

Word Choice: Definition

Word Choice is the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but in a way that moves and enlightens the reader. In good descriptive writing, strong word choice paints pictures in the reader's mind. In informational writing, strong word choice clarifies, explains, and expands ideas. In persuasive writing, strong word choice compels the reader to see things clearly and, sometimes to agree with the reader. Effective word choice is characterized not so much by exceptional vocabulary as by the ability to use everyday language naturally and in a fresh or unexpected way. ¹

Word Choice in Young Writers²

What to look for in pictures:

- Striking labels or titles
- Speech (often enclosed in bubbles)
- Language woven into the picture- for example, via signs

What to look for in text:

- Words of any kind
- Words you can read and make sense of
- Words that replace old, tired standards- for example, something other than *nice, good, fun, cool, neat, really, very*
- Strong verbs- the heart of good writing
- Words that paint a picture
- Sensory words that help you hear, smell, feel, or touch the moment
- A stretch to use a new or unusual word
- The right word at the right moment- for example, "My socks are *soggy*" (compare *wet*)

¹ McMahon, Carolyn, and Warrick, Peggy (August 2005). *Wee Can Write: Using 6+1 Trait Writing Strategies with Renowned Children's Literature*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: Portland, OR.

² Spandel, Vicki. (2004). *Creating Young Writers: Using the Six Traits to Enrich Writing Process in Elementary Classrooms*.

RSU 21 K-3 Developmental Continuum for Word Choice



	K Standard		Grade 1 Standard		Grade 2 Standard		Grade 3 Standard
	Recognizable words May attempt descriptive words or phrases Familiar written language Picture enhances words or phrases		Uses general or ordinary words Attempts new words but they don't always fit Uses favorite words correctly Attempts to use descriptive or interesting words		Uses specific words May borrow interesting words or phrases from literature or environment Experiments with precise nouns and/or strong verbs Experiments with adjectives		Words create clear pictures in places Uses some precise nouns and/or strong verbs Uses adjectives effectively- no adjective overload

June 2010

Word Choice

Exemplars for Kindergarten Standard

Exemplars are based on where students should be at the end of the year. Exemplars for Word Choice are only provided for grade level standards K-3.

Kindergarten Standard	Title	Explanation
Recognizable words	Boom Boom	The writer uses many recognizable words and repetitively uses a verb to describe an event. Picture enhances words.
May attempt descriptive words or phrases	Rising Sun	This paper has many recognizable words. The writer uses story language and experiments with descriptive words ('rising high')
Familiar written language Picture enhances words or phrases	Rice	This piece has many recognizable words. The writer experiments with descriptive words and uses repetition to add expression to her writing. Pictures enhance the writing and are very detailed.



Boom! -- Sa -- Sa -- Boom -- Boom!

The Sorm -- Tock -- Down! The tes

and Tock -- Down! The flu -- Fov -- Pozs

Tele phone

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp

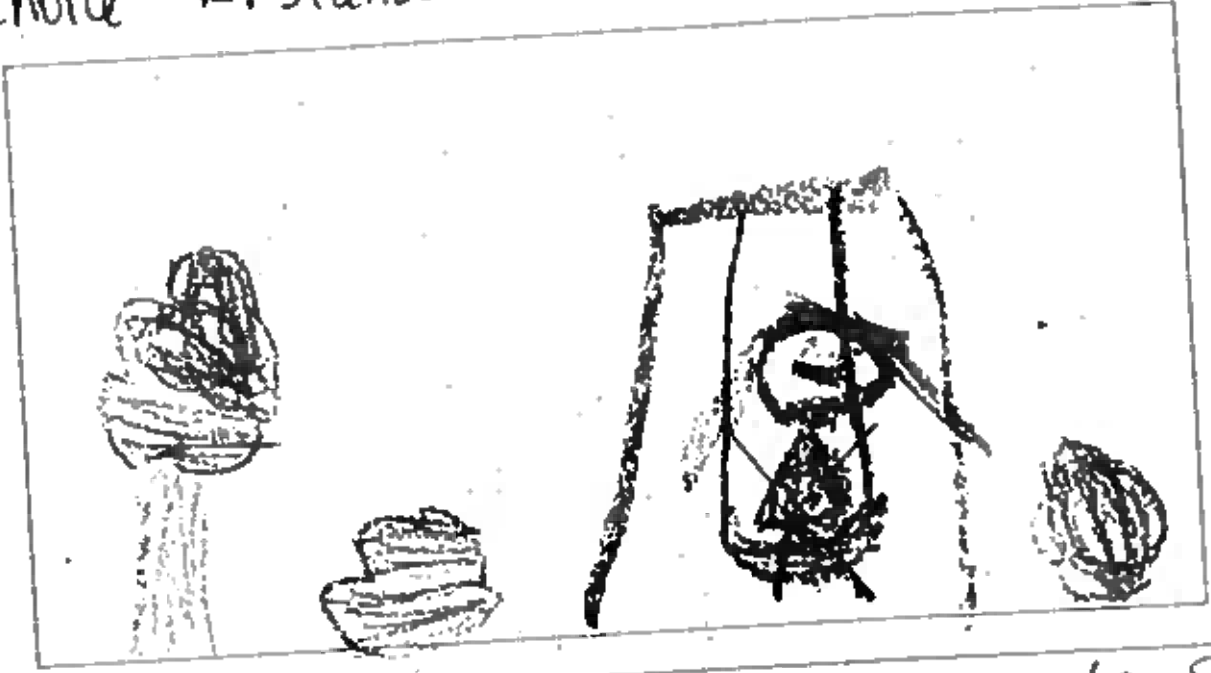
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

