

Grade 6
Functional Writing Samples 2005

For Classroom Use

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GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS FUNCTIONAL WRITING GUIDE

Purpose

This document is designed to be used by teachers and students to enhance students' writing by modelling writing standards specified in the Grade 6 Functional Writing Scoring Guide for the Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Test. It has been developed in conjunction with Grade 6 teachers from throughout the province who have extensive experience with both Grade 6 English Language Arts and the achievement testing marking process.

Contents

There are two components to this document:

1. Three news article writing samples with rationales that illustrate and explain how the scoring criteria fit each sample
2. Grade 6 Functional Writing Scoring Guide

News Article Assessment Task

Read the situation below and complete the assignment that follows.

The Situation

Imagine that you are a reporter for your local newspaper. Last night, a musk ox escaped from the local zoo. The musk ox was last seen near the community soccer fields and has not been recaptured. You visited the zoo and interviewed Pat Brown, a zoo official. You also interviewed the police and the people who last saw the musk ox. You have done some research on musk oxen and now you are ready to write your news article.

Assignment

Write a news article that will inform the readers about what has happened and what they can do to assist officials in recapturing the musk ox.

When writing your news article, **be sure to**

- provide readers with **information** that will support the purpose of the news article
- use a **style of writing** appropriate for a news article
- use a **style of writing** appropriate for the audience

Article Notes

<p>What happened? —gate to musk ox enclosure found open —musk ox last seen near soccer fields —musk ox escaped from zoo</p> <p>Where did this happen? —at the local zoo</p> <p>When did this happen? —last night</p> <p>Who was involved? —Pat Brown —police —other zoo officials</p>	<p>Information about musk oxen —found in the far north —live in small herds —feed on grass, leaves, lichens, mosses, and willow trees —are large animals —can weigh as much as 360 kilograms —have a coat of long, coarse hair —are usually brown or grey in colour —have large horns —may charge enemies when threatened —may snort when irritated</p> <p>How can people help? —stay away from the musk ox —note the location of the musk ox if seen —call officials if they see the musk ox —stay indoors</p>
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**You do not have to use all of the information provided on this page.
You may include additional appropriate information in your news article.**



Sample A

Musk Ox Escaped From Zoo

A gate to the musk ox area was found open last night and the musk ox escaped from the zoo. The musk ox was last seen eating the grass at the soccer feilds. Pat Brown, police and zoo officials were investigating. The musk ox lives in the far north and they live in herds. They feed on grass, leaves, lickens, mosses, and willow trees. They are large animals and can weigh as much as 360 kilograms. They have a coat of long coarse, hair. The musk ox is usully brown or grey and have large horns. They may charge enemies when threatned and snort when irritated.

Pat Brown from the zoo said “stay away from the musk ox.” A police officer said “write down the location of the musk ox when you see it.” “You have to call officials if you see the musk ox” and “you should stay inside!

Rationale for Marks

Sample A

Headline: Musk Ox Escaped From Zoo

Score	Reporting Category
3	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 • The ideas are adequately developed and organized (the reader is informed that a musk ox has escaped and a description of the musk ox is provided). 3 • Some information is given, and this information is supported by enough details to fulfill the purpose of the assignment (“A gate to the musk ox area” and “last seen eating the grass at the soccer feilds”). 3 • A tone appropriate for the assignment is generally maintained (“stay away from the musk ox” and “you should stay inside”).
3	<p>Content Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 • Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective (“were investigating” and “write down the location”). 3 • The writing demonstrates basic control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (“They have a coat of long coarse, hair” and “Pat Brown from the zoo”). 3 • Errors that are present rarely reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication (“feilds” and “lickens”).

Sample B

Missing Musk Ox

A musk ox escaped late last night from the local zoo when the gate to its enclosure was open. According to a witness, it was last seen grazing on leaves and grass near the West End soccer fields, and may still be in the area. The police and zoo officials are still searching for the animal. For your safety, they are asking people to remain inside while they continue to search for the musk ox. It is important that the missing musk ox be located quickly and returned to the zoo.

The musk ox is a large brown or grey animal with a coat of long coarse hair, it can weigh as much as 360 kilograms, and large horns. Musk ox are found in Northern Canada, live in herds, and likes to eat mosses, willow trees, or lichens. Snorting when irritated, they may charge enemies if they feel threatened.

The local zoo official, Pat Brown, stated, "If you have seen this animal or know where it is please call the zoo, or police right away."

