



Emerging | Exemplar Essay

Just Because

Learning and Writing



Plot and Ideas

The storyline is incomplete, offering opinions (“I use to think that writing essays in ELA was just because my teacher wanted to keep us busy”) instead of establishing the elements of a plot in the exposition. The ideas do not fulfill the purpose of the task.



Development and Elaboration

The essay does not have an established, clear setting (“in ELA”). A narrator is introduced, but is not adequately developed, making the writing feel more like an informative essay than a true narrative. No dialogue is incorporated and very little description is used to elaborate upon the characters (“Someday I may write to graduate or get in school or get money”).



Organization and Sequencing

The narrative does not contain a sequence of events that establishes a beginning, middle, and end. Transitions and other narrative techniques to signal shifts in time or setting add little understanding (“Now I know better”). A resolution that offers closure is absent (“So there is a reason for us to learn about something, even if we think we don't need it and or if it doesn't make sense”).



Language and Style

Descriptive words, sensory language, and figurative language are not used in the narrative (“things,” “something,” and “it”). The writing is not engaging and does not build a clear voice for the narrator. Point of view is established as first person, but the language is general and does not provide useful description.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Learning and Writing

There are many things to learn for very important reasons and there are also times where you learn things for no reason at all. Just because isn't a good reason but sometimes it's the only reason you get. Writing essays was something like this for me. I use to think that writing essays in ELA was just because my teacher wanted to keep us busy. Now I know better but I still don't like writing essays. Someday I may write to graduate or get in school or get money. So there is a reason for us to learn about something, even if we think we don't need it and or if it doesn't make sense.



Notes