-Zed Trimeter

9-10-2010

Word choice - k. ^{Date} standard

"Rising Sun"



ONE DAY THE SUN WAS

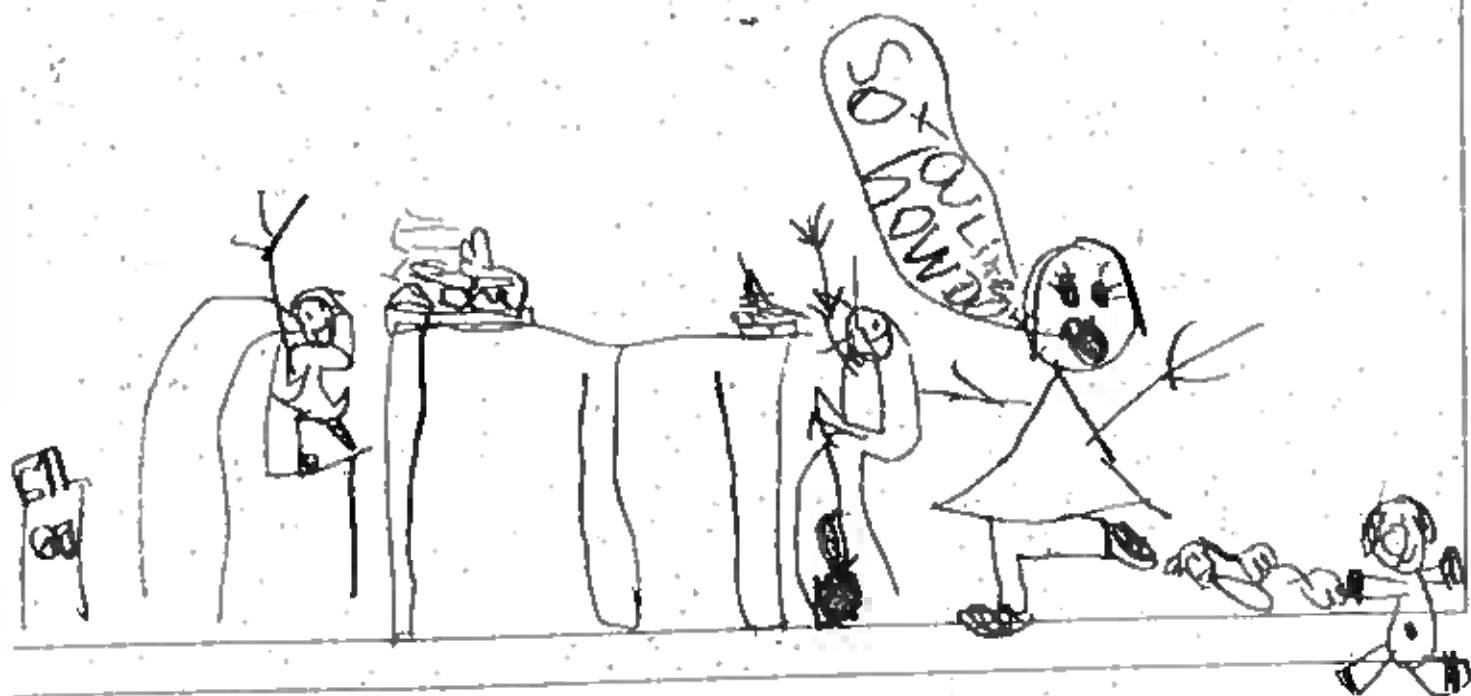
RISING HIGH IN THE SKY

AND I WAS PLAYING

IN MY BACKYARD

ON THE SWING

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz



YUCK I DO NOT LIKE RICE

BUT I LIKE CARITSE

AND A SANDWICH BUT

NO RISE NO NO NO OOO

RISE YES FOR SANDWICH

AND CARITS THE END

Word Choice

Exemplars for Grade 1 Standard

Exemplars are based on where students should be at the end of the year. Exemplars for Word Choice are only provided for grade level standards K-3.

Grade 1 Standard	Title	Explanation
Uses general or ordinary words Attempts new words but they don't always fit Uses favorite words correctly Attempts to use descriptive or interesting words	Swimming Monkey	The writer uses story language and specific language (scientist's). The illustrations enhance the story with detail and speech bubbles. Words untypical to grade level (daydreamed, townspeople) make this piece exemplary.
	Bella	The writer uses story language and favorite words correctly. The writer uses descriptive words and detailed illustrations to enhance the story.
	Snakes	The writer uses specific descriptive words related to the topic (slither, guide, reptile, venom). Favorite words (snake) are used correctly.

