

Narrative

Grade 6

Black Mountains of Dust

I was sitting at a park bench when I saw the endless black heading towards me. "Mom look!" I screamed. My mom turned around and faced me. A look of pure horror was painted across her face.

"Margaret come on we need to go now!"

She shouted. We ran across roads and dried up **cropt** fields. We did not dare look back. Suddenly I wasn't running away from the black cloud.

Instead I was face down in the dirt. Oh no I had tripped over my shoelace! I slowly looked **up where** was my mom? The cloud loomed closer and closer. I choked feeling the gritty dust in my throat. I **tryed** to crawl forward but needles shot through my legs. Oh great in a time like this my legs fall asleep! A whiff of dust blew toward me, burning my eyes and making everything **blury**.

"Mom!" I screamed. "Mom!"

I **tryed** to yell again but was choked by more dust. "Mom" I whined.

Where was she. I started coughing from all of the dust in my lungs and throat.

"Margaret! Darling come on!" My mom motioned me to get up but I shook my head.

Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context for the narrative that follows and **introduces a narrator and characters**. The narrator and her mother needing to escape the storm becomes the central focus /conflict in the narrative.

Uses narrative technique of dialogue to develop events. Event sequence to follow unfolds naturally and logically.

Uses transitional phrase to signal shift from one setting to another

Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey events and develop characters

Uses the narrative technique of dialogue to develop events and characters; controls pacing by slowing down the action

My Mom flung me into her arms and ran, soaring farther away from the storm. After what seemed forever, my mom stopped running. Screams and yells echoed off walls. I covered my ears.

Uses transitional clause to signal shift from one time frame to another

A person right in front of us said:

"Get inside quickly!"

My mom answered "okay" and then I was carried into a building, that looked like the town hall.

My mom set me down in a corner, in the town hall and sat next to me.

"Mom?" I croaked.

"Yes Sweetie?" She said in a sweet voice, almost like honey.

"Is this going to happen ever again, this storm?" I asked my voice still thick with dust. She did not answer and I knew that she knew this wouldn't be the last time the black mountains of dust attacked the plain states.

Provides a conclusion which follows from and then reflects on the events and focus / conflict of the narrative, the dust storm of the Dust Bowl days

Spelling problems, including typos, are in yellow

Punctuation problems are in green. In this text there should be a period or dash or semi-colon between "up" and "there", and a question mark following "she".

In this on-demand narrative, the writer tells the story of a girl and her mother being caught in a dust storm during the days of the Dust Bowl. She focuses the narrative around the central conflict of trying to escape the storm. The protagonist/narrator is a girl who is terrified by the storm as she is caught up in it.

The writer organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. Some development of the events and characters is done through dialogue. Some precise words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language are used as well. At times in the narrative, it would have been helpful to have had a bit more description along with the dialogue, but, in general, the writer controls plot and character development adequately.

Although not required by the Standards, the narrative concludes with reflection / foreshadowing about future dust storms, which follows effectively from the story line.

As kids learn to write, many times they will make errors because they are learning new words, phrases and writing skills.

Encourage and praise their creativity and exploration!

This sample of student writing, aligned to the Common Core and annotated to show its strengths, is drawn from the In Common project. You can find more writing samples and learn more here: <http://achievethecore.org/page/507/in-common-effective-writing-for-all-students>