Rationale for Marks

Sample B

Headline: Missing Musk Ox

Score		Reporting Category
4	4	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideas are generally well developed, and effectively organized (the public is informed that a musk ox has escaped and people are advised what to do if they see the musk ox).
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete information is presented, and this information is substantiated by appropriate details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment (“near the West End soccer fields” and “while they continue to search”).
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly maintained (“A musk ox escaped late last night” and “For your safety”).
4	4	<p>Content Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words and expressions are usually used accurately and effectively (“last seen grazing” and “asking people to remain inside”).
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (“The police and zoo officials are still searching for the animal”).
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication (“it’s enclosure” and “threatend”).

Sample C

Musk Ox Alert

The police and zoo officials have asked residents to be on the alert for a musk ox that escaped from the local zoo. Late last night at approximately 10:30 p.m. a zoo official making his evening rounds noticed that one of the musk oxen was missing. Apparently, the gate to the musk ox enclosure was open, and the animal wandered off. Shortly before midnight, witnesses reported seeing the musk ox near the Central soccer fields as it was headed north on Green Road.

The musk ox is a large animal weighing as much as 360 kilograms, lives in Canada's north. This animal is easily recognizable by its long coat of coarse brown or grey hair, and a set of large horns.

"The musk ox will probably be found in an area with grass, leaves, lichens, mosses, or willow trees," stated Pat Brown, an official at the zoo. "The musk ox may snort when upset and has been known to charge enemies when feeling threatened," he added. Police are warning the public that if anyone sees the musk ox, keep a safe distance and contact officials immediately about the animal's location.

Rationale for Marks

Sample C

Headline: Musk Ox Alert

Score	Reporting Category
5	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 • The ideas are well developed, and clearly and effectively organized (the public is informed that a musk ox has escaped and to be on the alert for the missing animal). 5 • Complete information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise and appropriate details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment (“a zoo official making his evening rounds,” “Shortly before midnight,” and “the animal wandered off”). 5 • A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly and effectively maintained (“zoo officials have asked residents” and “keep a safe distance and contact officials”).
5	<p>Content Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 • Words and expressions are consistently used accurately and effectively (“be on the alert,” “headed north,” and “easily recognizable”). 5 • The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (“Late last night at approximately 10:30 p.m.” and “stated Pat Brown, an official at the zoo”). 5 • Errors, if present, do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication (“Aparently”).

Grade 6 Functional Writing Scoring Guide 2005

FOCUS	CONTENT	CONTENT MANAGEMENT
	<p>When marking CONTENT appropriate for Grade 6 functional writing, the marker should consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectiveness of development and organization of the news article whether the purpose of the assignment is fulfilled with complete and appropriate information appropriateness of tone for the assignment and awareness of audience 	<p>When marking CONTENT MANAGEMENT appropriate for Grade 6 functional writing, the marker should consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accuracy and effectiveness of words and expressions control of sentence structures, usage, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.) clarity and flow of the communication <p>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are consistently accurate and effective. The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors, if present, do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ideas are well developed, and organization of the news article is clear and effective. Complete information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise and appropriate details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly and effectively maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective. The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present do not reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ideas are generally well developed, and organization of the news article is generally effective. Complete information is presented, and this information is substantiated by appropriate details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the assignment is clearly maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective. The writing demonstrates basic control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present rarely reduce the clarity or interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ideas are adequately developed, and organization of the news article is adequate. Some information is given, and this information is supported by enough details to fulfill the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the assignment is generally maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are frequently inaccurate and/or misused. The writing demonstrates faltering control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors often reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ideas are poorly developed, and organization of the news article is ineffective. Essential information may be missing. Supporting details are scant, insignificant, and/or irrelevant. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled. A tone appropriate for the assignment is evident but not maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are inaccurate and/or misused. The writing demonstrates lack of control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors severely reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ideas are not developed, and organization of the news article is inadequate. Essential information and supporting details are inappropriate or lacking. The purpose of the assignment is not fulfilled. Little awareness of tone appropriate for the assignment is evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and expressions used are inaccurate and/or misused. The writing demonstrates lack of control of sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors severely reduce the clarity and interrupt the flow of the communication.
Insufficient INS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfill the assignment, or the writing is so deficient in length that it is not possible to assess content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Note: Content *and* Content Management are *equally weighted*.

Please advise students that their work must be related to the assignment. Those assignments that are completely "off topic" will be awarded a mark of Insufficient.