1. The monkey who could swim #12

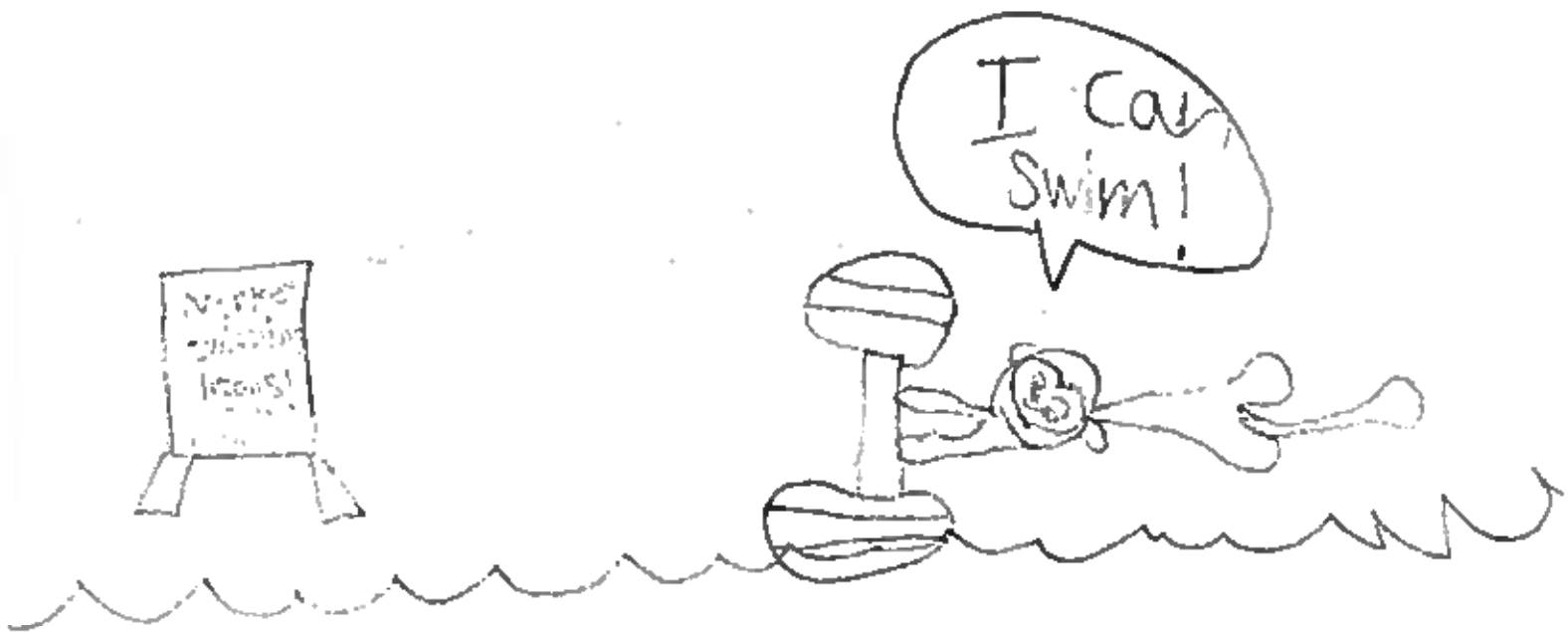


one day there was a monkey

and he wanted to learn to swim.

He did not know how to yet.

He daydreamed every day.



One day some artists

came to the town. They put

a sign on a local swimming pool: Monkey

swimming lessons. And so

he took them.



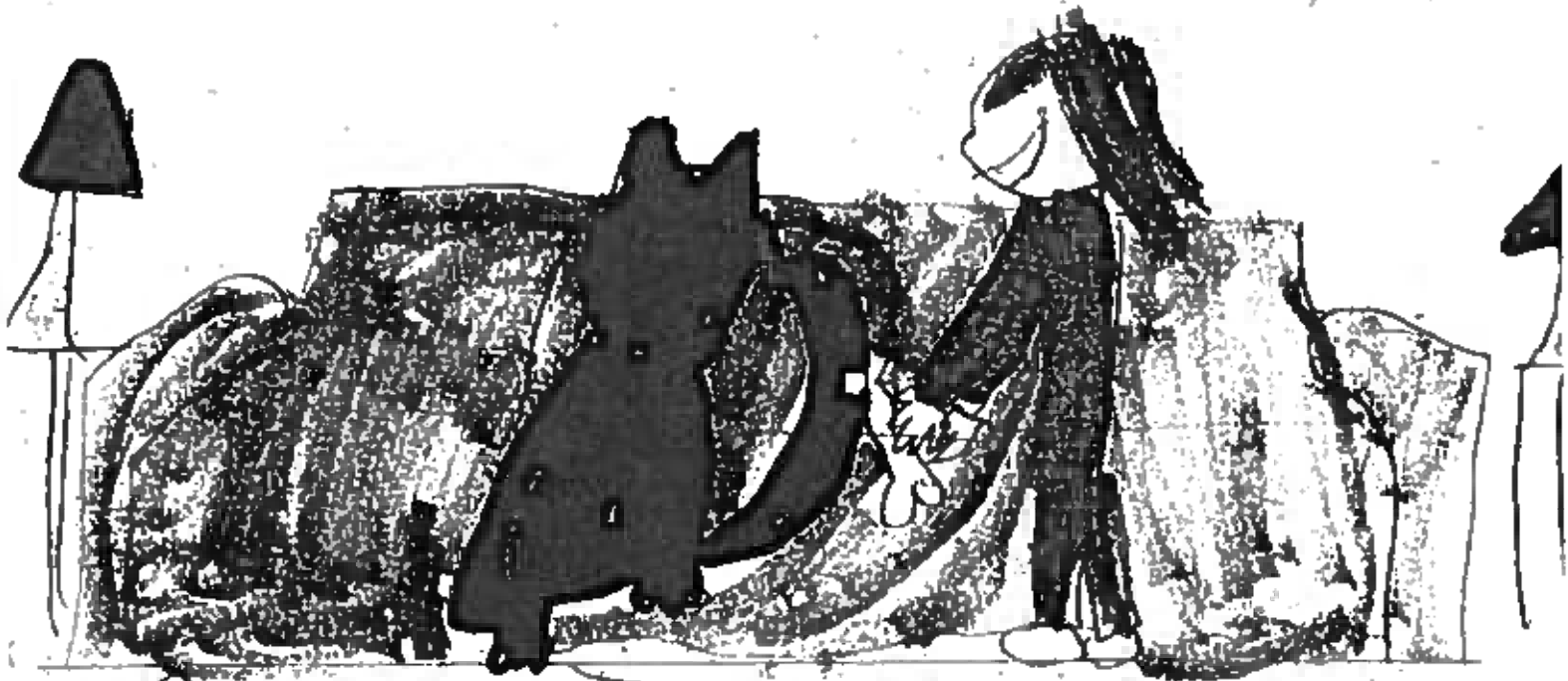
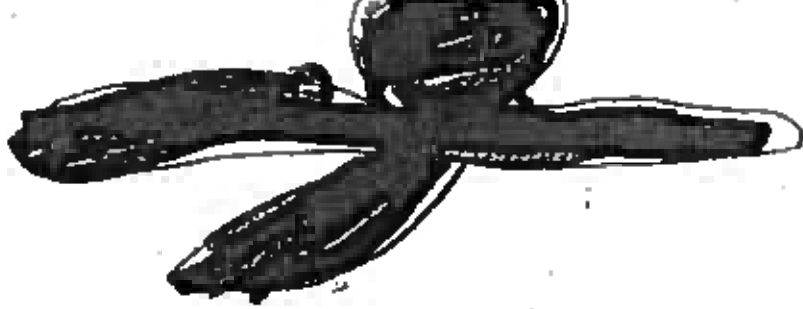
And so from that day on, all the
townspeople then called him:

