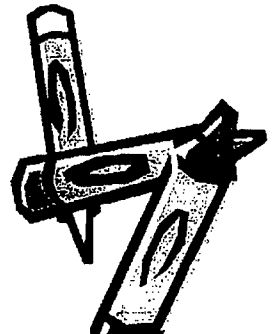
bolted
scrambled
inched
wondered
blurted

3rd Grade Adjectives and Adverbs

shimmering
oozing
ferocious
glamorous
sluggish

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Strong Language Practice

- I saw her **slip** into darkness. (sneak)
- Walk slowly and **saunter** to the office. (walk slowly)
- Did you see her **disappear** into the woods?
- The tiny puppy **trembled** with fear. (shook)
- My new bike **glided** down the steep hill.
- I **yelped** when I smashed my toe.
- We **hustled** to the school bus to be on time. (hurried)
- The wind **whistled** through the room
- After the fight I **avoided** my friend. (stayed away)
- The puppy **yelped** when I closed the door.
- I **galloped** out to the playground.
- They **streaked** across the playground.
- **Softly** tiptoe to your seat.
- The jump rope **startled** her.
- He will **sneak** into the closet to hide.
- The puppy sat **whimpering** for his mom.
- When she couldn't find her cat, she **sobbed**.
- I **lingered** to watch the Christmas tree after everyone left. (stayed behind)
- Mom **peered** into my room to see me.
- The little puppy **whined** for its mother.
- I **stormed** out of the room to find my brother.
- I **hoisted** up the heavy box.
- I **inched** up to the principal's office. (moved slowly)
- The butterfly **fluttered** into my room.
- We had to **hustle** to finish our work.
- The two cars **collided** and smashed.
- He **gabbed** so much he lost his recess.
- The jump rope **startled** her. (surprised)