The Monkey who could swim.

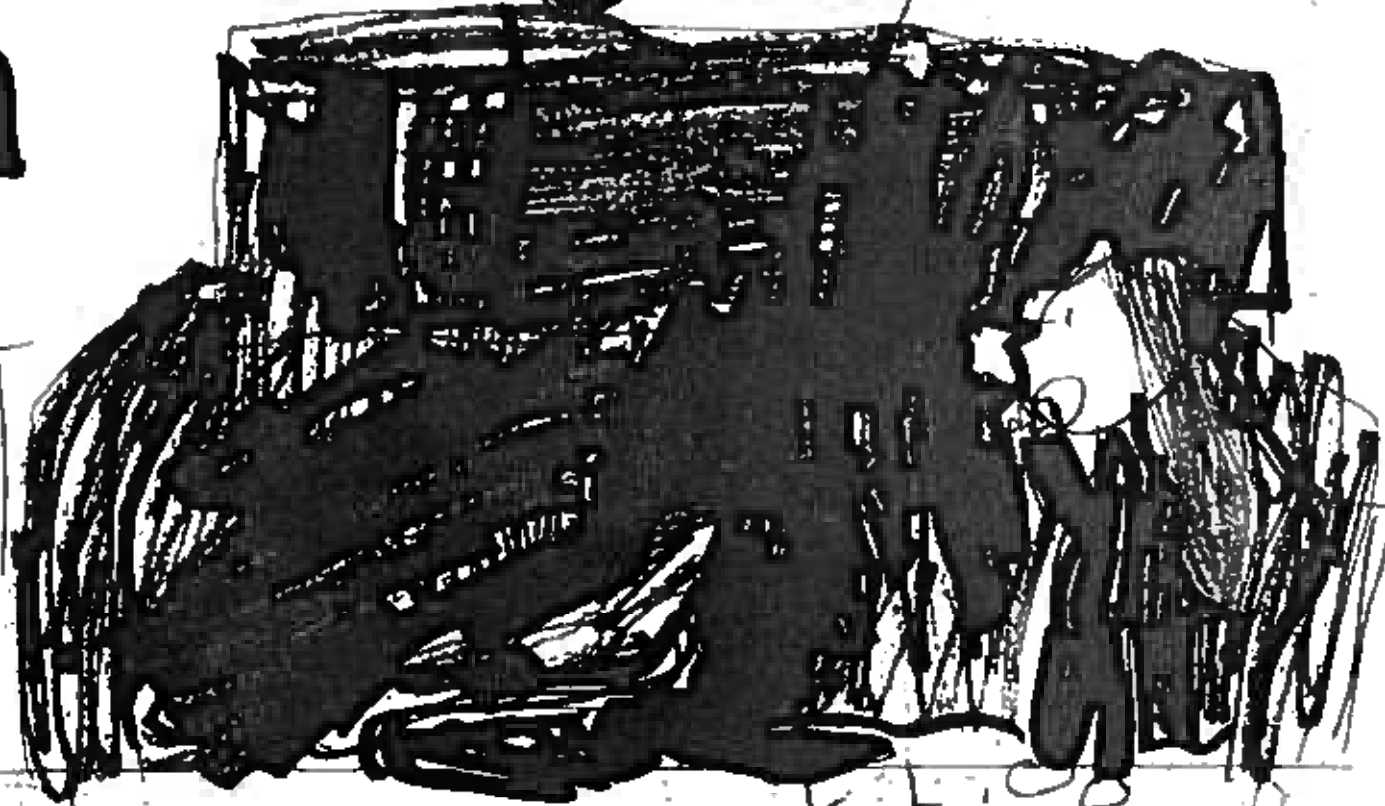
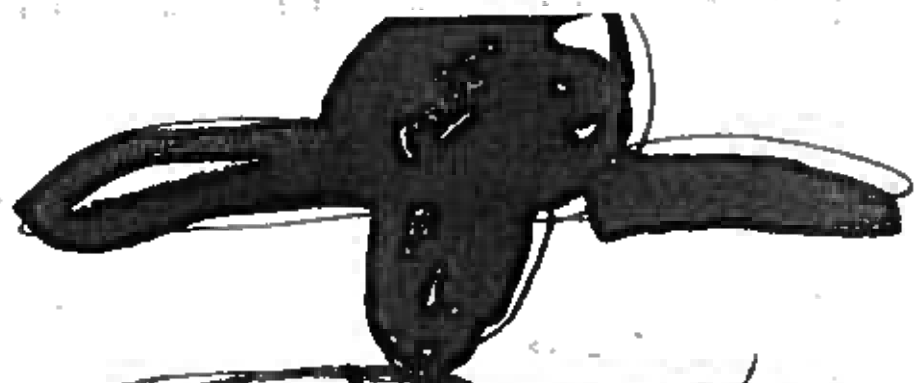
The Dog

named

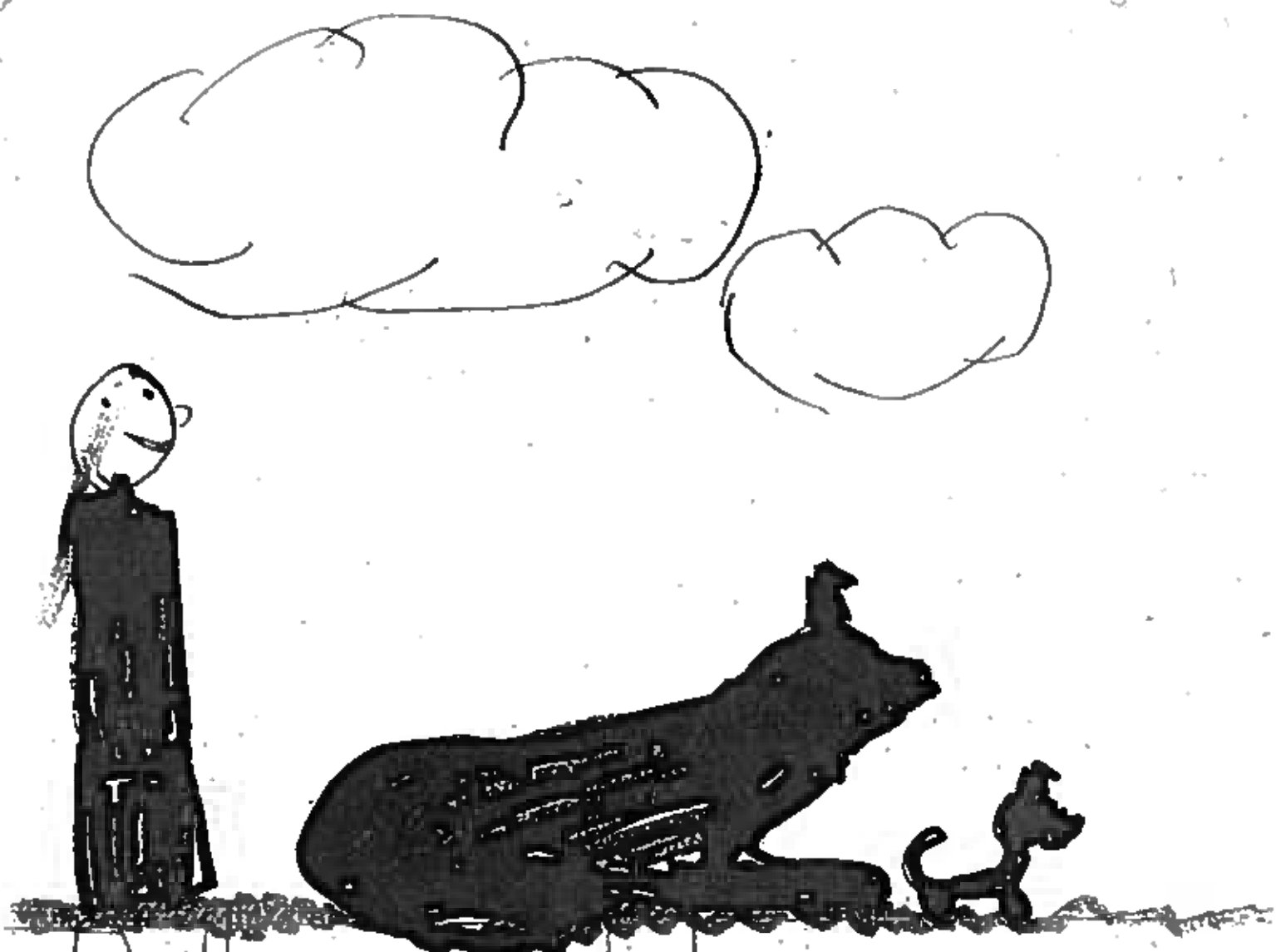
Bella



Once there was
^{one}
a dog who was very
well trained. its name
was Bella.



She was acting funny
One day she had a baby
The baby was very
cute.



Bella ^{nursed} nursed coco.

The puppy's name was
coco. Then they did
tricks outside when
they got tired they
went to bed.



Snake by S-I

Snakes are a kind
of reptile. Snake slither
to get around. Some snake
eat bugs or mice. Some
snake can glide to tree

to tree. Sun snake live
in the dezeret or forist.

There are thoundsand
of cined of snakes.

One snake is cloud the
ko ber up. One uther is
cloud the ratt snake.

Sun snake are venom.

Sun snake live in the

- oshin by rocks. Snake

- can moste live anever

- on erth. about the

- aurther I like snakes.

- Snake are cool.

Word Choice

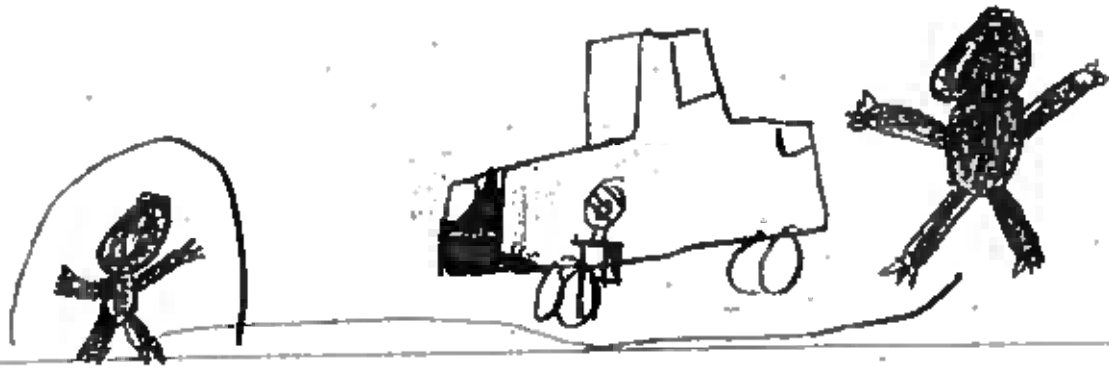
Exemplars for Grade 2 Standard

Exemplars are based on where students should be at the end of the year. Exemplars for Word Choice are only provided for grade level standards K-3.

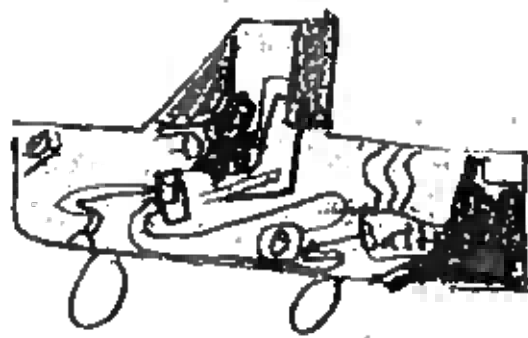
Grade 2 Standard	Title	Explanation
Uses specific words May borrow interesting words or phrases from literature or environment Experiments with precise nouns and/or strong verbs Experiments with adjectives	The Adventure	Uses specific words & precise nouns (hand sanitizer, species, & Slavery Machine 2000). Includes strong verbs (blasted, realized & defeated). Experiments with adjectives (evil).
	The Mouse & The Tow Truck	Uses specific words & precise nouns (gear shift, tow truck, Karate & Bob). Uses strong verbs (crept & struggled).
	Mount Washington	Includes specific words & precise nouns (Mt. Washington & characters names). Has strong verbs (chosen, screamed & boarded). Borrows interesting phrases (OMG!). Experiments with adjectives (color words, huge & bumpy).

The Adventure

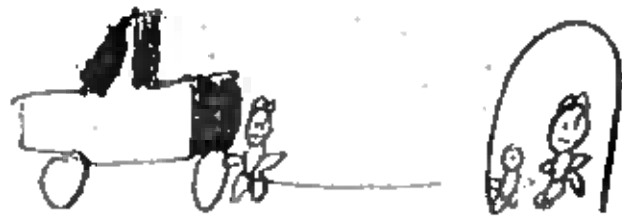
I was going to Mars. I needed air, food, water, a space suit, a rocket, a cup. I got into my rocket and blasted off! I was going into space! When I landed on mars I realized I brought along some items that I didn't need. I had brought a umbrella, a pet, and some hand sanitizer. I met an alien! He was in trouble. His specie was under slavery because of an evil mastermind! We went around freeing the people! Then it was time for us to do the last thing. We went and destroyed the slavery machine 2000! And we defeated the master mind! Then I went back to earth with my own little secret.



One day a mouse crept out
 of his ^{hole} hole. He found a ^{tow} tow
 truck. He found a ^{key} key. He put
 the key in the slot. Then he tried
 to start the tow truck. But
 he couldn't. He struggled with
 it. Then a man picked the tow
 truck up. Well the mouse's name
 was Bob. And he was good at
 karoty.



so He kicked But he landed
on the gear shift. He finely
strated the car. But He hurt
His foot. Suddenly the car stopped.
He had forgot to pull the pedel
down.



His foot hurt to much that he
went home. Then his mom Healed
his Foot. And that is the End
of the story.

Abhh" Niky screamed. "We have been chosen to go mountin climbing on M.T. Washington". "Omg" said Michie who was on her sellphone. Abby was on her purple bean bag chair. Abby dont sit there lets pack" said Michie who was the most exided. Niky had brown hair. Her faviret color was green. Abby had black hair. Her faviret color is baby blue. Michie had blond hair. Her faviret color was pink. They

were all packed up. The friends took a taxi to the airport. The plane was a huge white thing. "Wow" said Niky. "That's a big plane." They boarded the plane. It took hours to get there. When they got there Abby checked in. They unpacked. "Let's go" said Michie. When the three friends got there they hunched up holding on to the bumpy rocks was like holding onto sand paper. They were up really high. Just then in

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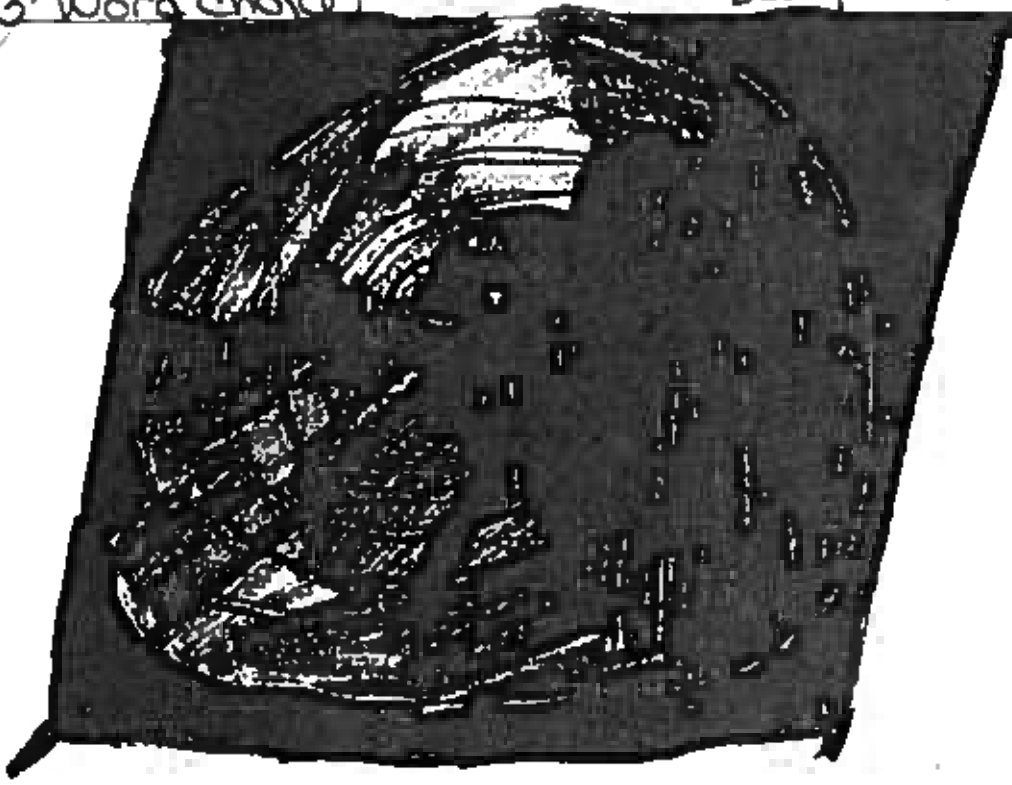
blink of an eye Abby's hook snapped! "Ahhhhhhhh" she yelled. Nicky threw her extra rope down just in time. They were stuck they couldn't keep climbing. Just then a helicopter came. The people in it saved them "Yay" they went back home. Just as some other girls were also getting news of going mountain climbing.

Word Choice

Exemplars for Grade 3 Standard

Exemplars are based on where students should be at the end of the year. Exemplars for Word Choice are only provided for grade level standards K-3.

Grade 3 Standard	Title	Explanation
Words create clear pictures in places	Being an Anaconda	Uses precise nouns (craving, Anaconda, Brazil & Guinness Book of World Records) and uses strong verbs (slithered& gardening) to create clear pictures. Uses adjectives to enhance the visual imagery (slimy & swampy).
Uses some precise nouns and/or strong verbs	The Gift	Uses descriptive words that create a clear picture (“My eyes started swelling...”) Precise nouns and strong verbs are used (fascination, rushed, muttered, running buddy). Uses a good variety of nouns and verbs.
Uses adjectives effectively- no adjective overload	The Infinite Gift	Uses words to create a clear visual image, including precise nouns, strong verbs, and adjectives (infinite gift, green orb, purple sparks, disintegrating).

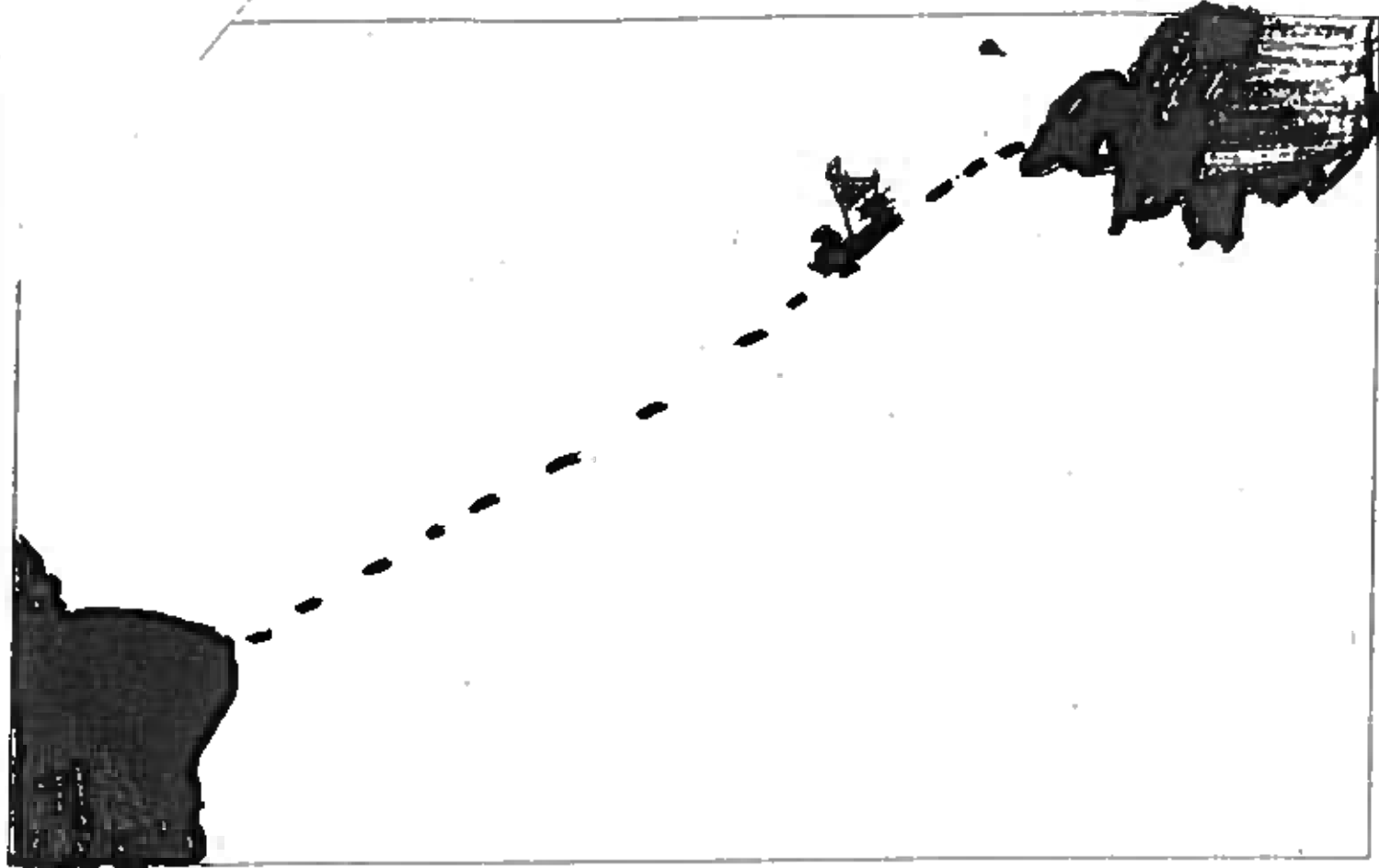


Being An Anaconda

By: S-14

One morning I woke up and
I was a long, fat, slimy anaconda.
I slithered through my house
and broke the stair way. All

of a sudden I had a craving
for rabbits. I went outside
and ate a rabbit. I slithered
all the way to Los Angeles,
California. I slithered down
to a swampy area and then
went back to the city. I
went to Mexico next. In
Mexico I slithered through



the desert. Then I found myself
in Brazil. I slithered all
the way to Brazil!!! I got
on a boat and sailed all the
way to Spain!!! I didn't last
long there. I went to China

next I was set in the Guinness

Book Of World Records

there. I was the planet's

biggest snake. I bite a person

there. I went to India next

I saw a bunch of people

dancing there. I tried to

dance to but everyone ran

away. I went to Vietnam



next. A bunch of people were
gardening there. It was gettin'
late so I went back home.
I went up in my bed and
hoped that I was going to
change back. I woke up the

next morning and I did. The

end. About the Author: I

like riding my bike.

The Gift

I have a friend named Lydia, she's moving in July and she's very sad and I want to cheer her up. It all started a couple months ago, I had just got to school, and then my other friend Emma rushed over and said "Lydia's moving". I thought just another joke in the morning.

I laughed and muttered "yay right. No your wrong" Emma said upset. She walked back slowly very slow. Lydia turned to me and whispered "I really am moving" it was so quiet know around could hear. "Joke" I said quickly. "No" said Lydia. My eyes started swelling up like squeezing a banana and gunk comes out yay exactly like that. I even felt like crying because she was my first friend ever in my life well sort of. Lydia was a person who completely loved herself but I can't believe I had fascination in her. When I told my mom she was upset because she and Lydia's mom (Dana) were best running buddies. Now I feel they have no time to be together. She always invites I to slumber parties we always have fun. I can't wait to go to her house and ride to New York City on a train. I'm give my friendship for her and I

Know she will cheer up.

The Infinite Gift

The last thing I wanted to do was destroy another city. We've moved three times because I was claimed of having "robbed a bank" or "burning a skyscraper". But I swear it wasn't me! It was my lucky black thread. So one day I thought "this thing is ball of threads raid of destruction gotta come to an end some day, right? " So I turned it into a blanket. But then I thought "Wait...I didn't kill it" I thought "I just gave it another body." So then I said "Ahhhh I got other things to think about. Like what my mom said: to make up for what you've done give someone a gift. I didn't know what to give but then it hit me: the universe. and I'd give it to my mom. and I k new just how to get it: the thread. That night I ran outside and threw the blanket UP. at first nothing happened except for the blanket hanging in the air. Just then purple sparks were in the air as the universe was disintegrating. a green orb"A.K.A. the universe flew into the blanket. Then I knew the blanket wasn't so bad after all. I ran inside and woke up my mom. "Mom take this" "What is it?" she asked "The universe"

The end